

Agenda
August 1, 2023

REGULAR MEETING OF TOWN OF COLUMBUS
BOARD OF PLANNING AND ADJUSTMENT

RULES FOR PERSONS ADDRESSING BOARD MEMBERS

1. Each speaker will identify himself or herself by giving his or her **name and place of residence**.
2. Each speaker will be limited to speaking one time on any topic. When you are finished speaking, please step away from the podium and be seated.
3. Each speaker will be limited to **three (3) minutes** and each group's representative will be limited to a **maximum of ten (10) total minutes**. Each group is encouraged to designate a single spokesperson for their group.
4. Each speaker will confine himself or herself to the general question before the Council and avoid irrelevant comments.
5. Each person entering the Council Chamber will wear a mask until they get to their seat.

PUBLIC MEETING
(6:00 PM)

Planning Board

1. Planning Board Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Approval of the minutes of the July 3, 2023 Regular Planning Board Meeting.
 4. Board Member Comments
 5. Adjourn
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1 **COLUMBUS PLANNING BOARD & BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS**
2 **Minutes of Regular Meeting**
3 **Tuesday, July 3, 2023**
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5 The Town of Columbus Planning Board and Board of Adjustments met on Tuesday, July 3,
6 2023, at 6:03 p.m. in the Columbus Town Hall Council Chambers.

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8 **Roll Call**

9 Cathy Elliott, Chairwoman
10 Jimmie Buell
11 Marshall Watkins
12 Virginia Green
13 Ernie Kan, Voting Alternate Member

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15 **Staff Present:**

16 Timothy J. Barth, Town Manager
17 Stephanie Serrano, Administrative Assistant

18 **In absence:** Mark Blanton, Vice-Chairman

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20 The meeting was called to order at 6:03p.m. A roll call was taken, and the chairwoman
21 acknowledge all present.

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23 **Approval of the minutes of the June 6, 2023, Regular Planning Board Meeting**

24 Mr. Watkins requested to change line item #86-87 to "There being no further business to discuss,
25 Mrs. Elliott made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Watkins seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at
26 7:08 PM".

27 Ms. Kan requested to change line item #80 to "Mrs. Kan recommended updating the old
28 ordinance to match the UDO on the Town's website to help clear the confusion as to which
29 ordinance to reference when issues arise."

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31 **Consideration of rezoning certain property from R-2 to H-C**

32 Tim Barth stated that Odel Floy Lewis has plans of combining the two properties, Tax Parcel:
33 C2-A5 and Tax Parcel: C2-A6 and selling it together as a commercial lot. Susan Hensley,
34 resident of Thorne Avenue, stated that she is concerned that Ms. Lewis's future plans with these
35 two lots would negatively impact the well-being of residents nearby. Ms. Hensley asked if there
36 were any guidelines for what would be allowed to be placed in this location. Mr. Barth stated
37 that any commercial activity is allowed in the town's table of permitted use such as a building
38 supply store, or a car wash. Dorene Byars, resident of Thorne Avenue, stated that she has directly
39 spoken to the homeowner, Ms. Lewis, and was told that the existing buildings would be
40 renovated as opposed to being torn down and being redone. Ms. Buell asked if her property was
41 zoned as highway commercial, would it be necessary for Ms. Lewis to come to the planning
42 board and speak about her future plans. Mr. Barth stated that the homeowner would only need to
43 come if they were not able to meet the requirements and regulations. Mr. Barth added that there
44 is a requirement for a screening between any developed commercial and developed residential
45 property which amounts to a fence or fairly dense vegetation that would help obscure the view.
46 Mr. Watkins stated that having residents of Thorne Avenue present at the planning board

47 meeting holds a tremendous weight, therefore, the board should be inclined to consider their
48 concerns when making their decision. Mrs. Kan stated that unlike her experience when
49 purchasing her home, the Thorne Avenue residents were not aware that their neighborhood
50 would be changed from residential to commercial property.

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52 Mrs. Elliott made a motion to deny the application and the Town Council may vote however they
53 choose. Mr. Watkins seconded the motion carried unanimously.

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55 **Discussion regarding “For Sale” signs for Residential and Commercial Property**

56 Mr. Watkins stated that Krossroads Kitchen on Mills Street, Columbus, NC, does not currently
57 have a master sign for their business. Mr. Watkins recommended adding the verbiage stating in
58 the event that there is another space available for a master sign a store front window will be
59 allowed. Mr. Barth stated that this recommendation would present some difficulty as it would
60 bring up the concern of whether we are treating them fairly as a business that is by itself that gets
61 to put a lease for rent sign in front of their business. Mrs. Elliott stated that Samco Properties fall
62 under the purview of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Section 10.25 Signs Allowed
63 by Permit under (F) Common Signage Plan for Shopping Centers on page 200. Mr. Barth stated
64 that the for sale, for lease and for rent signs have all been addressed in the UDO Section 10.23 –
65 Signs Allowed Without A Permit under Section F on page 196. Mr. Barth added that there are
66 requirements and certain things that Samco Properties must meet as a part of a shopping center.
67 Mr. Watkins stated that he would like to prevent others from repeating the same issue as Samco
68 Properties by putting a time limit on the signage or by taking another procedure. Mr. Watkins
69 recommended adding the verbiage stating that if a business has a master sign then it needs to be
70 utilized.

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72 Mr. Watkins made a motion to add the following verbiage under the UDO Section 10.23-Signs
73 Allowed Without A Permit under Section F(2) after the last sentence on page 196: any
74 commercial property with a master sign offering all or part of the property for sale, for lease or
75 for rent may only appear on the master sign. No individual signs will be allowed.

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77 Mr. Watkins stated that posted signs such as the sign located at Food Lion should not intimidate
78 the Town’s decision to plan for its removal. Mr. Barth stated that currently that are no time
79 restrictions for a business that is selling, leasing, or renting space. Mr. Barth added that their sign
80 meets the requirement of 1/5 linear feet that fronts on the street and he is unsure how to proceed
81 with the issue at this time other than to outlaw all for sale signs. Mrs. Kan stated that the Code of
82 Ordinance Title XV: Land Usage under 154.112 Signs (A1) mentions that the purpose of the sign
83 regulation is to promote the safety, health, peace, dignity, and general welfare of the people,
84 therefore, it is up to the residents to determine whether is considered as visual clutter. Mr. Barth
85 stated that he will draft a letter regarding the signage and email it to the planning board 4 or 5
86 days in advance for review before officially sending it.

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93 **Board Comments**

94 Mr. Watkins stated that he is concerned about the appearance of Blue Waters Pool & Spas
95 property and asked for an update. Mr. Barth stated that he will make a visit to Blue Waters Pool
96 & Spas on Peak Street, Columbus NC to get an update and address the planning board's
97 concerns. Mrs. Kan stated the Code of Ordinance Title XV: Land Usage Chapter 154 - Zoning
98 under 154.113 Vending Machines mentions that all vending machines are hereafter prohibited
99 from town sidewalks on the following streets in the Central Business District: Mills Street, Ward
100 Street, Gibson Street and Courthouse Street, therefore, the beverage vending machine in front of
101 Bricks Pizza on Mills Street will need to be removed. Mrs. Elliott asked where the YMCA is
102 planning to put their sign to promote their upcoming opening. Mr. Barth stated that the sign for
103 the YMCA will be placed in front of Highway 108 right below the road to help fill the space as
104 much as they can.

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106 There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Elliott made a motion to adjourn.
107 Mr. Watkins seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.

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Cathy Elliott, Chairwoman

Stephanie Serrano, Administrative Assistant