



## Planning, Development & Inspections

A Division of Community Services  
P.O. Box 550 • Raleigh, NC 27602  
[www.wake.gov](http://www.wake.gov)

### MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING BOARD - April 5, 2023

**LOCATION:** Wake County Justice Center, 301 S. Salisbury St., Room 2700, Raleigh, NC

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. Mr. Thomas Wells (Vice Chair)
2. Mr. David Adams
3. Mr. Jason Barron
4. Mr. Amos Clark
5. Mr. Bill Jenkins
6. Mr. Ted Van Dyk

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

1. Mr. Asa Fleming (Chair)
2. Ms. Brenna Booker-Rouse
3. Mr. Daniel Kadis
4. Dr. Kamal Kolappa

#### COUNTY STAFF:

1. Mr. Steven Finn
2. Mr. Tim Maloney
3. Mr. Josh McClellan
4. Ms. Sharon Peterson
5. Ms. Beth Simmons

#### COUNTY ATTORNEY:

1. Mr. Kenneth Murphy, Deputy County Attorney

#### GUESTS:

1. Ms. Delia Chi, VP Planning and Sustainability, RDUAA
2. Mr. Bill Sandifer, EVP Chief Development Officer, RDUAA

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1. **Meeting Called to Order:** Mr. Wells called the Planning Board meeting to order at 1:30 pm.
  2. **Petitions and Amendments:** Mr. Van Dyk requested to amend the petition to include discussion on the Transportation Committee scheduled for May 2023.
  3. **Approval March 1, 2023, Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes from March 1, 2023, was made by Mr. Barron and seconded by Mr. Jenkins. The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

#### **4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Mr. Wells opened the floor to nominations for Planning Board Chair. Mr. Van Dyk nominated Mr. Wells for Chair, and Mr. Jenkins seconded the nomination. Mr. Barron indicated that he felt Mr. Wells was an exemplary member of the Board and lauded his willingness to make the extra effort to participate in community outreach meetings. With no further nominees, Mr. Wells opened the Board to a vote and was elected Chair unanimously.

Mr. Wells then opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair and recommended Ms. Booker-Rouse in absentia with Mr. Murphy's consent. Mr. Barron seconded the nomination and Ms. Booker-Rouse was elected Vice Chair unanimously.

#### **5. RDU Airport Presentation – Presentation by Delia Chi, VP: Planning and Sustainability**

Mr. Maloney prefaced the presentation by informing the Board that key stakeholders in the community had given updates to the Planning Board and they felt this insight was helpful. The Wake County Planning Department met quarterly with community leaders for updates, and Mr. Maloney felt that it would be beneficial to brief the Board members as well. He noted that representatives from the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority (RDU) would be presenting an update on airport operations at the meeting as the first of multiple planned updates to the Board. Mr. Maloney introduced Delia Chi, Vice President of Planning and Sustainability for RDU, along with Bill Sandifer, the Executive Vice President, and Chief Development Officer.

Mr. Sandifer approached the Board and introduced himself as the Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer for the RDU Airport Authority. He explained to the Board that his experience developing airports over 36 years led him to RDU, where he began as a Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Sandifer explained that he and Ms. Chi had several interesting developments to share and noted that the structure of RDU's operations changed dramatically in April of 2020, when the airport saw a 96% reduction in customer traffic and revenue. He explained that RDU had rebounded and that their pre-COVID expansion plans would need to be accelerated, suggesting that \$2 billion in spending over the next decade would meet the minimum to keep up with growth. Mr. Sandifer introduced Ms. Chi to begin RDU's presentation and offered to answer any questions the Board might have.

Ms. Chi introduced herself to the Board as the Vice President of Planning and Sustainability and congratulated Mr. Wells and Ms. Booker-Rouse on their election to Chair and Vice Chair. She began her presentation explaining that Vision 2040 is the name of RDU's master plan and would encompass the next decade's worth of projects. RDU embarked upon Vision 2040 in 2017, prior to the pandemic, but Ms. Chi noted that while the master plan had not deviated, several changes had been implemented.

Providing an overhead view of the airport, Ms. Chi identified the two major runways and accompanying terminals, along with the rental car facilities in the middle of the site. She also noted the general aviation campus, overnight aircraft parking ramp, cargo area and parking facilities, as well as the National Guard and maintenance facilities to the south of the main campus. Ms. Chi continued, explaining that RDU was a major economic driver in the region, supporting 85,000 jobs and contributing \$17 billion in economic output. While discussing migration inflow and passenger forecast, Ms. Chi pointed out that in FY 2019, RDU serviced nearly 14 million passengers prior to a drop of nearly 0 during 2020. However, FY 22/23 numbers had rebounded to nearly 2019 levels with 12.46 million annual passengers. RDU anticipated continued growth to reach over 16 million by FY 26/27. She mentioned to the Board that while Business passengers had not returned to previous levels, Leisure passengers had returned to numbers comparable to pre-pandemic levels.



Ms. Chi introduced Vision 2040, identifying four key areas of development for RDU: Airfield Improvements, Updates to Terminals, an overhaul to Ground Transportation, and General Aviation. Based on the visioning and planning efforts approved in 2016 and 2017, Ms. Chi anticipated a \$4 billion total investment required to complete all Vision 2040 projects.

1. **Airfield Improvements** – Ms. Chi identified several pavement improvements underway, including Runway 5L-23R, taxi lanes, and the overnight aircraft parking ramp. She noted the overnight parking ramp was particularly important as it provided flights the ability to leave the next day on 6 a.m. or 7 a.m. flights. Additionally, the general aviation and cargo aprons were in the rehabilitation process. Future projects in the 2040 master plan will include the 5L-23R replacement project, currently in environmental assessment and design process, as the existing runway was in dire need of repair. The new runway would shift 5L-23R 537.5 feet northwest and convert the existing runway into a taxiway, allowing for expansion of the Terminal Two Facility. Ms. Chi also noted that the environmental and design process of the replacement program included pursuit of an Envision Sustainability Rating Certification for the project. She identified progress as currently according to schedule for completion by 2028 with the taxiway conversion ready by 2030. As an aside, Ms. Chi pointed to a section on the map where a proposal to relocate Lumley Road was underway.
2. **Updates to Terminals** – Ms. Chi introduced the Terminal 2 (T2) Landside Expansion Program, an update designed to address capacity constraints. She noted that during prior construction, the balance between the Landside areas (curbside roadway, passenger processing, ticket, and baggage claim) and Airside areas (gates and terminal buildings) were unbalanced, and the new project sought to address that concern. The T2 Landside Expansion Program, once implemented, would create multi-level terminal processor expansion, demolition of the existing parking garage and replacement facility to meet demand with construction of a bridge and tunnel to facilitate easier transport. Plans also include a new Ground Transportation Center to address traffic congestion and an extension to John Brantley Boulevard – the thoroughfare that connects traffic between terminals. Ms. Chi noted that planning for T2 was completed, and that schematic and environmental design were underway, with construction slated between 2025 and 2030.
3. **Ground Transportation Overhaul** – Ms. Chi then moved to the CONRAC Project, RDU's plan to improve rental car facilities. Presently, Ms. Chi noted, rental facilities were located away from the facility near the administration building, necessitating passengers to travel additional distances to secure transportation. The CONRAC Project would consolidate rental car facilities and providers into a new parking garage, located between Terminals 1 and 2, connected to a Quick Turnaround area. Additionally, per requests from rental car providers, Ms. Chi identified a proposed rental car storage facility located near the National Guard base. She noted that the CONRAC Project was currently slated for 2030. The final component of the transportation overhaul Ms. Chi presented was a Park Economy 3 expansion project, dedicated to providing more spaces for long-term parking customers, which she noted was in the environmental and design study phase with an anticipated late 2025 completion date. Combined with purchasing four electric buses and another eight planned, RDU planned to improve congestion for expanded parking.
4. **General Aviation** – Ms. Chi identified the final component of Vision 2040 as a long-term goal, centered around improvements to Terminal 1. She noted that with limits to construction to Terminal 2, additional demand to the airside would need to be accommodated through Terminal 1. Ms. Chi pointed out that RDU is currently in planning stages and provided a schematic of one

such improvement to the Board. She mentioned that planning was designed to implement phased improvements, leading to a proposed expansion to 21 gates.

Additionally, Ms. Chi informed the Board of RDU's Sustainability Management Program, completed in March of 2023 and is a framework for all future decisions in their capital development program and day-to-day activities. Goals of the program for the 2023/24 fiscal year included the Envision Sustainability Rating, the creation and hiring of an Energy Manager Position, and a transportation policy consistent with the goals of the Management Plan. Ms. Chi reiterated the existing purchase of electric buses and the plans to purchase more, as well as a goal of extending a sustainable transportation program for the entire airport. She also indicated that community outreach and partnerships with local businesses, academic institutions, and local government agencies were a priority in extending RDU's Sustainability Management Program. Ms. Chi noted that RDU was currently collaborating with staff from NC State University to improve on drainage areas in an existing project.

Ms. Chi closed her presentation by offering to answer any questions the Board might have for RDU about their Vision 2040 or Sustainability Management Program.

### **Board Discussion**

Mr. Van Dyk and Mr. Barron expressed concerns about the necessity to remove trees in the Park Economy Three expansion project and asked what measures were being taken to promote sustainability. Ms. Chi responded that RDU would typically be subject to both NEPA and CEPA compliance processes through the Federal and State review level. Additionally, the Airport Authority opted to implement their own process, a Project Environmental Compliance Review, designed to adhere to standards beyond the Federal and State requirements. She explained that during the environmental review process, RDU had already conducted their first public participation workshop in January and were preparing the public comments for a second workshop. Mr. Barron asked if the Park Economy surface area would be limited to pavement or if some landscape islands were under consideration to replant lost foliage. Mr. Sandifer responded that they intended to include landscape islands to offset any impact from removing trees.

Mr. Jenkins asked for more information regarding the CONRAC plan, specifically how the Ground Transportation Center would function as a point of origin for arrivals and departures. Ms. Chi responded that to be flexible, RDU researched the traffic congestion between Terminals 1 and 2 and reached the conclusion that the best option was to use the Ground Transportation Center to remove all vehicles not devoted to shuttle buses and pick up / drop offs. The proposed designs for the CONRAC allowed for a spine inside of the center of the garage to access both terminals, increasing efficiency and reduce congestion. Mr. Sandifer added that when Terminal 2 was created, the roadway was not expanded in a corresponding manner. He identified the CONRAC plan as a way for RDU to correct issues created during the construction of Terminal 2, but also noted that the early stages in 2025 would initially compound issues until the Ground Transportation Center's completion.

Mr. Clark asked about the collaboration with NC State and Mr. Sandifer explained that RDU sought recommendations for the Park Economy 3 project, given its proximity to Umstead Park. To avoid stormwater runoff into the park, RDU collaborated with NC State and DEQ to meet and exceed standards. Mr. Sandifer noted the process was ongoing and expressed confidence that the State would provide an exception to their minimum standards, provided that RDU's solution would give NC State additional opportunities to continue making improvements. Responding to Mr. Adams question about where RDU's plans were relative to market demand, Mr. Sandifer admitted that he currently felt they were behind what trends would require in the future. He noted that large goals like Vision 2040



take more time and Federal regulations, and budgeting were partially behind the lag, as was COVID, but he also reiterated that limiting customer disruption would always inhibit the speed of growth. Responding to a question from Mr. Wells regarding funding, Mr. Sandifer identified parking as a high percentage of operations funds. He also noted that, per the Airport Authority's original creation in the NC legislature, the owning bodies (Wake and Durham County and the Cities of Raleigh and Durham) contribute only \$50,000 annually. A Commercial Service Airport Funding Program from the State Legislature contributes \$24.5 million and may be used for infrastructure investments.

Mr. Wells asked what involvement, if any, Wake County had in the Airport Authority's operations. Mr. Sandifer replied that while RDU operated as its own independent governmental unit, they relied on the expertise of the County concerning building permits. He also pointed to Mr. Maloney's earlier comments regarding quarterly meetings with Staff to prioritize land use compatibility – residential land development, zoning restrictions, and particularly the Airport Authority's extraterritorial jurisdiction to control the heights of proposed buildings.

Regarding the sustainability initiative by the Airport Authority, Mr. Wells inquired where a Mass Transit System would fit into their overall plan. Mr. Sandifer agreed that a Mass Transit System would play an increasing role in RDU's ground transportation portfolio, although it remained to be seen exactly which areas would be emphasized. He noted that the airport did not control it and were unable to fund it per Federal Law restricting the movement of revenue off their boundaries. However, Mr. Sandifer did believe that the Airport Authority would invest in infrastructure to support Mass Transit onsite even if they were unable to provide funds to provide a network in the community. He did note that a 1998 tax on flights and rental cars implemented by the Legislature did allow for funds to be allocated to a Mass Transit System.

Mr. Sandifer ended his comments by noting that the Sustainability Program is leading the way in low water use, recycling, daylight harvesting in Terminal 2, electric buses, but that the Airport Authority would be considering many other options in the future to decrease their footprint in the area. He offered the Board members the opportunity to visit RDU and tour the "behind the scenes" facilities.

Mr. Wells thanked Ms. Chi and Mr. Sandifer for their presentation and for answering questions from the Board.

## **6. Committee Reports**

Transportation Committee:

Mr. Van Dyk informed the Board that a representative from the Turnpike Authority would be present at the May meeting to discuss tree reforestation on I-540.

## **7. Planning, Development, and Inspections Report**

Ms. Peterson updated the Board on the Middle Creek Area Plan, noting that she would be meeting with the City of Raleigh Staff later in the day to discuss Planning initiatives. She also reminded the Board about the April 20<sup>th</sup> community outreach meeting at Amplify Church and invited any members who were interested to attend. Ms. Peterson also mentioned that the Draft Plan was in the final stages and would be ready for Board review following meetings with the Soil and Water Conservation District and the Wake County Agricultural Board. Meetings with the Town of Garner planners provided Staff with their Comprehensive Plan Update Draft and identified transformation areas. Ms. Peterson noted that comparing the Town's planned Activity Centers with the County's proposed Mixed Use Development Districts had been helpful in finalizing the Middle Creek Area Plan. The final proposal

would be ready for the Planning Board in May and hopefully the Board of Commissioners to follow in June.

Mr. Finn provided the board with updates involving increases in zoning enforcement, centered around buffers and vegetation adjacent to towns. He mentioned that negotiations had been ongoing for the past 6 to 8 months regarding potential new subdivisions in pre-submittal process that were novel to Wake County with respect to affordable housing. He noted that the housing designs proposed were atypical and all attempts were being made to examine the UDO and remain flexible where possible concerning the utilization of public and private roads. Mr. Finn promised to keep the Board updated as developments moved forward. He also identified an increase in “pre” pre-submittal meetings regarding non-residential uses on a larger scale, part of a trend of requests for non-residential projects for the County. Mr. Finn defined “pre” pre-submittal meetings as ones pertaining to questions regarding zoning allowance or impervious standards, and that he wanted to emphasize the increase in non-residential projects considering the County’s traditional make-up of 90% residential land-use.

Mr. Wells asked whether the affordable housing was public or privately funded, and Mr. Finn responded that the developer in question had intended to use the land as a “legacy” project with no public funding involved to his knowledge.

Mr. Maloney informed the Board that on March 20<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Commissioners adopted the Text Amendment OA-23-22 and thanked Mr. Wells for being present at the meeting. He mentioned that after discussions with Mr. Jenkins, a Virtual Land Use Committee Meeting was scheduled for April 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Middle Creek Area Land Use Plan in advance of a full Board review in May. He also reiterated that a representative from NCDOT would be at the May meeting.

To follow up on the RDU presentation, Mr. Maloney added that the inspection portion of collaboration between the Airport Authority and the County is something that Staff took very seriously. He noted that RDU had planning and zoning authority and would not normally fall under County planning, but that they do have an informal agreement with Wake County dating back to the 1970s. The agreement allows the County to process building permitting review and on-site inspections. Mr. Maloney anticipated that Staff would be involved in many of the projects presented by RDU at today’s meeting.

## **8. Chair’s Report**

Mr. Wells thanked the Board members for their confidence in him and noted that he looked forward to the work ahead.

Mr. Maloney added that the Chair was open to making changes, if any, to Committee assignments. Mr. Wells made note of this and indicated he would contact the Committee Chairs for input in the coming days.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

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REGULAR MEETING  
WAKE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD  
April 5, 2023

Vice Chair Thomas Wells declared the regular meeting  
of the Wake County Planning Board for  
Wednesday, April 5, 2023, adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Thomas Wells". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and "T".

Thomas Wells  
Wake County Planning Board

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