

**Town of Waynesville Planning Board
Procedural Work Group
Meeting #1 (April 23) Summary Revised
May 28, 2026**

Present: Tommy Rose, Alex McKay, John Baus, Alex Mumby, Elizabeth Teague

Discussion of identified concerns and issues:

1. Generally
 - Public does not understand the different types of procedures, and what the expectations are for the types of public hearings.
 - Concern about public frustration and sense that they are not heard.
 - Concern raised for safety if people are upset.

2. Administrative Meetings
 - We want the public to speak and to let their feelings be heard.
 - Importantly, we want the public to speak to the developer.
 - Staff works with applications coming before the Board so that they are compliant with the ordinance – it feels like the Planning Board is just checking off on staff’s recommendations.
 - How does the public have opportunity to influence design?

3. Use of Comprehensive Plan and Consistency Statements
 - Public coming to a hearing does not understand differences between quasi-judicial, administrative and legislative, and how the Comprehensive Plan is applied.
 - Need guidance on how and when Comprehensive Plan applies to decisions.
 - Comprehensive Plan can be argued both ways – for conservation or for housing, either side could be argued. If the Plan just counts for legislative decisions why discuss it?
 - Staff recommendations are always in the affirmative. We should also allow for other viewpoints for how a project *is not consistent*. Find a way for staff to include both ways of interpretation or “pros and cons.”
 - Consistency Statements are subject to interpretation, and the goals can be argued either way.
 - How do we adjust the way we help the public to understand procedures generally?

4. Changes in procedures from Administrative from quasi-judicial as part of implementation of 160D.
 - Decreased the Planning Board’s influence because it took away the quasi-judicial procedure in major site plans and subdivisions.
 - Quasi-judicial allows for more control and influence in decisions - Planning Board can include conditions or ask for concessions. Can we go back to require quasi-judicial in more applications?
 - How can the Planning Board or Council have more influence over what gets permitted? If everything is administrative, then the Planning Board is essentially just checking boxes.
 - Public feels like the decisions have already been made and the public hearing feels like a useless exercise.

4. Developer presentations

- Would like to hear more from the developer. Staff does a presentation and then the developer just affirms what staff says – gives the impression that staff is doing the work for them.
- Do required neighborhood meetings prior to the formal hearing help? How do we get information out to the public ahead of the public hearing?
- Staff vets projects through the Technical Review process. Therefore, we know projects are compliant by the time they get to the Planning Board. Staff analysis of compliance with the ordinances makes it sound like staff is endorsing a project instead of just showing demonstrating compliance.

Ideas:

- Create a handout for the public to give out before a hearing so they understand. Could even be a poster in the room explaining what type of hearing or procedure is happening. (Example submitted by Tommy attached)
- Ask the developer to present first. Require more form the developer in terms of their application and presentation – make them answer the criteria for themselves and argue their case before the Board instead of relying on staff's analysis.
- Find ways to educate public about Waynesville's Comprehensive Plan and the LDS/zoning. Help people understand about the how the different types of hearings are implemented for different types of development.