

Special Joint Meeting of Town Council & Planning Board

Meeting minutes

The Planning Board and Town Council of the Town of Unionville held a special meeting on Monday, December 1, 2025, at 7:45 p.m. in Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Monroe, NC. Those attending were Mayor Baucom, Commissioners Andrew Benton, Gene Price, Chad Simpson, Jaren Simpson, Chairman Steve Outen, Devin Clontz, Will Crook, Lana Kirkpatrick, Matt Price, Alternates Jerry Adams and Annette Harris, and staff were present. Absent were Commissioner Jeff Broadaway, and Planning Board members Kevin JR Hayes and Doug Helms.

Welcome and Call to Order

Mayor Randy Baucom called the joint meeting of the Town Council and Planning Board to order at 7:45 PM on Monday, December 1, 2025.

Kickoff and Introduction of Town of Unionville's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Process – Michael Harvey

Michael Harvey, Vice President for N-Focus and Back-up Land Use Administrator for the Town, presented an overview of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) process. He began by thanking the Town for the opportunity to work on this project and acknowledged the current staff for their effective work in interpreting and enforcing the Town's code.

Mr. Harvey explained that the UDO would consolidate the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations into one comprehensive document, along with other regulatory elements such as flood plain regulations, watershed regulations, storm water, parking, and signage. The primary benefits of this consolidation would be:

- Creation of a centralized set of administrative policies
- A single definition section
- A unified process for project review
- Elimination of redundancies and conflicts in the current code
- Better alignment with the Town's comprehensive plan and future land use map

He emphasized that the planning board would be the primary working group throughout the process, with periodic updates provided to elected officials. The planning board would ultimately make a recommendation to the elected officials, who would then take final action during a duly advertised legislative hearing.

Mr. Harvey outlined that this project would:

- Ensure consistency with the Town's comprehensive plan
- Ensure compliance with state law (including recent amendments)
- Update implementation strategies
- Provide all available tools to properly manage development
- Reflect the community's vision for growth and development
- Provide uniform organizational structure

He clarified that the UDO process would not:

- Establish a moratorium on development
- Change current locations of general use zoning districts
- Make wholesale changes to permitted uses (due to state law restrictions on "down zoning")
- Add development standards that create nonconformities
- Allow public veto of development projects

Mr. Harvey displayed the Town's future land use map and explained how the UDO would need to align with this blueprint for community growth. He noted that the map establishes a downtown area, existing commercial/industrial areas, future commercial areas, and predominantly residential and agricultural areas.

The project would update several key sections of the Town's code:

- General provisions (Article 1)
- Advisory board policies and procedures (Articles 2 and 3)
- Zoning districts (Article 4)
- Development standards (Article 5)
- Subdivision regulations
- Floodplain regulations
- Sign regulations and landscaping
- Administration and enforcement
- Non-conformities
- Definitions

During the question and answer period, Mr. Harvey addressed several inquiries:

When asked by Mayor Baucom about the project timeline, Mr. Harvey stated they were contracted to complete the process within a year.

Planning Board Alternate Member Annette Harris asked about how often the UDO should be updated. Mr. Harvey explained that the ordinance is a "living, breathing document" that should be updated as community needs change, but major updates should ideally occur after comprehensive reassessments of the land use plan (approximately every 10-15 years).

Planning Board Chairman Steve Outen inquired about district boundaries, to which Mr. Harvey clarified they would address how staff interpret zoning district boundaries where there might be confusion on the map. Mr. Outen also asked about the state of emergency provisions and how they were implemented in western North Carolina during recent disasters. Mr. Harvey confirmed these provisions had been helpful in affected communities, though funding remains the bigger challenge for recovery.

Mr. Outen mentioned specific concerns about home occupation regulations in the current ordinance appearing restrictive. Mr. Harvey assured him this would be addressed when they reached that chapter, noting that the planning board would have ample opportunity to review each section throughout the year-long process.

Mr. Harvey concluded by outlining the next steps, which would include:

- Providing a status report to town staff
- Presenting formatting options
- Providing initial chapters (Articles 1-3) for review in January
- Discussing zoning districts in February
- Providing periodic updates to elected officials

He noted that N-Focus would provide a two-year warranty period after completion, offering technical assistance to staff on a no-cost basis regarding application of the ordinance.

Before adjournment, Mr. Outen took the opportunity to thank Lana Kirkpatrick for her service to the planning board and wished her the best in her new position on Council.

Adjournment

Mayor Baucom adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Braswell
Deputy Clerk

Approved as to form:

R. Kenneth Helms, Jr., Town Attorney

Note: These minutes were drafted with the assistance of Clerk Minutes by HeyGov. All content was reviewed and approved by the Clerk prior to submission.

