



Land Use Board

April 21, 2026

Meeting Minutes

The Union County Land Use Board met in regular session on April 21, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Union County Government Center, 1st Floor Board Room, 500 N. Main Street.

Present: Mark Tilley (Temporary Chairman), Derrick Austin, Doug McClew, Drew Medlin, and Charles Walkup, Jr.

Also Present: Planning Director Lee Jenson, Senior Planner John Wear and Land Use Board Clerk Amy Griffin.

Call to Order: Due to the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Lee Jenson called the meeting to order. Nominations were opened for a Temporary Chairman. Doug McClew nominated Mark Tilley as Temporary Chair, Derrick Austin seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

(a) Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Reflection: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Drew Medlin gave the prayer.

Establish Voting Members: Temporary Chairman Mark Tilley noted that there were five regular members present and there was a quorum.

Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda: A motion was made to move Agenda Item #2 to be heard first. The motion was made by Drew Medlin and seconded by Doug McClew. It was approved unanimously. Derrick Austin made a motion to remove the Minor Subdivision Discussion item from the agenda and defer it to a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Andrew Medlin and approved unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes: There were no minutes presented for approval.

Public Hearing:

Planning Staff Report - Rezoning Case # CZ-2026-001

Staff Contact: John Wear, Senior Planner

Summary of Request

This case is requesting to rezone one parcel totaling 5 acres appearing on the tax map as tax parcel 09-414-109A along NC 75 from RA-40 to Light Industrial (LI) CZ with Amended Conditions in order to develop a landscaping supply business and limited construction equipment storage. The rezoning will include the following conditions:

- 1) Limited to approved site plan dated March 6, 2026

Planning Department
500 North Main Street Suite 70
Monroe, NC 28112
T 704.283.3565

unioncountync.gov

- 2) Uses limited to landscaping supply business and construction equipment storage
- 3) Five-year vesting of development rights
- 4) Development will meet all requirements of the Union County Unified Development Ordinance on the date of approval
- 5) Access may be restricted to right in right out in the future, at the discretion of the NCDOT, based on safety issues that may be created by this site

Owner/Applicant

Owner: Marcham Family Trust
 2904 McNeely Farms Dr
 Monroe, NC 28111

Applicant: Thomas Marcham
 2904 McNeely Farms Dr
 Monroe, NC 28111

Property Information

Location: Located on the south side of NC 75 west of Rocky River Road. Location more specifically described as tax parcel 09-414-109A.

Municipal Proximity: The site is approximately 2/3 of a mile east of Mineral Springs.

Existing Land Use and Development Status: The parcel is currently zoned RA-40 and is partially cleared. A single-family home was removed approximately six years ago.

Environmental Features: There is a stream on the northern edge of the site that is incorporated into the stormwater pond. There are no other environmental features.

Utilities: Public water is available to the site. The site will use septic service, and an area is shown on the site plan.

Zoning and Land Use History: The parcel site has been zoned RA-40 since zoning was instituted. There have been three proposed residential rezonings for higher density development within a half mile of the site since 2019. All three were denied. Three commercial or industrial rezonings were approved at the intersection of Rocky River and NC 75 between 1977 and 2013. Several special use permits have been approved at the intersection of Rocky River and NC 75 for a telecommunications tower, two daycares and for the Union County Humane Society facility.

Schools: Because this rezoning request is commercial in nature, UCPS was not consulted for comments.

Transportation: This parcel is on NC 75, which is an NCDOT-maintained facility. NC 75 carries approximately 7,800 vehicles per day. The proposed use would have a low traffic impact but would have a high percentage of trucks and vehicles with trailers. Because of these concerns, the access from the site is limited to right outs, with these vehicles wanting to travel west to use the roundabout at Rocky

River Road. There are no funded road improvement projects in the immediate vicinity of the rezoning. A Traffic Impact Analysis was not required for this rezoning.

Planning Documents

Union County Comprehensive Plan: The Union County 2050 comprehensive plan identifies this area as a Rural Residential area with an Employment Corridor Overlay. The uses proposed under Light Industrial zoning require a special use permit, which can be incorporated into the rezoning. The applicant has stated in their application, submitted documentation or staff have concluded through a site plan review that it meets the five findings of fact necessary for a special use permit:

1. The proposed use and development comply with all regulations and standards generally applicable within the zoning district and specifically applicable to the particular type of special use.
2. The proposed development will not materially endanger the public health or safety.
3. The proposed development will not substantially injure the value of abutting property or is a public necessity.
4. The proposed development will be in harmony with the area in which it is located.
5. The proposed development will be in general conformity with the comprehensive plan.

Public and Municipal Comments

Public Comments: A community meeting was required and was held on March 30, 2026. A total of six residents attended the meeting and asked questions about fencing, lighting, traffic and stormwater impacts. No changes were made to the site plan as a result of the meeting.

Municipal Comments: Mineral Springs was contacted and responded that they did not have any issues with the proposed rezoning.

Staff Comments and Recommendation

This part of Union County is identified as an Employment Corridor overlaid on rural residential and agricultural land uses. The proposed use is allowed in Light Industrial with a Special Use Permit, which the applicant has stated they meet the conditions for such a permit, and Light Industrial is an appropriate zoning designation in an Employment Corridor. The proposed traffic impacts are moderate and have been mitigated in the site plan and this use will provide options to residents in the area and increase business opportunities in Union County. The proposed use is therefore considered appropriate for the area. Because of these aspects of the development, staff recommend **approval** of this rezoning application.

John Wear presented the staff report and stated that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the Employment Corridor designation in the Union County Comprehensive Plan and would provide landscaping and contractor-related services to nearby residents. Staff acknowledged concerns regarding the proximity of industrial uses to residential properties and the potential for increased truck traffic

along NC 75. However, staff noted the site's direct access to NC 75, proximity to existing commercial and industrial uses, and the applicant's proposed site improvements as positive factors supporting the request.

Applicant Presentation:

Chris Dugan, Attorney for Applicant

Chris Dugan presented the request on behalf of the applicant and stated the project would include a professionally designed landscaping supply and equipment storage facility.

Key points included:

- Retail sales of mulch, stone, and topsoil.
- Decorative gates, fencing, landscaping buffers, and controlled lighting.
- Stormwater management measures.
- Commitment to maintaining an attractive and well-managed site.

The applicant stated the community meeting was generally positive and emphasized the goal of being a good neighbor.

Engineering Presentation – Frank Cantrell, PLB Engineering

Frank Cantrell reviewed technical aspects of the project, including:

- Additional right-of-way dedication for potential future road widening.
- Sidewalk installation along the frontage.
- Paved parking and dust-control measures.
- Stormwater management through a sand filter system.
- Use of public water, on-site septic, and landscaping buffers.

Board Discussion:

- Board discussed incorporation of the special use permit into the conditional rezoning process.
- Applicant provided an appraisal indicating no substantial impact on neighboring property values.
- Discussion included proposed screening, lighting, fencing, and overall site appearance. Also, future sidewalk maintenance.
- Board members also discussed traffic circulation and future roadway considerations along NC 75.

Board Action:

Motion: Recommend approval of rezoning petition CZ-2026-001 and adopt the advisory consistency and reasonableness statement by Derrick Austin, **Second:** Doug McClew

Vote: Motion carried unanimously

Planning Staff Report - Rezoning Case # CZ-2024-005

Staff Contact: John Wear, Senior Planner

Public Hearing:

Summary of Request

This case is a request to rezone an approximately 10.92 acre portion of one parcel totaling 12.21 acres appearing on the tax map as tax parcel 02-226-017 located on Camden Road from RA-40 with Master Planned Development. The request is to develop a long-term residential drug rehabilitation facility for up to 80 residents and staff. The rezoning request is a conditional rezoning, and includes the following conditions:

- The use shall be limited to a residential recovery and life-skills program.
- The maximum duration of residency for program participants shall be twenty-four (24) months. The minimum duration of residency for program participants shall be ninety (90) days.
- The use shall not include medical detoxification or inpatient clinical treatment services.
- The use shall not be converted to a shelter, boarding house, correctional facility, halfway house for parolees, or a use not specifically allowed by these conditions.
- Overnight occupancy shall be limited to enrolled program participants and on-site staff only.
- The maximum number of residents shall not exceed 80.
- The development may occur in phases.
- All outdoor lighting shall utilize full cutoff fixtures and shall be directed away from adjacent properties.
- Organized outdoor activities shall not occur on site between 9 PM and 7 AM.
- A local contact person shall be provided to adjacent property owners and the County and updated annually.
- No onsite parking for resident vehicles.

Owner/Applicant

Owner: His Perfect Love Ministries
PO Box 516
Monroe, NC 28111

Applicant: Steve Merrit
PO Box 516
Monroe, NC 28111

Property Information

Location: Located on the south side of Camden Road east of Old Pageland Marshville Road. Location more specifically described as tax parcel 02-226-017.

Municipal Proximity: The site is approximately four miles south of Marshville and Wingate.

Existing Land Use and Development Status: The parcel is currently zoned RA-40 and is undeveloped.

Environmental Features: There is a stream on the northern edge of the site that is incorporated into the stormwater pond. There are no other environmental features.

Utilities: Public water is available to the site with an extension from Old Pageland Marshville Road. The site will utilize an engineered septic system.

Zoning and Land Use History: There have been no proposed rezonings or special use permits on this site or in the immediate vicinity since zoning was implemented in Union County. The site is undeveloped.

Schools: Because this rezoning request is commercial in nature, UCPS was not consulted for comments.

Transportation: This site is on Camden Road, which is an NCDOT-maintained facility. This section of Camden Road carries approximately 300 vehicles per day. There are no funded road improvement projects in the immediate vicinity of the rezoning. A traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) was not required for this rezoning. The anticipated traffic impact from this site is expected to be low.

Planning Documents

Union County Comprehensive Plan: The Union County 2050 comprehensive plan identifies this area as Rural Residential. Group living facilities such as what is proposed in this rezoning are typically accommodated on RA-40 zoned properties through the special use permit (SUP) process.

Public and Municipal Comments

Public Comments: A community meeting was required and was held on March 31, 2026. A total of 19 residents attended the meeting and asked questions about fencing, signage, lighting, and stormwater impacts. No changes were made to the site plan as a result of the meeting.

Municipal Comments: Marshville and Wingate were not consulted due to the distance to their municipal limits.

Staff Comments and Recommendation

This part of Union County is identified for rural residential and agricultural land uses. The proposed zoning is consistent with the adopted Plan because the use is typically allowed through the special use permit process. A SUP is not possible due to the phasing proposed for this facility – a new SUP would be required for every additional structure built one year after the SUP was granted. The proposed zoning district would provide flexibility for the owner and the proposed conditions limit future changes if the property is sold. The proposed use is therefore considered appropriate for the area. Because of these aspects of the development, staff recommend **approval** of this rezoning application.

John Wear presented the staff report, explaining the proposed use is generally consistent with the Rural Residential designation and that similar group home facilities are permitted within the RA-40 district through the special use permit process. Staff acknowledged concerns related to the intensity of the proposed residential program and proximity to surrounding residential uses but noted that the development standards and proposed conditions were designed to mitigate impacts. Staff determined the site was appropriately sized for the proposed use and recommended approval of the rezoning request.

Applicant Presentation:

Steve Merritt, House of Pearls –

Steve Merritt, Chairman of the Board for House of Pearls, presented the proposal and explained that House of Pearls is a nonprofit, faith-based recovery and discipleship program for women struggling with substance abuse, addiction, and related life challenges. The applicant stated the goal was to create a safe, supportive, neighborhood-style environment for recovery.

Key points included:

- House of Pearls is a faith-based recovery and life skills program for women.
- The proposed campus would include residential homes and a family life center.
- Residents would receive housing, recovery support, and life skills training.
- Security measures and full-time supervision would be provided on-site.

Public Comments

Several supporters of House of Pearls attended the meeting, including volunteers, graduates, and current program participants.

Speakers expressed support for the organization's mission and discussed the positive impact the program has had on women recovering from addiction and rebuilding their lives.

Those who spoke in favor of the rezoning were Alison Judd, April McErlane, Erika Sullivan, Natalie Reed, Jon Bradley, Bullfrog, Tabitha Hinson, Debra Long, Kimmie Schoening. There were none who spoke against the rezoning.

Board Discussion & Concerns

- Board members discussed emergency services availability and law enforcement coordination.
- Questions were asked regarding security, staffing, and supervision of residents.
- Discussion included the phased development plan and residential layout of the campus.

Board Action:

Motion: Recommend approval of rezoning petition CZ-2026-006 and adopt the advisory consistency and reasonableness statement for recommendation of approval by Doug McClew, **Second:** Charles Walkup, Jr.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Planning Staff Report: There was no report.

Brief Comments: There were none.

Close: With no further discussions, Doug McClew made a motion to adjourn, and Derrick Austin seconded. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.