



City of Durham
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
May 6, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Susan Deeming called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL.

Commissioners present: Chair Susan Deeming, Vice Chair Matt Winkler, Commissioners Pat Saab, Krista Bailey, Cheri Frazell, and Andrew Mast

Commissioners Absent: Forrest Boleyn

Staff Present: City Administrator Jordan Parente and Administrative Assistant Kait Garlick

Public: Residents Craig Mitchell; City Planner Alice Cannon; Mahendra Tadikonda representing Durham Dental (Zoom)

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES.

Commissioner Saab moved to approve the minutes from the March 4, 2025, meeting. Commissioner Mast seconded the motion. The vote passed (6-0).

MO 050625-1

4. PUBLIC FORUM.

None.

5. SIGN PERMIT 476-25 FOR DURHAM DENTAL; 16780 UPPER BOONES FERRY ROAD.

Mahendra Tadikonda, representing Durham Dental, spoke before the Commission regarding sign application 476-25. This was a continuation of the review that took place at the previous meeting. The Commissioner's discussion centered around concerns that the materials used for the sign did not meet the standards or aesthetic expectations set in the original approval. Specifically, the sign base lacked the natural, permanent appearance seen in other monument signs along Boone's Ferry Road. The Commissioners had previously requested better-defined base materials and physical samples for review.

Two design options were presented: one featuring a natural stone facade similar to retaining wall blocks, and another using a concrete base finished with a stucco texture. The stone option would either require removing the existing sign and rebuilding it on a new stone base or modifying the existing structure by adding a stone facade to the front, creating the desired appearance without full reconstruction. Renderings and plans were provided.

Mr. Tadikonda clarified that both proposals aimed to give the sign a more permanent, grounded appearance without needing to dismantle the entire structure. The Commissioners debated whether the facade approach would be durable and if the final product would be cohesive with neighboring signage. Concerns were raised about the lack of a full frame (e.g., stone wrapping the sides or back), and ultimately the Commissioners agreed that this feature needed to be added to the sides to improve aesthetic appeal. The Commissioners agreed to approve the revised proposal for a stone facade base with additional conditions: a sample of the stone and mortar must be delivered to City Hall for final review and the stone must wrap around the visible sides to create a finished look.

Commissioner Bailey moved to approve the sign application including the proposed revisions and wrap-around material added to the sides of the base, contingent upon material samples being provided for final verification and the additional unapproved sign being removed. Vice Chair Winkler seconded the motion. The vote passed (6-0).

MO 050625-2

6. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/REPORTS/STAFF UPDATES.**

Alice Cannon was introduced as the City's new contract planner from Cannon Planning. She brings a wealth of experience in local government planning, having spent around 35 years in the field, both in Colorado and Oregon. Her previous roles include community development director in several Oregon cities—Milwaukie, The Dalles, and Tualatin—as well as a position in the City Manager's office in Gresham. She also worked earlier in Boulder, Colorado.

Ms. Cannon recently transitioned her consulting business, which she has run for about five years, from a part-time venture to a full-time focus. She's now serving a variety of clients, including Durham, Hood River County, and Canby. One of her primary responsibilities will be helping update floodplain regulations to comply with new FEMA rules prompted by a federal lawsuit from environmental groups. Ms. Cannon is already actively assisting with several projects, including reviewing the City's fee schedule and making needed updates to the City's development code. It is also intended for her to finish updating the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Cannon will also be partnering with the City's land use attorney to make updates to the City's development code pertaining to trees. The updates aim to better align the ordinance with the original intent of the City Council and ensure it meets applicable land use criteria. A draft of the revised tree code has been prepared, which will be reviewed by the Planning Commission before any recommendations are made to Council. Any changes to the development code must be submitted to the state with at least 35 days' notice, meaning that although the process is moving forward, adoption may still be a few months out.

There was discussion about whether to group the tree code update with other planned development code changes or process them separately. While bundling changes might streamline administrative processes, it could also create confusion for the public. Given the sensitivity and visibility of the tree ordinance, there's strong support for prioritizing it to avoid delays or misunderstandings, especially since the City wants the updated standards in place before any new development applications are submitted.

Lastly, the Commissioners discussed the distinction between the development code (which governs land use) and the municipal code (which addresses non-land-use-related issues). There's a recognized need for the tree-related provisions in both codes to be consistent in intent and aligned with the City's broader goals. Clarifying and coordinating these separate codes will help ensure a coherent approach.

7. **NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION.**

➤ Tuesday, June 3, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission at 7:00 PM.

8. **ADJOURN.** Chair Deeming adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

Approved:

Susan Deeming, Chair

Attest:

Jordan Parente, City Administrator/Recorder