# RIVER BEND PLANNING BOARD 51 Shoreline Drive, River Bend June 02, 2022 at 6:00pm <u>AGENDA</u>

# I. CALL TO ORDER – Egon Lippert

We welcome our visitors. A copy of the meeting package is available. If you want to address the board with general comments or priority issues, you have the opportunity to do so at this time. For comments or questions regarding a specific agenda item, please address the board as the item comes up.

# II. GENERAL VISITOR COMMENTS / PRIORITY ISSUES - All

- A. Discuss and vote on request to rezone approximately 100 acres at 403 Old Pollocksville Rd. (Craven County PIN 8-200-029) from R-20A to to PDR-SF (Planned Development Residential-Single Family) and PDR-MF (Planned Development Residential- Multi-Family)
- **B**. Discuss and vote on possible recommendation to Town Council, regarding short term rentals, in view of Wilmington, NC court decision. *Allison McCollum, Delane Jackson and Dave Baxter*

# **III. APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES –** Allison McCollum

## **IV. REPORTS**

- A. Summary of permits issued Allison McCollum
- B. Town Council Update Buddy Sheffield

## V. OLD BUSINESS – All

A. None at this time

## VI. NEW BUSINESS – All

A. Discuss and vote on recommendation to Board of Adjustment regarding Special Use Permit Request from Town of River Bend to build Public Works Building on 2 acre site at 1504 Plantation Drive near town's existing water tank. This use is not listed in Permitted Uses table. Police Station is the closest use and shall be used as comparison.

# VII. OTHER – All

A. Next meeting is scheduled for July 07, 2022 at 6:00pm

# VIII. CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT - All

# AGENDA ITEM

II A



## TOWN OF RIVER BEND

45 Shoreline Drive River Bend, NC 28562

T 252.638.3870 F 252.638.2580 www.riverbendnc.org

## **REZONING REQUEST**

1012 Date:

To: Town of River Bend 45 Shoreline Drive River Bend, NC 28562-8970

From:

Ellis Developments NC, CCC - Matthew Hook 6801 Fails of Neuse Rd Suite 108 Raleigh, NC Phone: 484-797-0627

matthe Cellisdeugroop.com

The undersigned owner of real property respectfully requests that the area described in the metes and bounds description attached hereto and further described in plot plan survey attached hereto be rezoned from  $\underline{220-A}$  to  $\underline{PDR-5F}$  Zoning Classification.

PDR-MF

The names and addresses of all owners of parcels of land within the property to be rezoned are as follows: Attached.

We certify that according to the Craven County tax listing map, all owners of parcels of land abutting the property to be rezoned have been notified by first class mail of our rezoning request. A list of all such owners is attached hereto.

\$\_\_\_\_\_\_ payment of filing fee is enclosed.

(Seal)

Attachments As noted above

TRB Form 21 (Rev. 6/13)

#### OWNER

Brown, Weldon Brown, Hazel Marie Dow, Kimberly Hargett Loftin, Anthony M & Angela K Sharf, Zinovy & Sandra B Bagayoko, Abdulaye & Fatou Stoler, Twilla M Whitney, Lawrence A & Constance R Frazer, Robert L & Carole P Trustees Lakemere Owners Association Inc Swaringen, Dianne Campbell, Kenneth T & Traci P Moran, Louis J & Claudia J Ewing, Linda & Richard Boulware, Keith E & Barbara J Elks, Sandra Mills Lippert, Egon Harrison, Nancy P Trofholz, Nadene G Georgantas, Jean M Kimmett, Suzanne D Gasparro, Barry & Flansburg, Rhonda Henson, Esther N Dougherty, Debra M Kearney, Edward J Young, Douglas A Wells, Deborah Elizabeth Baskin, Karen Marie Powell, Gloria J Maher, Thomas M & Delores Heath, Sam T Wedell, David A & Mary Anne James, Willa Mae Fitzgerald, Noreen C Porter, Roy M Town of River Bend Natusch, Cynthia & Robert Lund, Bryan M Donahue, Dana C & Nancy Smolinski, Holly Ann & Mary C Right of Supervi 320 N Carolina Dr Yagoda, Eric & Abby Pollick Taylor, Johnnie M Jr & Gail P Mills Kenneth Wayne

#### Mail Address 1

Mail Address 2 4507 Sherborn Ln Upper Marlboro, MD 2077: 1208 Colony Dr Apt 63 New Bern, NC 28562 319 Old Pollocksville Rd New Bern, NC 28562 301 Old Pollocksville Rd New Bern, NC 28562 110 Stillwater Ct New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 111 Stillwater Ct 109 Stillwater Ct New Bern, NC 28562 135 Canebrake Dr New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 129 Canebrake Dr PO Box 12384 New Bern, NC 28561 New Bern, NC 28562 333 Lakemere Dr 342 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 3603 Cashmere Ln New Bern, NC 28562 608A Lilliput Dr New Bern, NC 28562 336 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 334 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 332 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 330 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 328 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 326 Lakemere Dr 12536 Campbells Point E Sackets Hbr, NY 13685 Altamont, NY 12009 11 Sunset Dr 320 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 2162 Bees Ferry Rd Apt (Charleston, SC 29414 316 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 314 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 312 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 310 Lakemere Dr New Bern, NC 28562 Houston, TX 77008 1826 Stacy Crst New Bern, NC 28562 382 Lochbridge Dr 326 Lochbridge Dr New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 320 Lochbridge Dr 9903 24th Ave East Elmhurst, NY 11369 316 Lochbridge Dr New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 1202 Plantation Dr 45 Shoreline Dr New Bern, NC 28562 1401 Plantation Dr New Bern, NC 28562 1309 Plantation Dr New Bern, NC 28562 319 N Carolina Dr New Bern, NC 28562 New Bern, NC 28562 225 Pinewood Dr New Bern, NC 28562 228 Pinewood Dr New Bern, NC 28562 412 Old Pollocksville Rd New Bern, NC 28562

Barteau, David Allan Manthei, Rosanna Nofong, Kochamon Jarmon, Donald J & Elaine B Paul, Michael & Sheryl McKeon, Margarett Hardamon, Reginald Mattocks, Mary Elizabeth Jones, Bruce Anthony & Rose G Liland, Michael Jones, James D 410 Old Pollocksville Rd
408 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
2802 Monroe Dr
404 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
402 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
400 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
324 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
322 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
320 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
320 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562
42A Woodedge Ave Apt : Edison, NJ 08817
316 Old Pollocksville Rd
New Bern, NC 28562

All of that certain tract of land containing 166 acres, more or less, located in North Carolina, Craven County, No, 8 Township, and bounded on the North by the Trent Road; on the East by the E. C. Armstrong Estate; on the South by the lands of W. F. Clarke & Son, and on the West by the Miller-Henderson lands; said tract of land is more particularly described according to a plat prepared by B. M. Potter, Surveyor, in November, 1933, as follows, to-wit:

BEGINNING at an existing buggy axle found on the south right-of-way of Old Pollocksville Road (N.C.S.R. 1307), said axle having a Northing : 488,620.53' and Easting : 2,550,351.69' in the North Carolina State Plane Coordinate System, single zone, North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) 2011 Epoch;

THENCE (1) North 47°02'51" East, 62.02 feet to the beginning of a curve concave southeasterly, said curve has a radius of 950.00 feet and a chord bearing North 54°43'58" East for a distance of 254.10';

THENCE (2) northeasterly along said curve through a central angle of 15°22'15" an arc distance of 254.86 feet to a point of tangency;

THENCE (3) North 62°25'06" East, 576.20 feet to a calculated point; THENCE (4) South 27°34'54" East, 225.00 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (5) North 62°25'06" East, 200.00 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (6) North 62°25'06" East, 207.50 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (7) North 62°25'06" East, 11.82 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (8) South 46°38'08" East, 213.72 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (9) South 46°33'50" East, 10.10 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (10) South 46°35'28" East, 96.05 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (11) South 46°35'28" East, 28.65 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (12) South 18°33'01" East, 68.58 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (13) South 47°08'02" East, 26.77 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (14) South 47°08'02" East, 43.39 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (15) South 43°53'18" East, 35.53 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (16) South 43°53'18" East, 72.79 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (17) South 43°53'18" East, 31.54 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (18) South 42°07'30" East, 25.60 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (19) South 39°08'39" East, 77.97 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (20) South 37°14'30" East, 55.56 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (21) South 8°31'55" East, 162.76 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (22) South 2°08'38" East, 47.72 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (23) South 46°18'09" West, 97.80 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (24) South 46°18'09" West, 95.26 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (25) South 46°18'09" West, 30.24 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (26) South 14°52'15" East, 97.50 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (27) South 14°52'15" East, 64.44 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (28) South 14°52'15" East, 63.03 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (29) South 14°52'15" East, 60.81 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (30) South 14°52'15" East, 61.25 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (31) South 14°52'15" East, 60.96 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (32) South 14°52'15" East, 63.22 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (33) South 14°52'15" East, 60.87 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (34) South 14°52'15" East, 61.00 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (35) South 14°50'25" East, 60.93 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (36) South 14°51'47" East, 29.50 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (37) South 14°51'47" East, 33.53 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (38) South 14°55'03" East, 50.50 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (39) South 9°25'52" East, 71.63 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (40) South 9°27'01" East, 144.55 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (41) South 9°27'25" East, 46.41 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (42) North 76°39'53" East, 154.56 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (43) North 76°46'03" East, 36.47 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (44) South 7°11'14" East, 161.87 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (45) South 7°37'02" East, 111.25 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (46) South 36°46'39" East, 24.89 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (47) South 36°57'37" East, 72.60 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (48) South 9°48'21" East, 42.42 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (49) South 9°09'01" East, 19.40 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (50) South 32°22'44" East, 53.60 feet to an iron pipe; THENCE (51) South 15°23'14" East, 54.94 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (52) South 18°22'21" East, 4.79 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (53) South 0°16'18" West, 137.59 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (54) South 2°29'21" East, 6.49 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (55) South 6°31'11" East, 49.76 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (56) South 9°17'59" East, 17.27 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (57) South 13°14'01" West, 72.45 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (58) South 13°49'59" East, 171.16 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (59) South 76°10'01" West, 182.91 feet to the beginning of a curve concave northerly, said curve has a radius of 680.00 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (60) westerly along said curve through a central angle of 18°05'00" an arc distance of 214.62 feet to a point of tangency;

THENCE (61) North 85°44'59" West, 100.30 feet to the beginning of a curve concave southerly, said curve has a radius of 645.00 feet;

THENCE (62) westerly along said curve through a central angle of 39°19'00" an arc distance of 442.60 feet to a point of tangency;

THENCE (63) South 54°56'12" West, 100.00 feet to the beginning of a curve concave northwesterly, said curve has a radius of 680.01 feet;

THENCE (64) southwesterly along said curve through a central angle of 20°06'38" an arc distance of 238.68 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (65) North 14°39'38" West, 296.24 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (66) South 74°49'22" West, 251.15 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE (67) South 74°49'22" West, 5.00 feet to a calculated point;

THENCE (68) North 15°41'38" West, 986.82 feet to an iron pipe;

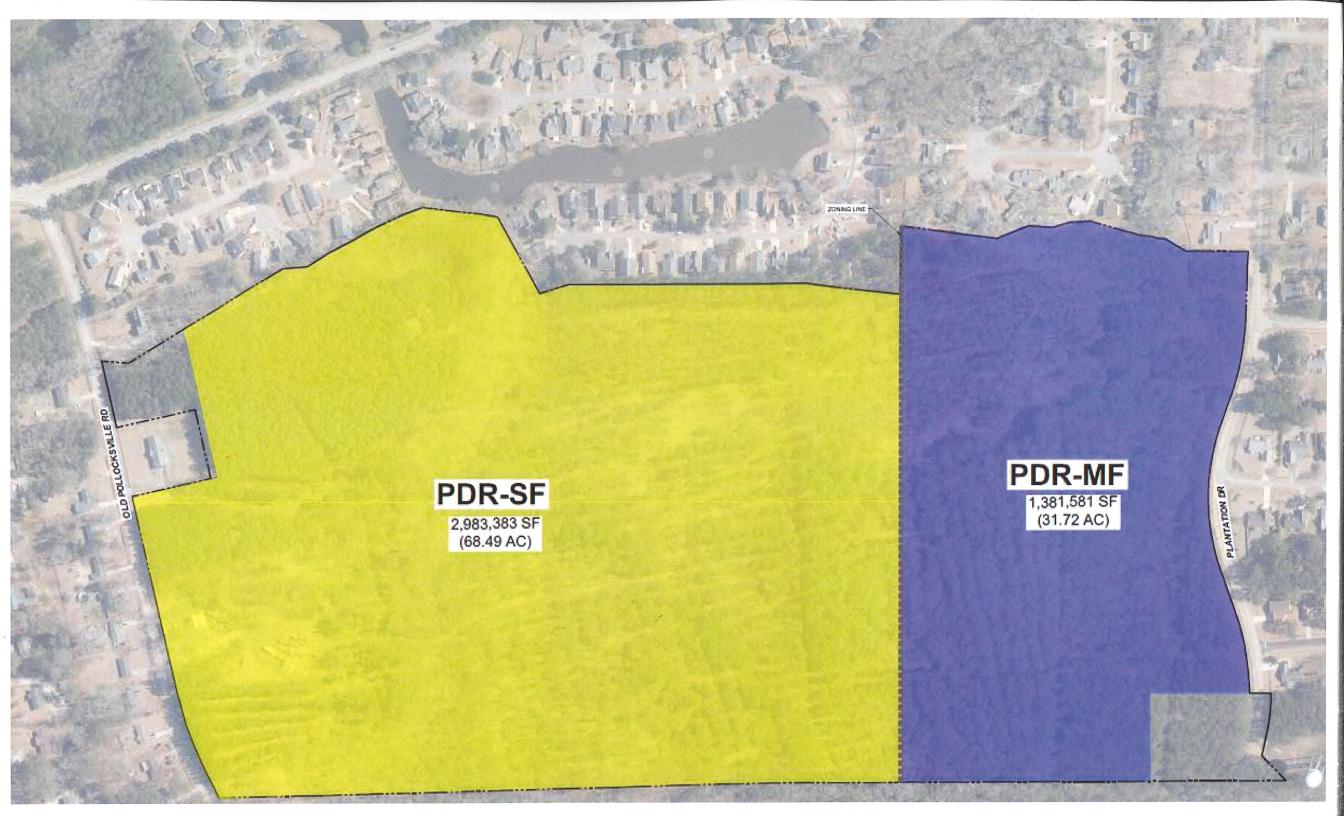
THENCE (69) North 15°41'38" West, 158.02 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (70) North 15°41'38" West, 998.95 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (71) North 15°41'38" West, 229.30 feet to an iron pipe;

THENCE (72) North 15°41'38" West, 237.72 feet to the POINT of BEGINNING;

Containing 4,405,692 square feet or 101.1408 acres, more or less.



#### § 15.02.124 DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS.

For convenience in the administration of this chapter, there hereby is established and made a part of this chapter the following schedule of district use regulations.

#### SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

**KEY:** 

P – Use permitted by right

SU – Special use permitted upon approval by Board of Adjustment after recommendation of the Planning Board

Blank/Unlisted - Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR-SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD-PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Accessory Building	Р	Р	Р	Р	SU	SU	SU	Р	e Settin ti over
Adult Day Care			102		Р	P	Р	10.50	G
Bakery, Retail						Р	Р		G
Financial Services						Р	Р	1,0422	G
Barber Shop/Beauty Shop		5				Р	Р		G
Boats and Trailer Sales		i c		Sec.		SU	SU		G
Cabinet, Woodworking or Upholstery Shops						Р	Р		G
Child Day Care						SU		-	
Churches	SU	SU	SU	SU	Р	SU	SU		E
Clubs and Lounges, Private					Р	SU	SU		F
Clothing Store						Р	Р		G
Computer Sales and Service						Р	Р		G
Dairy Bar and Ice Cream Parlors						Р	Р	Sent in	G
Drug Store		6				Р	Р	a asilyn	F
Dry Cleaners/Drop Off/Pick Up Only						Р	Р		G

### SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

## KEY:

P – Use permitted by right

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Blank/Unlisted - Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR-SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD-PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Dwellings, Single-Family	Р	Р	Р	Р		SU	iin e		A
Dwellings, 2-Family				Р		SU			A
Dwellings, Multi-Family			ua	Р		SU		, enitsia	A
Fire Department Buildings	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	- 1	F
Fitness Center						Р	Р		G
Florists/Gift Shop						Р	Р		G
Furniture Store						Р	Р		G
Golf Course	SU	SU	SU	SU	Р	SU	SU	Million Provincia	F
Grocery Store		0				Р	Р		G
Hardware Sales						P	Р		G
Home Occupations	Р	Р	Р		P		2		G
Jewelry and Watch Repair	12					Р	Р		G
Libraries	SU	SU	SU	SU		Р	Р		G
Marina	n de la compañía de la					Р		- - 	G
Nursing Home and Rest Home					Р				G
Office for Business, Professional and Personal Services						Р	Ρ		G
Pet Shops (excluding Veterinary Services)		9			-	Р	Р		G

#### SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

KEY:

P – Use permitted by right

SU – Special use permitted upon approval by Board of Adjustment after recommendation of the Planning Board

Blank/Unlisted – Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR-SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD-PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Pharmacy						Р	Р		G
Photo Shop/Supply						Р	Р		G
Police Station	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU		F
Public Enterprise**	SU	SU	SU	SU		SU	SU		F
Public Utility	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU		F
Restaurants					Р	Р	Р		F
Schools	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU				F
Service Station						SU	SU		J
Shoe Sales and Repair						Р	Р		G
Sporting Goods Sales						Р	Р		G
Storage Rental Units/Areas	*					Р	Р		G
Travel Agency						Р	Р		G
Utility Tanks, Pumps, Electrical Substations & Related Services	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	
Wholesale and/or Retail Janitorial Sales & Services						SU	SU		F
Youth Center					Р	Р	Р		G

\*\* As defined by G.S. § 160A-311

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

Amended 11/18/10

# AGENDA ITEM

II B

## IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NORTH CAROLINA

## 2022-NCCOA-210

## No. COA21-192

## Filed 5 April 2022

New Hanover County, No. 19-CVS-4028

## DAVID SCHROEDER and PEGGY SCHROEDER, Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF WILMINGTON and CITY OF WILMINGTON BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, Defendants.

Appeal and cross-appeal from a judgment and stay entered 15 October 2020 by

Judge R. Kent Harrell in New Hanover County Superior Court. Heard in the Court

of Appeals 17 November 2021.

Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP, by John E. Branch, III, and Andrew D. Brown, and Institute for Justice, by Ari Bargil and Adam Griffin, for Plaintiffs-Appellees/Cross-Appellants.

Poyner Spruill LLP, by N. Cosmo Zinkow and Robert E. Hagemann, and Deputy City Attorney Meredith T. Everhart, for Defendant-Appellant/Cross-Appellee City of Wilmington.

INMAN, Judge.

The North Carolina Constitution establishes the State as sovereign, and local governments may exercise only those powers that our General Assembly "deem[s] advisable" through legislative enactment. N.C. Const. art. VII, § 1. When a legal question arises regarding the scope of a local government's authority, it is the

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judiciary's duty to interpret the enabling law and apply it in accordance with the General Assembly's intent. *Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation v. N.C. Comm'n of Indian Affairs*, 145 N.C. App. 649, 653, 551 S.E.2d 535, 538 (2001). And when a local government enacts an ordinance asserting powers that exceed those granted by the General Assembly, we are compelled to invalidate the unauthorized action. *King v. Town of Chapel Hill*, 367 N.C. 400, 411, 758 S.E.2d 364, 373 (2014).

David and Peggy Schroeder ("Plaintiffs") dispute the authority of the City of Wilmington ("Wilmington") to enact a zoning ordinance restricting short-term rentals through a registration and lottery process. Plaintiffs presented several state law and constitutional law rationales to the trial court. The trial court dismissed Plaintiffs' constitutional challenges but agreed that the zoning ordinance was entirely invalid based on a statute and its amended recodification precluding local governments from "requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property . . . to register rental property with the local government." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c) (2017), *recodified as amended at* N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207(c) (2021).

¶ 3 The trial court stayed its judgment, and both parties appeal. Wilmington challenges the judgment and Plaintiffs challenge the dismissal of their constitutional

 $\P 2$ 

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claims and the entry of a stay.<sup>1</sup>

After careful review, we affirm the trial court's judgment that the registration and lottery provisions of Wilmington's ordinance are invalid under Section 160D-1207(c) of our General Statutes. But we reverse the portion of the judgment striking provisions of the Wilmington ordinance that are not prohibited by statute and are severable from the invalid provisions. Because our holding renders moot Plaintiffs' constitutional challenges to the ordinance, we do not reach Plaintiffs' cross-appeal.

## I. FACTUAL AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

¶ 5

¶ 6

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The record below and our General Statutes disclose the following:

## A. The General Assembly Restricts Permitting, Permission, and Registration Requirements for Residential Rentals

In 2011, the General Assembly enacted a statute prohibiting cities from penalizing or restraining the rental of residential real property absent "reasonable cause." 2011 N.C. Sess. Laws 1034, 1034, ch. 281. That statute, Section 160A-424(c),<sup>2</sup> prohibited cities from "requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property to obtain any permit or permission from the city to lease or rent." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Plaintiffs moved this Court to dissolve the stay by separate motion, and we denied that motion by order entered 20 April 2021. Because Plaintiffs concede that we have already decided this issue against them and they advance their arguments strictly for preservation purposes, we do not revisit that issue in this opinion.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Our General Statutes are organized by subject matter into chapters, which may be further subdivided into subchapters, articles, parts, or subparts. A "Section" is the text of the law itself, and sections are placed within the chapters and their various subdivisions.

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(2011). The statute provided an exception allowing cities to "levy a fee for residential rental property *registration* under subsection (c)" if the rental units in question had a sufficient number of local ordinance violations or were hotspots for criminality. *Id.* § 160A-424(d) (emphasis added). Subsection (d) further allowed cities "that charge[d] registration fees for all residential rental properties as of June 1, 2011" to continue to do so according to a specific fee schedule. *Id.* 

As the land development statutes were codified at the time Section 160A-424(c) was originally enacted, municipal land development regulatory powers were found in Article 19, "Planning and Regulation of Development," of Chapter 160A, "Cities and Towns." County land development regulatory powers were located in Article 18, "Planning and Regulation of Development," in Chapter 153A, "Counties." Thus, the statutes authorizing local governments to regulate land uses were codified in two separate chapters, depending on the body politic. Section 160A-424(c), as a statute governing municipalities, was located in Part 5, "Building Inspection," of Article 19 in Chapter 160A. Organizationally, this placed Section 160A-424(c) apart from our municipal zoning laws, which were located in Part 3, "Zoning," of Article 19 in Chapter 160A.

¶ 8

In 2017, the General Assembly added language to Section 160A-424(c) to bar cities from "requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property to obtain any permit or permission . . . to lease or rent . . . *or to register rental property with the city*." N.C.

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Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c) (2017) (emphasis added). The statute continued the exceptions for properties that repeatedly violated building codes or were sites of substantial criminal activity. *Id.* The amended statute repealed the subsection that allowed the uniform rental registration programs predating June 2011 to continue, ending the authorization of those programs. *Id.* § 160A-424(d).

#### **B.** Wilmington Regulates Short-Term Rentals Through Registration

Against this statutory backdrop, Wilmington sought to protect its neighborhoods and housing market from the impact of widespread short-term rentals. Wilmington's City Council identified concerns including "undue commercialization and disruption to the primary and overarching purpose of a neighborhood being first and foremost a residential community, where people actually live," and the possibility that "inordinate reductions in the supply of housing available for standard rentals for the citizens of Wilmington could have a destabilizing effect on housing affordability." These concerns led Wilmington to enact a zoning ordinance (the "Ordinance") in January 2019 regulating short-term rentals within city limits in an effort to balance their negative effects against the benefits of a "properly regulated" short-term rental market—including "assisting property owners to keep properties in good repair, which, in turn, stabilizes home ownership, maintains property values, and strengthens the economy of the City."

¶ 10

The Ordinance restricted short-term rentals to specific zoning districts,

¶9

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required at least 400 feet of separation between short-term rentals, and capped the total percentage of short-term rentals at two percent of residential parcels within Wilmington's 1945 Corporate Limits and two percent of residential parcels outside the same. To implement the separation and cap requirements, the Ordinance required short-term rental operators to register their properties. Initial registrations were to be doled out in conformity with the separation and cap requirements by lottery. Registrations would terminate if not renewed annually, upon transfer of the subject property, or for violations of law, and registrations filed after the initial lottery would be received and processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Existing short-term rental operators who failed to obtain a registration by lottery were required to cease short-term rentals by the end of a one-year amortization period. Other sections of the Ordinance imposed health, safety, and similar requirements, such as requiring short-term rental operators to conspicuously post the dates for garbage collection and the non-emergency telephone number for the Wilmington Police Department.

their property but lost in the initial lottery, as another property within 400 feet of

## C. Plaintiffs' Challenge

¶ 11 Plaintiffs own a townhome in the Lions Gate community of Wilmington, which they used as a short-term rental without any reported problems prior to the enactment of the Ordinance. After the Ordinance was passed, Plaintiffs registered

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their townhouse drew a lower lottery number. Plaintiffs appealed to the Wilmington Board of Adjustment, which upheld Wilmington's denial of registration.

With no other administrative avenues available to them, Plaintiffs filed a declaratory judgment action in October 2019 to challenge the validity of the Ordinance, alleging it violated Section 160A-424(c)'s prohibition against ordinances "that would require any owner or manager of rental property to obtain any permit or permission from the city to lease or rent residential real property or to register rental property with the city."<sup>3</sup>

## D. The General Assembly Reorganizes and Recodifies Local Land Use Regulatory Statutes

¶ 13

In July 2019, shortly before Plaintiffs filed suit, the General Assembly amended and recodified statutes concerning local government regulation of shortterm rentals, including Section 160A-424(c). On 1 July 2019, the General Assembly enacted Session Law 2019-73 to explicitly place vacation rentals under the ambit of Section 160A-424. 2019 N.C. Sess. Laws 300, 300, ch. 73, § 1. Ten days later, the General Assembly amended and recodified Section 160A-424 as part of a session law

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Plaintiffs also brought several facial and as-applied challenges to the Ordinance under the North Carolina Constitution and have cross-appealed the later dismissal of those claims to this Court. Because we hold that the allegedly unconstitutional portions of the Ordinance are preempted on statutory grounds, we dismiss as moot Plaintiffs' cross-appeal arguing the unconstitutionality of the Ordinance. *Chavez v. McFadden*, 374 N.C. 458, 467, 843 S.E.2d 139, 147 (2020).

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captioned, "An Act to Clarify, Consolidate, and Reorganize the Land-Use Regulatory

Laws of the State." 2019 N.C. Sess. Laws 424, 424, ch. 111 (hereinafter "the Act").

Part II of the Act-which contains the recodification of Section 160A-424-is titled

"Provisions to Reorganize, Consolidate, Modernize, and Clarify Statutes Regarding

Local Planning and Development Regulation." Id. at 439, ch. 111.

14 Part II of the Act at issue in this case provides:

. . . The intent of the General Assembly by enactment of Part II of this act is to collect and organize existing statutes regarding local planning and development into a single Chapter of the General Statues and to consolidate the statutes affecting cities and counties.

. . . The intent of the General Assembly by enactment of Part II of this act is to neither eliminate, diminish, enlarge, nor expand the authority of local governments to exact land, construction, or money as part of the development approval process or otherwise materially alter the scope of local authority to regulate development . . . .

*Id.* at 439, ch. 111, §§ 2.1.(e)–(f). Part II relocated the previously scattered patchwork of planning and development statutes into a single new chapter, Chapter 160D. *Id.* at 439, ch. 111, § 2.4. The Act also expressly provides that "Part II of this act clarifies and restates the intent of existing law and applies to ordinances adopted before, on, and after the effective date." *Id.* at 547, ch. 111, § 3.2. As an express clarifying amendment of declared retroactive effect, the Act's recodification retroactively applied to Wilmington's Ordinance.

¶ 14

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The new Chapter 160D is organized into 14 Articles. Chapter 160D maintains the structural separation between zoning and building code inspection that existed in the previous codification of our land regulation statutes. Zoning is now found in Article 7, "Zoning Regulation," N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 160D-701, et seq.; building code enforcement in Article 11, "Building Code Enforcement," id. §§ 160D-1101, et seq.; and minimum housing standards in Article 12, "Minimum Housing Codes." Id. §§ 160D-1201, et seq. The Act recodified Section 160A-424 as Section 160D-1207, placing it among the minimum housing standard statutes in Article 12.4 Id. §§ 160D-1201, et seq.

¶ 16

The General Assembly also modified the language regarding the prohibitions against permitting, permissions, and registrations applicable to residential rentals. The new statute, with additions marked in bold and deletions struck through, now reads:

> In no event may a city local government do any of the following: (i) adopt or enforce any ordinance that would require any owner or manager of rental property to obtain any permit or permission under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter from the city local government to lease or rent residential real property or to register rental property with the city local government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The sections in Chapter 160D are generally numbered sequentially according to their placement in the Chapter. The amended statutory language at issue here is found in the seventh section of Article 12 in Chapter 160D, hence Section 160D-1207.

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Compare N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c) (2017), with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207(c) (2021).

## E. The Trial Court Concludes the Ordinance Is Preempted by Statute

Wilmington moved to dismiss Plaintiffs' complaint. The trial court dismissed Plaintiffs' constitutional claims by order entered 11 March 2020. Wilmington then filed its answer and moved for summary judgment in its favor, while Plaintiffs moved to amend their complaint to explicitly address, among other things, the changes to and recodification of Section 160A-424(c) as Section 160D-1207(c). The trial court denied this motion by order entered on 3 September 2020, and on 15 September 2020, the trial court granted summary judgment to Plaintiffs, declaring the entirety of the Ordinance void based on the conclusion that Section 160A-424(c) and its revised codification at Section 160D-1207(c) unambiguously prohibited Wilmington's shortterm rental registration scheme.

¶ 18

 $\P 17$ 

Wilmington moved for a stay of the trial court's judgment shortly after entry. The trial court granted that motion as to all parties except Plaintiffs who, by statute, enjoyed a stay of the Ordinance's enforcement against them during litigation. The trial court's ruling on summary judgment and the entry of the stay were then consolidated into a final judgment entered 15 October 2020, and both parties filed timely notices of appeal.

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## II. <u>ANALYSIS</u>

This appeal requires us to resolve three competing interpretations and applications of Sections 160A-424(c) and its successor statute 160D-1207(c): by the trial court, by Plaintiffs, and by Wilmington. Section 160A-424(c) prohibited Wilmington from enacting an ordinance that required a short-term rental operator "to obtain any permit or permission from the city to lease or rent . . . or to register rental property with the city." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c). When it recodified the statute as Section 160D-1207(c), the legislature added nine words that have spawned the differing interpretations before us, prohibiting Wilmington from requiring short-term rental operators "to obtain any permit or permission under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter . . . to lease or rent . . . or to register rental property." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207 (emphasis added).<sup>5</sup>

¶ 20

The trial court concluded that Section 160D-1207(c) prohibits Wilmington from requiring: (1) permits and permissions to rent under Articles 11 and 12; and (2) all registrations of rental property. Plaintiffs construe the new language to prohibit (1) all permits to lease or rent; (2) permissions to rent under Articles 11 and 12; and (3) all registrations of rental property as a condition to rent. Wilmington advocates a third reading, contending the added cross-reference to Articles 11 and 12 modifies the

 $<sup>^5</sup>$  Section 160D-1207 includes several specific exceptions that are not at issue in this case, so we do not address them.

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scope of "permits," "permissions," *and* registrations, so that local governments are authorized to use their zoning powers—found in Article 7—to implement registration schemes on short-term rentals.

 $\P 21$ 

After reviewing the language of the statutes, we hold that Wilmington's registration requirements for rentals, and those provisions of the ordinance inseparable from them, are prohibited by state statute and therefore invalid, and we affirm the trial court's judgment in this respect. However, because several of the Ordinance's provisions are severable from the invalid registration provisions, we reverse the trial court's judgment in part and remand for entry of a judgment that invalidates the registration requirement and those provisions insevarable from it, but leaves the severable sections, described below, intact.

## A. Standard of Review

We review the trial court's entry of summary judgment *de novo*. *JVC Enters., LLC v. City of Concord*, 376 N.C. 782, 2021-NCSC-14, ¶8. Summary judgment is proper when there are no genuine issues of material fact and judgment in favor of a party is appropriate as a matter of law. *Id.* The same *de novo* standard applies to questions of statutory interpretation. *Id.* 

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# B. Section 160A-424(c) Unambiguously Prohibited Wilmington's Registration Ordinance

When the Ordinance was first enacted, Section 160A-424(c) generally precluded cities from "requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property . . . to obtain any permit or permission . . . to lease or rent residential real property or to register rental property with the city." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c) (2017). Thus, the statute prohibited two categories of regulation: (1) permits or permissions to lease or rent; and (2) registrations of rental property. The statutory language is in no way ambiguous, so it must be afforded its plain effect without reference to canons of statutory interpretation. *See, e.g., Jeffries v. Cnty. of Harnett,* 259 N.C. App. 473, 488, 817 S.E.2d 36, 48 (2018) ("[W]hen the language of a statute is clear and unambiguous, there is no room for judicial construction and the courts must give it its plain and definite meaning." (citation and quotation marks omitted)). The Ordinance is prohibited by the statute's straightforward language to the extent it requires Plaintiffs "to register rental property with the city." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-424(c).

Wilmington asserts that Section 160A-424(c) was only intended to limit registration requirements in the context of building code inspections—not zoning by pointing out that it was included in a part of our General Statutes that, per its title, related to municipal building inspections. But, because Section 160A-424(c) is

¶ 23

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unambiguous, our analysis begins and ends with the plain meaning of the text, and we need not consult its placement in a building inspection statute to discern the legislature's intent. *Appeal of Forsyth County*, 285 N.C. 64, 71, 203 S.E.2d 51, 55 (1974) ("The law is clear that captions of a statute cannot control when the text is clear." (citation omitted)); *First Bank v. S&R Grandview*, *L.L.C.*, 232 N.C. App. 544, 551, 755 S.E.2d 393, 397 (2014) (noting that "the placement of a statute within an act is less probative of legislative intent than the plain language of the statute itself" and holding the placement of a plain and unambiguous statute had no bearing on the interpretation of its plain language). *But see Ray v. N.C. Dept. of Transp.*, 366 N.C. 1, 8, 727 S.E.2d 675, 681 (2012) (observing that "even when the language of a statute is plain, the title of an act should be considered in ascertaining the intent of the legislature" where there was no question as to the plain meaning of a statutory amendment but only whether the amendment was intended to apply retroactively or prospectively) (citation and quotation marks omitted)).

## C. Recodification as Section 160D-1207(c) Did Not Alter the Restriction Against Registrations

¶ 25 Our review of Section 160D-1207(c), in context with the rest of Chapter 160D and together with Section 160A-424(c)'s prior unambiguous language, leads us to hold that the registration provisions of the Ordinance are invalid. We hold that Section 160D-1207(c) continues to impose a disjunctive list of two prohibitions, restricting

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local governments from:

requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property [1] to obtain any permit or permission under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter from the local government to lease or rent residential real property or [2] to register rental property with the local government....

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207(c). The Ordinance's registration provisions thus remain preempted by statute.

This reading of Section 160D-1207(c) avoids any violence to the statutory language and structure. It also continues to treat "permit or permission . . . to lease or rent" as a single category of prohibited regulatory action separate from "registrations"—just as was demanded by the unambiguous language of its predecessor statute, Section 160A-424(c).

Treating "permit or permission" of a like kind and as a single categorical phrase also accords with the construction of Chapter 160D itself. Article 11's statutes explicitly refer to "permits" and other approval mechanisms. Except for the prohibition against permits at issue here, Article 12's statutes do not expressly refer to "permits," but they do contemplate other forms of governmental approvals, *i.e.*, permissions. *Compare* N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 160D-1101, *et seq.* (providing for building code enforcement powers through the issuance of building permits and other forms of written approvals for work), *with* N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 160D-1201, *et seq.* (allowing for adoption and enforcement of minimum housing code ordinances without specifically

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referencing permitting).<sup>6</sup> Thus, applying the statutory cross-reference to both "permit or permission" and treating them together results in a general prohibition against requiring government approval to lease or rent, however required under Articles 11 or 12, that aligns with the structure of those Articles. *See, e.g., Elec. Supply Co. of Durham, Inc. v. Swain Elec. Co.,* 328 N.C. 651, 656, 403 S.E.2d 291, 294 (1991) ("[W]e are guided by the structure of the statute and certain canons of statutory construction." (citations omitted)).

 $\P 28$ 

We acknowledge that this reading appears, in some sense, to conflict with the provisions of Chapter 160D's enabling session law that express an intention to clarify, rather than change, the law. But every interpretation before this Court results in some substantive alteration, as each imposes some restriction where the prior unambiguous language of Section 160A-424(c) contained none.<sup>7</sup> In this circumstance, we must attempt to construe the provisions of Chapter 160D's enabling session law together, and "harmonize such statutes, if possible, and give effect to each." *Town of* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For example, Section 160D-1112 in Article 11 provides that post-permit changes to construction are only allowed if they "are clearly permissible under the State Building Code" or are made pursuant to "specific written approval of the proposed changes . . . [by] the inspection department." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1112 (2021). Article 12, meanwhile, allows a local administrative tribunal to close dwellings unfit for human habitation by order—rather than permit—until repairs are completed and habitation may resume. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1203(3)(a) (2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ironically, the "clarifying" changes in Section 160D-1207 have now rendered the statute ambiguous. *See Winkler v. N.C. State Bd. of Plumbing, Heating & Fire Sprinkler Contractors*, 374 N.C. 726, 730, 843 S.E.2d 206, 211 (2020) (holding a statute was ambiguous where "the provision at issue is equally *unsusceptible* of each proposed interpretation").

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Blowing Rock v. Gregorie, 243 N.C. 364, 371, 90 S.E.2d 898, 904 (1956).

Our reading of Section 160D-1207(c) seeks to harmonize the clarifying intent of the legislature with the imposition of a new limitation on local government authority to the extent possible. It aligns with and continues the clear original legislative intent, previously expressed in Section 160A-424(c), to provide two disjunctive restrictions: (1) prohibiting permits and permissions to lease or rent (now clarified as permits or permissions pursuant to Articles 11 or 12), and (2) prohibiting registrations of rental properties. In other words, Section 160A-424(c) unambiguously restricted permits or permissions to the same and equal extent, and our reading of Section 160D-1207(c) continues to treat them identically. Similarly, Section 160A-424(c) treated the restriction against permits and permissions separately from the prohibition against registrations, and our interpretation of Section 160D-1207(c) maintains this division, as we do not apply the statutory crossreference to Articles 11 and 12 inserted into the clause restricting permits and permissions as applying to registrations. As discussed below, neither interpretation of Section 160D-1207(c) suggested by the parties allows for this same symmetry when compared to the original, unambiguous language contained in Section 160A-424(c).

¶ 29

¶ 30

In sum, we hold that the General Assembly enacted Section 160D-1207(c) to clarify that the restriction against permits or permissions to lease or rent originally found in Section 160A-424(c) applied only to the government approvals now found in

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Articles 11 and 12. The language added in Section 160D-1207(c) does not suggest that the legislature intended to modify the structure of the previous unambiguous statute precluding registrations generally, nor does it suggest treating "permission[s]...to lease or rent" as a separate category of prohibition from "permit[s]...to lease or rent." We agree with the trial court's interpretation of Section 160D-1207(c) as prohibiting local governments from requiring a short-term rental owner to obtain a permit to rent under Articles 11 or 12, a permission to rent under the same Articles, or to register the property as a rental with the government.<sup>8</sup> The provisions of Wilmington's Ordinance requiring such a registration—as well as any provisions that are inseverable from that initial registration requirement—are preempted by Section 160D-1207(c) and its unambiguous predecessor Section 160A-424(c).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> We do not interpret Sections 160A-424(c) or 160D-1207(c) as exempting rental properties from all zoning or permitting requirements; as Plaintiffs conceded at oral argument, even their reading would not preclude Wilmington from zoning or requiring Plaintiffs to obtain a building permit to construct an addition to their property. Our reading does not prohibit these actions either and only limits "permit[s] . . . *under Article 11 or Article 12 . . . to lease or rent.*" N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207(c) (emphasis added).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Wilmington asserts that our interpretation would allow it to replace "register" with "permit" in the Ordinance and reenact it under Article 7 without violating Section 160D-1207(c). But such a hypothetical ordinance is not before us today and would be open to legal challenges asserting that the statute's language should be applied to reach any "permit" that is, in all practical effect, a registration otherwise barred by the statute. *Cf. Mazda Motors of America, Inc. v. Southwestern Motors, Inc.*, 296 N.C. 357, 361, 250 S.E.2d 250, 253 (1979) (" '[W]here a literal interpretation of the language of a statute will lead to absurd results, or contravene the manifest purpose of the Legislature, as otherwise expressed, the reason and

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## **D.** The Parties' Preferred Interpretations Fail

¶ 31 In adopting the trial court's interpretation of Section 160D-1207(c), we reject

the competing interpretations proposed by the parties.

¶ 32 Plaintiffs' proposed interpretation of the statute would rework the language

and punctuation of the statute in the following manner, reflected in bold, to provide

that local governments are prohibited from:

requir[ing] any owner or manager of rental property[:] [1] to obtain any permit [from the local government to lease or rent residential real property;] or [2] [to obtain] permission under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter from the local government to lease or rent residential real property[;] or [3] to register rental property with the local government [to lease or rent residential real property]....

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-1207(c).

¶ 33 Plaintiffs' proffered interpretation—which they contend is the only unambiguous reading—requires a substantial revision of the statutory language; truly unambiguous statutes require no modification to be given their plain effect. *See In re Banks*, 295 N.C. 236, 239, 244 S.E.2d 386, 388-89 (1978) ("When the language

purpose of the law shall control and the strict letter thereof shall be disregarded.'" (quoting *State v. Barksdale*, 181 N.C. 621, 625 107 S.E. 505, 507 (1921))). Because Wilmington's hypothetical ordinance is not before us, we decline to resolve whether such an ordinance would be preempted by Section 160D-1207(c). *See Chavez*, 374 N.C. at 467, 843 S.E.2d at 147 (noting our appellate courts do not " 'determine matters purely speculative, enter anticipatory judgments, declare social status, deal with theoretical problems, give advisory opinions, answer moot questions, adjudicate academic matters, provide for contingencies which may hereafter arise, or give abstract opinions'" (citation omitted)).

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of a statute is clear and unambiguous, . . . the courts must give the statute its plain and definite meaning, and are without power to interpolate, or superimpose, provisions and limitations not contained therein."); *Lunsford v. Mills*, 367 N.C. 618, 623, 766 S.E.2d 297, 301 (2014) (noting that, in applying an unambiguous statute, "it is our duty to give effect to the words actually used in a statute and not to delete words used or to insert words not used"). And Plaintiffs offer no rule of grammar or construction that would allow us to transpose the modifier "to lease or rent" to the later restriction on registrations. Plaintiffs acknowledge that the prohibition on registration "follows in a completely separate clause" from "permit[s] or permission[s] . . . to lease or rent."

¶ 34

Plaintiffs argue that "it is impossible to conceive of a permitting scheme that did not also in some sense require registration. . . . [A] bar on registrations would sweep up practically any permitting scheme." But if this is true, Plaintiffs' reading of the statute would render its provisions redundant: the legislature would not need to prohibit permits to lease or rent and registrations to lease or rent separately if a ban on the latter encompassed the former. *See State v. Morgan*, 372 N.C. 609, 614, 831 S.E.2d 254, 258 (2019) ("We are further guided in our decision by the canon of statutory construction that a statute may not be interpreted in a manner which would

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render any of its words superfluous." (citation and quotation marks omitted)).<sup>10</sup> And, because this interpretation presumes the legislature intended to create *three* categories of restrictions—(1) permits, (2) permissions under Articles 11 or 12, and (3) registrations—when the unambiguous language of Section 160A-424(c) only imposed *two*—(1) permits or permissions, and (2) registrations—we decline to adopt it as the "clarified" meaning of Section 160A-424(c).

We also disagree with Wilmington's argument that the statutory crossreferences added to Section 160D-1207(c) limit the general prohibition against registrations originally found in Section 160A-424(c). Under that reading, Section 160D-1207(c) prohibits local governments from:

> requir[ing] . . . any permit or permission under Article 11 or Article 12 . . . from the local government[:] [1] to lease or rent residential real property or[;] [2] to register rental property with the local government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Our reading of the statute does not result in this redundancy. By prohibiting "permit[s] or permission[s] under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter . . . to lease or rent" together, the General Assembly identified what permits it intended to curtail in Section 160D-1207(c). The registration prohibition is then read in context not to encompass all permits, but instead to prohibit any ordinance that requires the landowner to register as a residential rental with the government under any article and however imposed. *See City of Asheville v. Frost*, 370 N.C. 590, 592, 811 S.E.2d 560, 562 (2018) ("In interpreting a statute, a court must consider the statute as a whole and determine its meaning by reading it in its proper context and giving its words their ordinary meaning."). *Cf. Jeffries*, 259 N.C. App. at 493, 817 S.E.2d at 50 ("The interpretative canon of *noscitur a sociis* instructs that 'associated words explain and limit each other' and an ambiguous or vague term 'may be made clear and specific by considering the company in which it is found, and the meaning of the terms which are associated with it." (citation omitted)).

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Thus, Wilmington asserts that Sections 160A-424(c) and 160D-1207(c) prohibit, among other things, "permission[s]. . . to register" under Articles 11 and 12. But Wilmington's able counsel conceded in oral argument that no statute in Article 11 or 12—or anywhere else in the General Statutes—references a "permission to register" scheme.

¶ 36

Counsel for Wilmington offered a singular example of a "permission to register" regime, contending a city could restrict short-term rentals to certain zoning districts and then require short-term rental operators to register. In such a circumstance, only those in the proper zoning district would have "permission to register" as a shortterm rental.<sup>11</sup> But this example—the only one put forward by Wilmington—is selfdefeating: if "permission to register" only arises through the exercise of a local government's Article 7 zoning powers, there would be no need for the General Assembly to prohibit "permission to register" under Articles 11 and 12. We will not read the statute as prohibiting something that does not appear to exist. Such a reading runs counter to the mandate that "a statute must be construed, if possible, to give meaning and effect to all of its provisions." *HCA Crossroads Residential Ctrs. v. N.C. Dept. of Human Res.*, 327 N.C. 573, 578, 398 S.E.2d 466, 470 (1990). *See also* 

 $<sup>^{11}</sup>$  Even this example does not align with the statute when its words are given their common and ordinary meaning, as a zoning ordinance allowing for certain uses in a district would not put any positive burden on the landowner "to *obtain* . . . permission" to engage in those uses.

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*Estate of Jacobs v. State*, 242 N.C. App. 396, 402, 775 S.E.2d 873, 877 (2015) (declining to adopt an interpretation rendering a statute's provisions "superfluous or nonsensical").

## E. The Trial Court Erred in Invalidating the Entire Ordinance

- ¶ 37 Though we hold that the trial court correctly concluded that the Ordinance is invalid to the extent that it is preempted by Section 160D-1207(c), we disagree that the entirety of the Ordinance fails as a result.
- ¶ 38 Section 14 of the Ordinance states, "if any . . . portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severable and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof." We will give effect to this clause to preserve any provisions that are "not so interrelated or mutually dependent" on the invalid registration requirements that their enforcement "could not be done without reference to the offending part." *Fulton Corp. v. Faulkner*, 345 N.C. 419, 422, 481 S.E.2d 8, 9 (1997). Non-offending sections of the Ordinance that are "complete in [themselves] and capable of enforcement" will remain in effect. *Id.* Stated differently, "[w]e will sever a provision of an otherwise valid ordinance when the enacting body would have passed the ordinance absent the offending portion." *King*, 367 N.C. at 410, 758 S.E.2d at 372 (citation omitted).

¶ 39

Several provisions of the Ordinance are so intertwined with the invalid

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registration requirement that they are likewise preempted by Section 160D-1207(c), namely: (1) the cap and distance requirements and their predicate registration provisions, *i.e.*, the entirety of Secs. 18-331.2 and 18-331.4;<sup>12</sup> (2) the proof of shared parking or parking space rental and the submission of all shared parking agreements to the city attorney for approval prior to registration, as found in Sec. 18-331.5; (3) the registration termination provisions, *i.e.*, the entirety of Secs. 18-331.8-.9 and .13; (4) the requirement that a registration number be posted in a short-term rental, as found in Sec. 18-331.14(d); (5) Sec. 18-331.7's limited application to "registration, *i.e.*, the entirety of Secs. 18-331.17.

¶ 40

The remainder of the Ordinance does not require registration to be enforceable and gives effect to Wilmington's intent in enacting the Ordinance. For example, the requirement that each short-term rental operator provide one off-street parking space per bedroom does not require registration to be effective or enforceable; a customer may rent a short-term rental assuming compliance with this provision and inform Wilmington of a violation should parking prove inadequate. Similarly, the prohibition against cooking in bedrooms or the requirement that operators

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> To avoid possible confusion, our citations refer to Section 18-331 of Chapter 18, Article 6 of Wilmington's Land Development Code, as amended by the Ordinance and set forth in the record on appeal.

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conspicuously post the non-emergency telephone number for the Wilmington Police Department are not grounded in any registry.

We hold that the following provisions of the ordinance are *not* preempted by Section 160D-1207(c) and remain in effect: (1) the restriction of whole-house lodging to certain zoning districts, *i.e.*, the entirety of Sec. 18-331.1; (2) the requirement that there be at least one off-street parking space per bedroom, whether on-site or off-site through shared parking or parking space rental agreements, *i.e.*, the remaining portions of Sec. 18-331.5 not held preempted above; (3) the prohibition against variances by the board of adjustment in Sec. 18-331.6; (4) requirements that shortterm operators comply with all applicable laws, disallow events and large gatherings, maintain adequate insurance, keep adequate records, ensure refuse is appropriately stored and collected, refrain from preparing and serving food, and prohibit cooking in individual bedrooms *i.e.*, the entirety of Secs. 18-331.10-.12. and .15-.16;<sup>13</sup> (5) the requirement that certain information unrelated to registration be posted in the rental, *i.e.*, Secs. 18-331.14(a)-(c) and (e); and (6) any provisions of the Ordinance not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Several of these provisions refer to "property owners registering a whole-house lodging" or "[r]egistrants," but it is clear from their context that they are intended to apply uniformly to all short-term rentals. Because "it is apparent that the legislative body, had it known of the invalidity of the [registration] portion, would have enacted the remainder alone," *Jackson v. Guilford Cnty. Bd. of Adjust.*, 275 N.C. 155, 168, 166 S.E.2d 78, 87 (1969), we hold these provisions remain valid despite the use of the words "registering" and "registrants."

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otherwise held preempted above.

# III. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

For the foregoing reasons, we hold that the trial court correctly interpreted Sections 160A-424(c) and 160D-1207(c) in concluding that the short-term rental registration regime enacted by Wilmington was preempted by those statutes. We also hold, however, that portions of the Ordinance, as identified above, are severable from the invalid registration provisions and remain operative. We therefore affirm the trial court's judgment in part, reverse the portion of the judgment declaring the entirety of the Ordinance invalid, and remand for entry of a judgment consistent with our holdings. Plaintiffs' cross-appeal is dismissed as moot.

AFFIRMED IN PART, REVERSED IN PART, AND REMANDED; CROSS-APPEAL DISMISSED.

Judges ZACHARY and CARPENTER concur.

¶ 42

# Town of River Bend Planning Board

Minutes for Regular Meeting – 3 March 2022 – River Bend Municipal Building

Board Members present:

Chairman Egon Lippert, Vice Chair Bob Kohn, Keith Boulware, Linda Cummings, Kathleen Fleming, Kelly Forrest, Kelly Latimer

Board Members absent:

Others present:

Councilman Buddy Sheffield, Councilwoman Barbara Maurer, Town Manager Delane Jackson, Assistant Zoning Administrator Allison McCollum, Town Attorney Dave Baxter, and five members of the public

Call to Order

The regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting was called to Order at 6:00 PM on Thursday, 3 March 2022, in the River Bend Municipal Building meeting room with a quorum present.

### 1. Priority Issues

a. Rezoning Request – Property Adjacent to 'Guy C. Lee' on Hwy 17 S (PIN: 8-205-27000)

Town Manager Delane Jackson summarized the rezoning request for Parcel ID: 8-205-27000 to change from AG to BD. The Board briefly discussed the request.

Board Member Keith Boulware made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning / request. Motion was seconded by Board Member Bob Kohn. Motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Approval of 3 February 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the Minutes of the 3 February 2022 Regular Meeting. Motion was made by Vice Chair Bob Kohn to accept the Minutes as presented. Motion was **seconded** by Board Member Kelly Forrest. **Motion carried unanimously**.

3. Reports

a. Zoning Report

AZA Allison McCollum presented the Board with a typed report summarizing the number of permits issued, the type of permit issued, and the total of all permit fees for the month of February 2022. The members of the Board reviewed the report and asked questions as needed.

b. Council Report

Councilman Buddy Sheffield addressed the Board and verbally reviewed the most recent actions of the Town Council. The members of the Planning Board asked questions as needed.

### 4. Old Business

a. Town Manager Delane Jackson summarized the need for a revision to the Town's current sign ordinance. Town Attorney Dave Baxter added legal comments. The members of the Planning Board asked questions as necessary. The Board was presented with a draft of possible changes to the sign ordinance which they largely approved of, but further revisions will be made before recommended to the Town Council. Agenda item will be revisited at a later meeting.

### 5. New Business

a. Town Manager Delane Jackson presented the Town's current ordinance regarding temporary rentals such as AirBNB. Town Attorney Dave Baxter summarized the ongoing court case before the NG Court of Appeals involving a homeowner and the City of Wilmington. He further explained how regardless of the ultimate decision, our current ordinance needs to be revised. The members of the Planning Board asked questions and discussed the issue. The Board unanimously decided to table the issue until the NC Court of Appeals case is settled.

### 6. Other

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 7 April 2022 at 6pm.

## 7. Adjournment

Motion was made by Board Member Keith Boulware to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Board Member Kelly Forrest. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Allison McCollum, Secretary



# TOWN OF RIVER BEND

## 45 Shoreline Drive River Bend, NC 28562

T 252.638.3870 F 252.638.2580 www.riverbendnc.org

## March 2022

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	3	\$43,163.40
Home Occupation	1	N/A
Residential Zoning	9	\$279,563.40
Sign	1	N/A

The total amount of permit fees collected for March 2022 is **\$859.60** 

# April 2022

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	5	\$138,602.00
Residential Zoning	5	\$118,712.00

The total amount of permit fees collected for April 2022 is **\$600.00** 

# May 2022

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
CAMA	1	\$18,000.00
Flood	3	\$34,878.48
Residential Zoning	4	\$41,878.48

The total amount of permit fees collected for May 2022 is **\$357.60** 

# AGENDA ITEM VI A



# TOWN OF RIVER BEND

45 Shoreline Drive River Bend, NC 28562

T 252.638.3870 F 252.638.2580

www.riverbendnc.org

**APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT** 

	Applicant Information		
Full Na		5-1	7-22
Addres	First UC CL Last M.I.		
	Street Address River Bend NC	Apartment/U	Init #
	City State	ZIP Code	
Phone:	638-3870 Email: Manager@river	send n	C.org
	Request		U
I/We re	equest a Special Use Permit to allow: a Public Works Office	•	
+	to be built at 1504 Plantation Driv		
		Ŭ	
		Na Kalinda Na Na Kalinda Na Kalinda	
1.	Legal description of land: See attached Map an	d sch	edule A
2.	Is map/plat plan/drawing enclosed?	YES	NO
3.	Land described is currently zoned: (R15, BD, etc.) $R - 20A$		
4.	Intended use of land: Public Works Office		
5.	Will the proposed use adversely affect the health and safety of residents and/or workers in t	he zoned ar	rea?
		YES	NO
6.	Will the proposed use be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties?	YES	NO
7.	Is the lot sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use?	YES	NO
8.	Will the intended use create a nuisance or hazard for the adjacent property owners?	YES	NO M
9.	Will the proposed use adversely affect the value of adjacent properties?	YES	NO
10.	Is a site plan enclosed?	YES	NO
	Are architectural drawings enclosed?	YES	
		X	

1

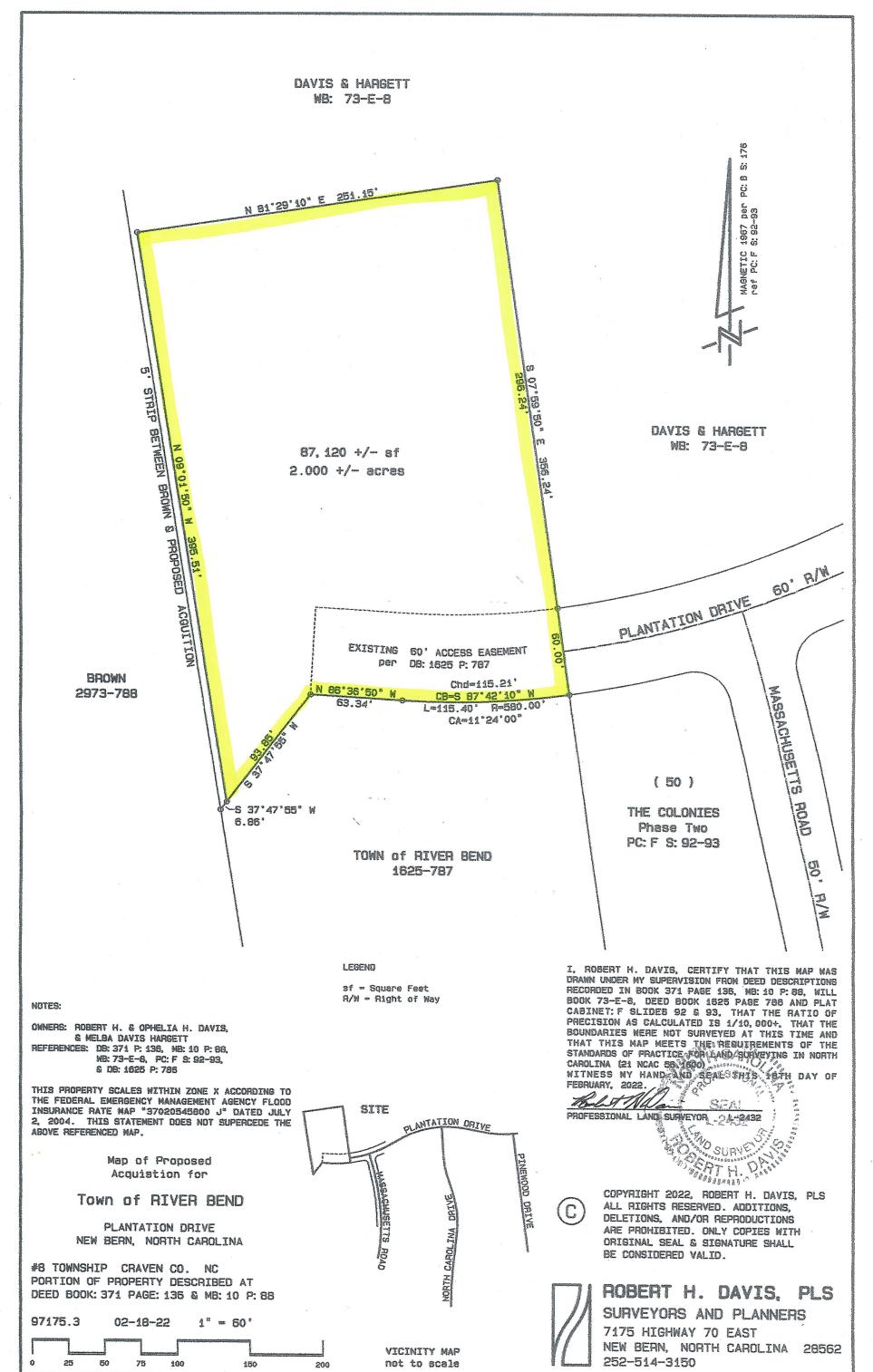
12. Is an off-street parking plan enclosed?	YES		
13. Is the \$200 fee for Special Use Permits enclosed?	YES	x	

### Additional Information

Please list any additional relevant information or further justification for the request.

allow Special P. INSE permit is reguested operation the Public Construction A a Office Complex. facility K5 The Currently 4 ค located Wild wood 115 Drive allow a Will reloca operations Facil ted th DP 1504 PI antati Drive O

Signature		
I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.		
Signature: Delane Jackson	Date:	5-26-22



### SCHEDULE A

All that certain tract or parcel of land lying and being situated in Number Eight (8) Township, Craven County, North Carolina and more particularly described as follows:

Being that 2.00 +/- acre parcel designated on a survey map entitled "SURVEY FOR TOWN OF RIVER BEND" dated March 23, 2022, by Robert H. Davis, PLS, and recorded in the Craven County Registry in Plat Book J, at Slide 7 F, which is specifically incorporated herein by reference.

Being conveyed SUBJECT TO that 60-foot in width access easement described by that instrument of record in Book 1625, Page 787, Craven County Registry.

### SPECIAL USE REGULATION

### § 15.02.120 GENERAL REGULATIONS.

- A. Permission may be granted by the Board of Adjustment for the establishment of uses listed as special uses (SU) in the district use regulation tables in this subchapter, after Planning Board review and recommendations and after a public hearing held by the Board of Adjustment. And further, that the Board of Adjustment finds that:
  - 1. The proposed use does not affect adversely the general plans for the physical development of the town as embodied in these regulations or in any plan or portion thereof adopted by the Planning Board and/or the Town Council;
  - 2. The proposed use will not be contrary to the purposes stated in these regulations;
  - 3. The proposed use will not affect adversely the health and safety of residents and workers in the zoned area;
  - 4. The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or other neighborhood uses;
  - 5. The proposed use will not be affected adversely by the existing uses;
  - 6. The proposed use will be placed on a lot of sufficient size to satisfy the space requirements of the use;
  - 7. The proposed use will not constitute a nuisance or hazard because of number of persons who will attend or use these facilities, vehicular movement, noise or fume generation or type of physical activity;
  - 8. The standards set forth for each particular use for which a permit may be granted have been or will be met;
  - 9. The proposed use shall be subject to the minimum area, setback and other dimensional requirements of the zoning district in which it will be located; and
  - 10. The proposed use shall be subject to the off-street parking and service requirements of these regulations.
- B. The Board of Adjustment shall impose or require any additional restrictions and standards as may be necessary to protect the health and safety of workers and residents of the community, and to protect the value and use of property in the general neighborhood.
- C. Whenever the Board of Adjustment shall find, in the case of any permit granted pursuant to the provisions of these regulations, that any of the terms, conditions or restrictions upon which the permit was granted are not being complied with, the Board shall rescind and revoke the permit after giving due notice to all parties concerned.
- D. If construction of a use authorized by a special use permit does not begin within 6 months of the time the permit is issued, the permit shall be revoked.

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

### § 15.02.121 APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE PERMITS.

- Α.
- 1. An application for special use permits shall be made in duplicate to the Zoning Administrator on forms furnished by the Zoning Administrator.
- 2. If rezoning is to be requested in connection with the request for a special use, the request shall be made concurrent with the application for the special use.
- B. A fee shall be paid the Town of River Bend for each application for a special use permit. In addition, costs for retaining legal, planning, engineering and other technical or professional services in connection with the review of special use permit applications may be charged to the applicant.

### Penalty, see § 1.01.999

### § 15.02.122 REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SPECIAL USES.

Α.

- 1. The application forms for a special use permit shall be transferred along with required plans, plats and the like to the Planning Board by the Zoning Administrator 7 days before a regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting so that the application can be placed on the Board's agenda.
- 2. At this meeting, the owner of the property for which the special use is sought or his agent shall appear.
- B. The Planning Board shall review the application for details, where applicable, of the site, situation, existing and proposed structures, architectural plans, neighboring land and water uses, proposed parking areas, driveway locations, highway access, traffic generation and circulation potential, drainage, waste disposal, water supply systems and the effects of the proposed use, structure, operation and potential changes in water quality, shoreland cover, natural beauty and wildlife habitat.
- C.
- 1. The Planning Board shall consider recommending conditions that may be placed in the granting of the special use permit by the Board of Adjustment.
- 2. These conditions may include items such as landscaping, architectural design, type of construction, construction commencement and proposed completion dates, sureties, lighting, fencing, location, size and number of signs, water supply and waste disposal systems, performance standards, street dedication, certified survey maps, floodproofing, ground cover, sedimentation control from the project construction, terraces, stream bank protection, planting of buffer screens, operational control, hours of operation, improved traffic circulation, deed restrictions, highway access restrictions, yard sizes or additional parking.
- D. In addition, the Planning Board shall check for compliance of the requested special use with all other relevant provisions of this subchapter, such as lot dimensional requirements, building heights, parking and loading standards.

- E. The Planning Board shall consider the application at the first regular meeting of the Planning Board after receiving the completed application. Within 45 days after the meeting at which the application is considered, the Planning Board shall make its written recommendations and pass them on to the Board of Adjustment.
- F. The Zoning Administrator shall set a date and advertise for Board of Adjustment public hearing. The Board of Adjustment shall review the application and all recommendations from the Planning Board.
- G. The Board of Adjustment shall approve or deny the application following a public hearing provided for in division (F) above.
- H. After approval or conditional approval of the special use by the Board of Adjustment, the Board shall notify the Zoning Administrator of the approval. Notification shall be by a written letter signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Adjustment, and a copy of the approval letter shall be forwarded to the special use permit applicant and the Planning Board Chairperson. Applicant/landowner must give written consent to conditions related to the special use permit to ensure enforceability.
  - 1. Rejection of an application for a special use permit shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Adjustment meeting during which the decision was made.
  - 2. Notification of the rejection or denial of an application for a special use permit shall be a letter signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Adjustment.
  - 3. The letter shall state reasons for denial and reference the specific sections or paragraphs in this chapter that would be violated if the special use were granted.
  - 4. The denial letter shall be forwarded to the applicant by certified or registered mail and copies of the letter shall be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Planning Board and the Zoning Administrator.
  - 5. One copy shall be retained in the files of the Board of Adjustment.

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

1.

## § 15.02.047 DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS.

For convenience in the administration of this chapter, there is hereby established and made a part of this chapter the following schedule for the several districts setting forth minimum limitations and requirements. The requirements listed for each district as designated are subject to all provisions of this chapter and, unless otherwise indicated, shall be deemed to be the minimum requirements in every instance of their application.

			Schedu	le of Distri	ict Require	ements	- 35 - 105 - 11			
	R-20	R-20A	R-15	PDR- MF	PDR-SF	ID	BD	WP	AGR	PD-BD
Min. Lot Area (SF)	20,000	20,000	15,000	-	6,500	20,000	20,000	-		20,000
District Size	-	-	-	5 acres	10 acres			1. 1	-	4 acres
Density	Carrow Ton No.	-	· _ ·	*	+	-	+	-	-	+
Min. Front Lot Line (FT)	90**	90**	85**	50++	50††	-	100	-	-	100
Min. Bldg. Set Back (FT)	30	30	30	25	25	40	40	-	-	40
Min. Side Yard (F	T)					1				1
Main Building	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	-	-	10
Accessory Building	5	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
Swimming Pool	10	10	10	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Tennis Court	15	15	15	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Min. Rear Yard (F	T)									
Main Building	15	15	15	15	15	10	20	-	, - I	20
Accessory Building	10	10	10	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
Swimming Pool	10	10	10	-		10	-	-	-	_ · · a.
Tennis Court	15	15	15	-	-	10	, - I	-	-	-
Accessory Building			Р	LEASE REF	ERENCE C	HART IN §:	15.02.061	1	1	
Max. Lot Coverage by Bldg. (%)	24	24	24	24	30	24	24	-	-	24
Max. Height (FT)	•	1		÷						
Main Building	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	-	-	34
		and the second se								

Schedule of District Requirements											
	R-20	R-20A	R-15	PDR- MF	PDR-SF	ID	BD	WP	AGR	PD-BD	
Accessory Building The lesser of 18 FT or one (1) story											
CAMA and FEMA	setbacks, i	fapplicable	, take prio	rity to Tov	vn designa	ted setbac	ks.				
*Density – PDR-N	1F – No mo	re than 6.5	dwelling u	nits per a	cre.						
†Density – PDR-SI	F – No mor	e than 4 dv	velling unit	s per acre							
‡Density – BD, PD	)-BD – Nor	more than	4 business	units per	acre.						
**Min. Front Lot	Line – R-20	, R-20A, R-:	15 – 40 FT	on cul-de-	sac.						
<sup>++</sup> Min. Front Lot Line – PDR-MF, PDR-SF – 25 FT on cul-de-sac.											
Penalty, see § 1.01	.999						Amended	11/18/2	021		

- 1. A buffer shall be provided along all property lines of the uses which abut a residential district or lot which is occupied by a residential use;
- 2. All gasoline pumps and other stationary equipment shall be at least 24 feet off the edge of pavement and 12 feet off the edge of right of way; and
- 3. All areas subject to daily or frequent use of vehicles shall be paved.
- G. *Janitorial supplies*. Due to the nature of the materials handled which could be a safety hazard, the business owner must demonstrate strict control of chemical supplies by showing capability to comply with all federal and state regulations.

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

## § 15.02.124 DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS.

For convenience in the administration of this chapter, there hereby is established and made a part of this chapter the following schedule of district use regulations.

## SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

P – Use permitted by right

KEY:

**SU** – Special use permitted upon approval by Board of Adjustment after recommendation of the Planning Board

Blank/Unlisted - Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR- SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD- PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Accessory Building	Р	Р	Р	Р	SU	SU	SU	Р	
Adult Day Care					Р	Р	Р		G
Bakery, Retail						Р	Р		G
Financial Services	· .					Р	Р		G
Barber Shop/Beauty Shop						Р	Р		G
Boats and Trailer Sales						SU	SU		G
Cabinet, Woodworking or Upholstery Shops						Р	Р		G
Child Day Care						SU			
Churches	SU	SU	SU	SU	Р	SU	SU		E

## SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

KEY:

P – Use permitted by right

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Blank/Unlisted – Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR- SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD- PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Clubs and Lounges, Private					<b>P</b>	SU	SU		F
Clothing Store			-			Ρ	Р		G
Computer Sales and Service						Р	Р		G
Dairy Bar and Ice Cream Parlors						Р	Р		G
Drug Store						Р	Ρ		F
Dry Cleaners/Drop Off/Pick Up Only						Р	Р		G
Dwellings, Single- Family	Р	Р	Р	Р		SU			Α
Dwellings, 2-Family				Ρ		SU			Α
Dwellings, Multi- Family				Р		SU		: :	А
Fire Department Buildings	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU		F
Fitness Center						Р	Р		G
Florists/Gift Shop						Р	Р		G
Furniture Store						Р	Р		G
Golf Course	SU	SU	SU	SU	Р	SU	SU		F
Grocery Store						Р	Р		G
Hardware Sales						Р	Р		G
Home Occupations	Р	Р	Р		Р				G

### SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

KEY:

**P** – Use permitted by right

**SU** – Special use permitted upon approval by Board of Adjustment after recommendation of the Planning Board

Blank/Unlisted – Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR- SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD- PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Jewelry and Watch Repair						Р	Р		G
Libraries	SU	SU	SU	SU		Р	Р		G
Marina						Р			G
Nursing Home and Rest Home			e		Р				G
Office for Business, Professional and Personal Services						Р	Р		G
Pet Shops (excluding Veterinary Services)						Р	Р		G
Pharmacy						Р	Р		G
Photo Shop/Supply						Р	Р		G
Police Station	<mark>SU</mark>		F						
Public Enterprise**	SU	SU	SU	SU		SU	SU		F
Public Utility	SU		F						
Restaurants					Р	Р	Р		F
Schools	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU				F
Service Station						SU	SU		J
Shoe Sales and Repair						Р	Р		G
Sporting Goods Sales		-				Р	Р		G

### SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT USE REGULATIONS

KEY:

**P** – Use permitted by right

**SU** – Special use permitted upon approval by Board of Adjustment after recommendation of the Planning Board

Blank/Unlisted – Prohibited use

Use	R20/ R20A	R15	PDR- SF	PDR- MF	ID	BD	BD- PD	AGR	Parking Code*
Storage Rental Units/Areas						Ρ	Ρ		G
Travel Agency						Р	Р		G
Utility Tanks, Pumps, Electrical Substations & Related Services	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	
Wholesale and/or Retail Janitorial Sales & Services						SU	SU		F
Youth Center					Р	Р	Р		G
*Parking code descri ** As defined by G.S									

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

Amended 11/18/10

### § 15.02.125 CONTROL OF BACKFLOW AND CROSS-CONNECTIONS.

#### A. Purpose.

- The purpose of this section is to protect the public potable water supply of the town from the possibility of contamination or pollution by isolating within the consumer's internal distribution system(s) or the consumer's private water system(s) such contaminants or pollutants which could backflow into the public water system.
- 2. This section shall apply to all users connected to the town's public potable water supply regardless of whether the user is located within the town limits or outside the town limits.
- B. *Definitions*. For the purpose of this section, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

**AIR-GAP SEPARATION**. An unobstructed vertical distance through the atmosphere between the lowest opening from any pipe or faucet supplying water to a tank, plumbing fixture, or other device and the flood level rim of the receptacle. An approved air-gap vertical separation shall be at least double the diameter of the supply pipe. In no case shall the air-gap be less than 1 inch.