



Planning and Development Services

(Planning) ☎ 919-856-6310
(Permits and Inspections) ☎ 919-856-6222
(Watershed Management) ☎ 919-856-7436

336 Fayetteville St. • Raleigh, NC 27601
P.O. Box 550 • Raleigh, NC 27602

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MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING BOARD - June 3, 2026

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. Mr. Ted Van Dyk (Chair)
2. Mr. David Adams
3. Ms. Brenna Booker-Williams
4. Mr. Asa Fleming
5. Ms. Suzanne Prince
6. Mr. Bill Stallings
7. Mr. Thomas Wells

MEMBERS ABSENT:

1. Ms. Sally Rice (Vice Chair)
2. Mr. Amos Clark
3. Dr. Kamal Kolappa

COUNTY STAFF:

1. Mr. Adam Cook
2. Mr. Steven Finn
3. Mr. Tim Gardiner
4. Ms. Ashley Jacobs
5. Dr. Caroline Loop
6. Mr. Timothy Maloney
7. Mr. Josh McClellan
8. Ms. Terry Nolan
9. Ms. Beth Simmons
10. Ms. Becca Truluck

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

- Mr. Kenneth Murphy, Deputy County Attorney

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1. **Meeting Called to Order:** Mr. Van Dyk called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
 2. **Petitions and Amendments:** None.
 3. **Approval of April 1, 2026, Minutes:** Ms. Prince made a motion to approve the April 1, 2026, minutes as submitted. Mr. Wells seconded the motion, and the Board adopted the minutes unanimously.
 4. **Proposed Zoning Map Amendment PLG-005868-2025 – Adam Cook, Planner II**

Request to rezone one parcel consisting of approximately 10.42 acres from Residential-30 (R-30) to Conditional Zoning Industrial-1 (CZ-I-1).

Presentation by staff: Adam Cook, Planner II

Mr. Stallings noted for the record that he had no relation to the applicant's counsel.

Mr. Cook explained that this request is to rezone one parcel consisting of approximately 10.42 acres from Residential-30 (R-30) to Conditional Zoning Industrial-1 (CZ-I-1). The parcel is located at 4605 Windy Knoll Road with frontage on Watkins Town Road. The conditions proposed by the applicant are as follows:

1. The property shall be used solely for a tree service operation and associated equipment storage.
2. No retail sales or commercial customer traffic shall occur on the property.
3. Operations on the property shall be limited to equipment storage, staging, and incidental maintenance within existing structures.
4. Hours of operation shall be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
5. No outdoor storage of materials or equipment shall occur except as screened by vegetation.
6. No additional principal structures shall be constructed without further zoning approval.
7. The use shall comply with all applicable Wake County Unified Development Ordinance requirements.

In 2025, a complaint was received about the operation of a tree removal business. In 2026, a Notice of Violation for the unlawful operation of a commercial tree and landscaping contracting business was issued, along with a separate Notice of Violation for land-disturbing activity. The subject property is located in the Community Area on the Wake County Development Framework Map. The East Raleigh / Knightdale Area Plan identifies the subject parcel as residential.

The parcel is designated Community on the Development Framework Map. Community areas are described as lands already in municipal corporate limits, municipal extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), or lands on the fringe of these areas for the municipality to expand and grow into. PLANWake policy recommends supporting municipal utility service and municipal annexation of the subject parcel. The subject parcel is shown as low-density residential according to Raleigh's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

Wake County is currently updating the area plan in this vicinity. Until that process is completed, the East Raleigh / Knightdale Plan is currently in effect, and the plan designates the subject parcel as Residential 1.5 to 4 units per acre. In accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes and the Wake County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), any proposed rezoning should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The subject property is currently developed with individual on-site well and septic disposal systems. New non-residential developments located in the Community Area of the County's Development Framework Map are required to contact the jurisdictional municipality regarding a potential utility connection. The applicant was instructed to reach out to the City of Raleigh to discuss potential connections to water and sewer. A portion of the subject properties contain Wake County flood hazard soils and United States Geological Survey (USGS) blue line streams. Various provisions of the Wake County UDO restrict or prohibit development within these environmentally sensitive areas. The site currently has an active Notice of Violation for land-disturbing activity from the Watershed Management Division of Wake County Planning and Development Services.

The subject property has frontage on Watkins Town Road and is served by a 60-foot private access easement (Windy Knoll Road). The segment of Watkins Road that serves as frontage of the subject site is currently a 60-foot public right-of-way. Any future redevelopment on the property will be required to comply with the requirements of the Wake County UDO related to the provision of transportation facilities identified on the Wake County Transportation Plan. Any roadway improvements and/or driveway permits will have to be coordinated with, and approved by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

A public hearing sign was posted on the property. The owner of the parcel and adjacent owners within 500 feet were notified by mail about a proposed rezoning. Mr. Cook indicated he received multiple inquiries about the proposed rezoning. Some community members expressed concerns about the noise level and traffic, while others supported for the rezoning request.

Staff finds that the proposed Conditional Zoning Industrial-1 rezoning is not compatible with the surrounding residential development and that the proposed Conditional rezoning is not consistent with the Community Area of the Comprehensive Plan's Development Framework Map. The subject parcel is shown as low-density residential according to Raleigh's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map. The proposed Conditional Industrial-1 rezoning is not consistent with the East Raleigh / Knightdale area plan. The East Raleigh / Knightdale area plan designates the subject parcel as residential.

Staff does not recommend approval of the requested zoning map amendment PLG-RZ-005868-2025 as presented as the request is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does not otherwise advance the public health, safety, and welfare.

Mr. Cook offered to answer any questions from the Board. Mr. Stallings asked what the proposed hours of operation were, and Mr. Cook responded 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. with no conditions on the days of the week.

Presentation by Petitioner: S. Adam Stallings, Martin & Gifford, PLLC

Mr. Stallings introduced himself as the representative for petitioner Usman Ahmad of SOKO Enterprises, LLC. He stated that their goal was to bring the business into compliance with the County while maintaining the status quo of operations onsite. They propose that the tree service operations run Monday-Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Mr. Stallings explained that occasionally, the business operates a stump grinder which does generate additional noise. He explained that his client is not looking to develop his property further or increase traffic. Mr. Stallings stated that his client is working to address the notices of violation. He added that they would be willing to conduct a decibel reading if that would help the Planning Board reach a positive recommendation.

Ms. Booker-Williams asked if he could explain the daily operations, and Mr. Stallings stated that Mr. Ahmad removes trees from clients and returns them to his property. The site contains one structure for the storage of vehicles and equipment, and employees enter and exit the business throughout the day. Mr. Stallings stated the business is not active onsite from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., but the stump grinder is occasionally operated. There are no other plans to expand operations.

Mr. Ahmad introduced himself as the operator of Aborex Tree Services. Mr. Ahmad stated that the stump grinder allows the business to process roots and tree debris. He stated that this stump grinder is what triggered the complaint with Wake County.

Mr. Adams asked what percentage of the property is being used by the business, and Mr. Ahmad responded 10%. Mr. Wells asked if the property also contained a residence, and Mr. Ahmad stated that the home and the shop were the only dwellings on the property.

Public Hearing

Mr. Van Dyk opened the floor for public comment at 2:07 p.m.

Citizens in Favor

Multiple citizens spoke in favor of the rezoning petition, claiming that the operations were not visible from the road. Others stated they were unaware of noise on the property.

Citizens in Opposition

An adjoining property owner provided drone video footage of the operation. The drone video showed more significant grading and site disturbance than what was previously described by staff and the applicant. They stated that the vehicles entering and exiting the property made considerably more noise than mentioned during the applicant's presentation. Another nearby resident stated that the noise is significant enough to prevent them from going outside during business hours.

With no further comment from the public, Mr. Van Dyk closed the floor at 2:42 and opened discussion among the Board members.

Board Discussion

Ms. Booker-Williams and Ms. Prince agreed that the noise level complaints would need more information before they felt comfortable advancing the rezoning case to the Board of Commissioners. They echoed Mr. Stallings's request for a decibel test onsite.

Mr. Cook stated that the applicant made several points in their presentation which were not included during proposed use discussions. The applicant did not mention the grinding service, which would change the type of rezoning required to Heavy Industrial II. Mr. Finn added that operating the grinder was in continued violation of the notice received by the County: they were told to cease operations in 2025.

Mr. Adams and Ms. Prince raised concerns about a residential property being located on a rezoned CZ-I-1 lot, and Mr. Cook explained they would still be out of compliance as a residential use would not be allowed under the new classification. Mr. Van Dyk suggested it would be preferable to continue the case until the applicant provided documentation on how to best proceed with their request.

Mr. Stallings indicated that, given the option, Mr. Ahmad would prefer to continue the case until August to address concerns from the Planning Board.

Board Motion to Continue PLG-RZ-005868-2025

Ms. Prince made a motion to continue PLG-RZ-005868-2025 to the August 5th, 2026, Planning Board meeting date, with the aforementioned conditions to be addressed by the applicant.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Stallings and was adopted unanimously.

5. Data Centers Update, Terry Nolan, Planner III

Ms. Nolan shared a presentation on data centers that she previously shared with the Board of Commissioners.

6. Traffic Impact Analysis, Steven Finn, Land Development Administrator

Mr. Finn shared a presentation providing an overview of traffic impact analyses.

7. Committee Reports

Mr. Wells reported that he, Ms. Prince, Ms. Rice, and Mr. Stallings attended the UNC School of Government's workshop for Planning Board members.

8. Planning and Development Services Report

Mr. Gardiner informed the Board that the Neuse North Draft Plan will be ready soon, followed by a public meeting on June 22nd. Staff is reviewing three NCDOT projects: I-40, I-440 in West Raleigh, and 540 from Holly Springs to Garner.

Mr. Finn shared that code enforcement is currently involved in 56 cases, which points at an upward trend over the previous fiscal year.

Mr. Maloney informed the Board that there would be no meeting in July, and that the continued rezoning case would be on the agenda for August 5th. The Board of Commissioners will hear the proposed Ordinance Amendment from April on June 15th, and Mr. Van Dyk's presence will be required.

9. Chairperson's Report

Mr. Van Dyk thanked the Board for their due diligence during the rezoning case and believed that continuing until August would give it the full hearing it deserves. He thanked Mr. Maloney for his service to the County and wished him well.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

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REGULAR MEETING
WAKE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
June 3, 2026

Chair Ted Van Dyk declared the regular meeting
of the Wake County Planning Board for
Wednesday, June 3, 2026, adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'T' followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small flourish.

Ted Van Dyk
Wake County Planning Board

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