

Perquimans County Planning Board
MINUTES

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

The Perquimans County Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Community Meeting Room of the Perquimans County Library.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Antoine (A.J.) Moore, Chair
Lewis Smith, Vice Chair
Thelma Finch-Copeland
John Skinner

MEMBERS ABSENT: Teressa Blanchard

OTHERS PRESENT: Rhonda Repanshek, Planner
Trevor Miles, Planning and Zoning Technician
Brandon Shoaf, County Manager
Chris Cox, Glandon Forest Equity LLC Representative
Brent Purdum, Bowman Representative
More than 25 residents of the New Hope area

Planning Board Chair, Antoine Moore, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm and the meeting was opened in prayer by Lewis Smith.

Agenda Item I, Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Mr. Skinner. The motion passed unanimously.

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Agenda Item II, Consent Agenda/Approval of Draft Minutes of Previous Planning Board Meetings: See attached draft of November 12, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes.

Mr. Skinner made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Ms. Finch-Copeland. The motion passed unanimously.

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Agenda Item III, Business Item A: REZ-25-01 – Rezone 2.04 acres on New Hope Road, from Rural Agriculture District, RA to Rural Commercial District, CR, for the purpose of developing a commercial retail store; requested by Glandon Forest Equity, LLC. Subject property is tax parcel 4-0064-0052A consisting of approximately 60 acres on the southwest side of New Hope Road, 1300 feet northwest of the Woodville Road intersection.

Planner Repanshek began by clarifying that only 2.04 acres of the 60 acre parcel would be subject to the rezoning. She then proceeded to explain that the reason the rezoning was needed was to allow a department, variety, or general merchandise store of less than 25,000 square feet. She also gave a brief overview of the general information of the property, including it's current use and general layout of the residences and business within a half mile of the proposed site.

Planner Repanshek then pointed out that two parcels in the general area, the New Hope Country Store and the former lunch counter across from the Durants Neck Ruritan Club, were already zoned Rural Commercial, CR. She also explained that county water infrastructure exists on New Hope Road, and that a fire hydrant is located across the street from the proposed site. She also stated that soils at the site had been evaluated by a soil scientist, but that no evaluation had been done by Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS) for a septic system.

Planner Repanshek then pointed out that with a rezoning, all the potential uses must be considered, not just the use that the applicant is specifically asking for. She then listed the potential uses by right and by special use permit that are permitted in the CR zone. She also explained the special use permit process, and that it was separate from the rezoning process. Planner Repanshek then reviewed what the CAMA land use plan says about the residential agricultural classification, stating that the residential agricultural classification includes some isolated commercial development that is typically associated with rural areas, and it is intended to encourage the continued use of land for agricultural, forestry, and open space purposes while limiting commercial and light industrial uses.

Planner Repanshek then moved to address a question regarding spot zoning that was brought to her prior to the meeting. She explained that spot zoning was not illegal in North Carolina, but that for a spot zoning to be valid in the eyes of the court, it would have to have a good reason behind it. She also explained that it could technically be looked at either way, and that it was a gray area as to whether it qualified as spot zoning at all. She then explained that it could be argued that it would be reasonable to rezone the property because the retail store could be seen as serving a large public interest for the residents on the south end of New Hope.

One of the audience members asked how prevalent it was to rezone properties adjacent to a spot zoning once the spot zoning was approved. Planner Repanshek responded that rezoning in Perquimans was not that prevalent in general. Another member of the audience asked how many Dollar Generals were in Perquimans. Planner Repanshek responded that there are five Dollar Generals. It was then asked how many other dollar stores were in the county, and she responded that there are two Family Dollars. The audience then inquired about the distance to the two nearest Dollar Generals along the highway, and someone else in the audience responded that they were 7.2 miles and 11 miles from the proposed site.

Brent Purdum, a representative from the civil engineering firm Bowman, then began to explain how the location was chosen. He explained that Dollar General starts by looking at the number of residential properties in an area and then begins picking a specific location based on several criteria, prior to reaching out to property owners. He also stated that the store would be a 1.9 million dollar investment and would provide between 4 and 7 jobs. He also explained that D.O.T. did not express any concern about the location and did not recommend any road improvements.

Mr. Smith asked if there were any alternate sites in consideration. Mr. Purdum replied that there were none at this time. Mr. Moore then asked what the square footage of the store would be. Mr. Purdum answered 9100 square feet. Mr. Skinner asked if the inventory for the store would be delivered on a tractor trailer. Mr. Purdum responded yes, and added that the parking lot was laid out in such a way that the tractor trailer could pull in, reverse to the back of the store, and pull out once the unloading was finished. A member of the audience then asked if Glandon Forest Equity bought all 60 acres, and it was clarified that Glandon Forest Equity did not currently own any of the land, and that it was only interested in 2.04 acres, and that the rezoning was only concerned with the 2.04 acres as proposed.

Mr. Purdum then explained more specifics about the site layout, including the location of the septic system and stormwater pond. A member of the audience then asked if there would be a fence separating the store from the adjoining residential property to the Northwest. The audience was then reminded by Mr. Moore that conditions such as that would be decided at the hearing for the special use permit, not the rezoning.

Mr. Jose Colon, a resident of New Hope, then asked County Manager Shoaf if Glandon Forest Equity had requested any tax breaks for this property. Mr. Shoaf explained that he was not aware of Glandon Forest Equity asking for any incentives, and that the county did not have any to offer. He also explained that if the 2.04 acres were split from the 60 acres, the 2.04 acres would be removed from the land use program and pay a higher tax rate. Mr. Colon also brought up concerns about the potential for the Sheriff's Department to provide adequate response to situations at the store, and the potential for that to impact taxes on residents.

It was then asked if the county had a comprehensive plan for development, and the audience was referred back to the CAMA Land Use Plan. Mr. Smith then asked Mr. Purdum why the specific location for the store was placed next to the existing singlewide. Mr. Purdum stated that Chris Cox, the real estate agent, would have to answer that.

Planner Repanshek then read three opposition letters to the Planning Board, one from Mr. Patel, writing on behalf of the New Hope Country Store, and two from individual residents of Perquimans County. Both expressed concerns about the impact of a Dollar General on the existing New Hope County Store, the increased strain on transportation infrastructure, and the potential harm to the character of the community. Robin Harris, a resident of Sue Lane, provided the board with a list of objections to the rezoning, including supposed inconsistency with the comprehensive plan and preservation of community character.

A member of the audience then asked Mr. Purdum how often delivery trucks would come to the store. He answered once a week, and that it would be a full-size tractor trailer. Another member of the audience asked why the lot needed to be 2.04 acres, and what the footprint of just the store and parking lot was. Mr. Purdum answered that the lot size was required to meet all the various governmental requirements for the development, and that the footprint of the store and parking lot was just over an acre. There was then a lengthy discussion of the potential impact of the Dollar General on the existing corner store, with the residents of New Hope expressing concerns that the corner store would close, and Mr. Purdum stating that he had observed in several other communities that local businesses tend to not be negatively impacted if the residents of the community continue to shop at the local businesses. He also stated that he could not predict what would happen to the corner store if this Dollar General were built.

A member of the audience then expressed concern that the Dollar General would be able to buy products faster, at lower rates, which would negatively impact the existing corner store's ability to compete. She also stated that she disagreed with the proposed rezoning on the basis that it is spot zoning. Several members of the audience then stated that they were not just opposed to the idea of Dollar General being in the area, but to the idea of rezoning the property to commercial at all, and several others voiced the opinion that there were enough Dollar Generals as it was.

Robin Harris, a resident of Sueola Beach, then gave a brief summary of the points she had provided to the Planning Board earlier. Several audience members echoed her points. Diane Elkins, a resident of New Hope, expressed several concerns about the potential damage to the character of the area if the rezoning were to occur.

Chris Cox, the real estate agent, then began explaining his position as a representative of Glandon Forest Equity. He asked the audience how many people would oppose the rezoning if it wasn't a Dollar General. He then stated that it was the responsibility of the board to rezone or not rezone based on all the potential uses, not the possible specific use. He also commented that in relation to the potential tax base of the store, it is like building 10 houses in one area. He then explained that the proposed location of the lot was chosen by the landowner.

The concern was then raised about potential noise and light pollution affecting the existing residential property next to the proposed site. Mr. Cox explained that should the rezoning be approved, the developer would install an 8 foot privacy fence and a buffer between the store and the home. He also explained that the exterior design of the store would be similar to the Dollar General on Holiday Island Road, across from Albemarle Plantation. A member of the audience then asked Mr. Cox how Dollar General chooses potential locations, and Mr. Cox explained that Dollar General uses an algorithm to calculate potential locations for their stores. Several members of the audience then reiterated that they opposed the rezoning strictly because they did not want any commercial development in that area.

Mr. Shoaf then clarified the rezoning process, stating that the Planning Board was an advisory board, and that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would ultimately be the ones to make a final decision on the rezoning, weighing the recommendations of the Planning Board and the comments of the public, and that the meeting would be publicly advertised. It was then clarified that residents who lived outside of the 150' notification buffer would be allowed to speak at the BCC meeting.

The question was then addressed to Planner Repanshek on whether the county had an acreage limit when it came to spot zoning. She responded no and explained that per the precedent set by court cases across North Carolina involving potential spot zoning, the acreage to be considered a spot zoning could range from anywhere between $\frac{1}{2}$ acre to 50 acres. She also reiterated that spot zoning was not illegal in North Carolina, provided that the spot zoning can be proven to be reasonable.

The question was then asked if the opinion of the community matters to the Planning Board. Planner Repanshek then explained that there was an example where the neighborhood came out against a special use permit, and the board ultimately voted against it. The question was then asked if the Commissioners could say no to the rezoning, and Planner Repanshek explained that yes, they could say no to the rezoning.

Mr. Moore made a motion to find proposed Rezoning No. REZ-25-01 to not be consistent with the county comprehensive Land Use Plan because although the Land Use Plan allows low intensity commercial uses, the proposed use is not an agricultural business and it is not reasonable because a local convenience store already exists, for one, in a Rural Commercial zone less than a mile away from the proposed site and (two) it is not in harmony with the area. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith. It passed 3 in favor, with Mr. Skinner dissenting.

Mr. Skinner then made a motion to recommend denial of Rezoning Request REZ-25-01 for tax parcel 4-0064-0052A to the Board of County Commissioners. It was seconded by Mr. Smith. It passed unanimously.

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Agenda Item III, Business Item B. General observations of abbreviated subdivision density.

Planner Repanshek started by explaining that there has been a somewhat concerning pattern of minor subdivisions going on in the county for the last four years. She then showed several before and after pictures of different locations in the county where minor subdivisions have happened, pointing out that some had been sold to manufactured home dealers, while others were sold to various contractors who build site-built homes.

Mr. Skinner asked why this wouldn't fall under the mobile home park rules, and Mr. Shoaf explained that because they were individual lots in individual ownership, they did not qualify as a mobile home park.

There was then discussion of the most recent minor subdivision on Little River Shores Road. Mr. Moore then asked if the subdivision regulations could be altered to lower the number of lots that qualifies as a minor subdivision. Planner Repanshek then pointed out that the number of lots is dependent on the road type (major vs minor.) Mr. Shoaf then pointed out that from a functional standpoint, the road type almost becomes irrelevant because any additional housing comes with additional traffic.

Mr. Smith then asked if the county needed a comprehensive land use plan to address these issues. Mr. Shoaf then explained that he felt as long as the CAMA land use plan is updated, the public gets to have input on the future land use. Mr. Skinner then asked what the Planning Department was looking for, and Planner Repanshek responded that she was wondering if the Planning Board felt like the lot number should be decreased.

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Agenda Item IV, Other Items A: Status Report on Previous Board Recommendations:

Albemarle Plantation Cole Tract, Phase One, Final Plat review requested by Woody Perry and John Linton of Albemarle Preserve, LLC. Phase one consists of fifty lots.

Planner Repanshek explained that the plat was approved and recorded, but there was an issue with the slope of the pond sides, so a condition was added by the stormwater engineer prior to him signing the plat. The only current office issue is addressing the townhomes. Technician Miles explained that he is working with Jonathan at Emergency Management to make sure the addressing is done in such a way that it will not cause issues with 911 dispatching.

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Agenda Item IV, Other Items B: Chair's signature on approved minutes.

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A motion was made by Mr. Skinner to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith. It passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm.

Minutes approved this day of 2026.

Chairperson

Recorder

Attachments: A (Sign-In Sheet)
B through E (letters of opposition)

Attachment A

Planning Board Sign-In Sheet

For Jan 13, 2026 Meeting

May be Viewed in the Planning Office,

During Normal Business Hours,

Upon Request

Opposition Letter

Date:01/12/2026

To: Perquimans County Planning Board Members
Attention: Rhonda Repanshek, County Planner

Re: Business Owner Opposition to Rezoning of Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing on behalf of New Hope Country Store, located at 2101 New Hope Road, Hertford, NC 27944, to formally state my opposition to the proposed rezoning of Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A.

New Hope Country Store is an established local retail business that already serves the needs of the surrounding community. There is no need for another retail store in this area. Within just eight miles, there are already a Dollar General and a Family Dollar, providing ample retail options for residents. Approving additional retail development so close would create unnecessary competition and directly threaten my business.

This rezoning would significantly harm my business and could make it extremely difficult to survive. There is a real risk that my store may be forced to close, which would negatively impact both my livelihood and the local community members who rely on my store for essential goods.

Additionally, the proposed rezoning would increase traffic, raise safety concerns, and place further strain on local roads and infrastructure that are not designed to support expanded commercial activity. The New Hope area should be protected from overdevelopment that threatens small businesses and the character of the community.

For these reasons, I respectfully but firmly urge the Perquimans County Planning Board to deny the rezoning request for Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A and to support responsible planning that safeguards existing local businesses and the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Sincerely,

Alepshkumar Patel,

New Hope Country Store

2101 New Hope Road

Hertford, NC 27944

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Draft Opposition Letter

Date: 01/12/2026

To: Perquimans County Planning Board Members
Attention: Rhonda Repanshek, County Planner

Re: Strong Opposition to Rezoning Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing to state my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning of Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A. Rezoning this property for commercial use is not appropriate for our neighborhood and should be denied.

Our community is a residential area, and the introduction of any commercial or retail business would significantly harm the character of the neighborhood. This rezoning would bring increased traffic, noise, congestion, and safety concerns, especially for families and nearby homeowners. It would also negatively affect property values and the overall quality of life for residents.

There is no demonstrated need for additional commercial retail development in this location. Approving this rezoning would set a harmful precedent and permanently change the nature of our community.

I respectfully urge the Perquimans County Planning Board to reject the rezoning request for Parcel No. 4-0064-0052A and protect the interests of existing residents.

Thank you for your consideration.



Sincerely,

Japan Joshi

[REDACTED]
Hertford, NC 27944
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Formal Opposition and Request for Clarification - Proposed Glandon Forest Equity Development**From** Derrick Chavis [REDACTED]**Date** Tue 1/13/2026 1:37 PM**To** Rhonda Repanshek <RhondaRep@perquimanscountync.gov>

Dear Ms. Repanshek,

I am a resident of the 27944 area and am writing to formally express my opposition to the proposed rezoning associated with the planned sale of approximately 60 acres to Glandon Forest Equity, LLC, reportedly for development anchored by a Dollar General and potentially additional commercial uses.

Because rezoning represents a permanent change to allowable land use - not merely approval of a single project - I have serious concerns about the long-term impacts of this request and whether it is consistent with Perquimans County's adopted land-use policies and rural planning objectives.

I respectfully request clarification on the following points, which I believe are essential before the Planning Board can make any recommendation:

1. Consistency With the Land-Use / Comprehensive Plan

- Please identify how the proposed rezoning is consistent with the County's adopted land-use or comprehensive plan for this area.
- If the area is designated rural, agricultural, or low-density, what findings support converting it to commercial zoning?
- If the rezoning is inconsistent with the plan, what justification would be relied upon to override that inconsistency?

2. Scope and Permanence of the Rezoning

- Does the requested rezoning permit only a single Dollar General store, or would it allow multiple or future commercial uses across the full 60 acres?
- What safeguards, if any, are proposed to prevent future expansion or additional commercial development once the zoning is changed?

3. Precedent and Cumulative Impact

- How is the Planning Board evaluating the precedent this rezoning would set for other rural parcels in the county?
- Has the cumulative impact of similar rezonings been considered if this request is approved?

4. Traffic, Safety, and Infrastructure Impacts

- Has a traffic impact analysis been required or completed, given the rural road network, school bus routes, agricultural equipment, and delivery truck traffic?
- Has NCDOT reviewed or approved proposed access points for this site?
- If these reviews are incomplete, what is the rationale for moving forward with a rezoning recommendation?

5. Process and Alternatives

- Were alternative locations or zoning districts considered that are more consistent with existing commercial areas?
- What opportunity exists for the Planning Board to require additional studies or modifications prior to making a recommendation?

From a public perspective, approving a rezoning of this size and nature without clear land-use consistency findings, defined limits on future development, and completed traffic and infrastructure reviews would raise serious concerns about long-term impacts to community character, safety, and local businesses.

This opposition is not opposition to all development, but to rezoning rural land in a way that permanently alters the character of the area and establishes a precedent that cannot be undone.

Please include this correspondence in the public record associated with this rezoning request. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Derrick Chavis
27944 Resident
[REDACTED]

From: Robin Harris and Lynn Mathis (██████████ Hertford)

Strengthened Economic and Land-Use Planning Argument Against REZ-25-01

Rezoning rural land to permit a dollar store represents a clear departure from sound land-use planning principles and would produce negative economic impacts that outweigh any perceived short-term benefits.

1. Inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Rural Zoning Purpose

A large national discount retailer dropped in the middle of a rural community is fundamentally incompatible with the rural character of the area. Rural zoning exists to preserve low-density development, open space, agricultural uses, and small-scale local businesses. A dollar store introduces high commercial intensity, increased traffic, large signage, bright lighting, and a building scale, which are urban in nature and out of place in a rural setting. In addition, an unpleasant by product of these stores is trash from bags and wrappers blown onto adjacent residential properties and farm fields. We see it all the time next to dollar stores across the state.

Once this type of development is allowed, it sets a precedent that erodes the very protections rural zoning is meant to provide. Allowing this rezoning to accommodate a national chain retailer constitutes **Spot Zoning**. Spot Zoning is defined by courts as the singling out of a small parcel for treatment inconsistent with surrounding land uses and the comprehensive plan, primarily for private benefit (*Chrismon v. Guilford County, North Carolina*).

Such an action weakens the predictability and credibility of the zoning framework and invites further requests for similar commercial encroachments, accelerating rural sprawl.

2. Preservation of Community Character Is a Legitimate Government Interest

Courts have repeatedly affirmed that the preservation of rural character and community identity is a legitimate and substantial government interest. In (*Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.*), the U.S. Supreme Court recognized that separating land uses and protecting neighborhood character are valid exercises of police power.

Dollar stores are high-visibility commercial uses with standardized architecture, signage, and lighting that are inconsistent with rural scale and design. Approving such a use contradicts widely accepted planning principles articulated by the American Planning Association, which emphasize that rural areas should accommodate only low-intensity commercial uses that directly support local needs and rural economies. It is important to note that the local need for a store is already being met by a locally owned store just 1,300 feet from the proposed rezoning site.

3. Adverse Economic Impact on Existing Local Businesses

While zoning cannot be used solely to protect a business from competition, courts have recognized that **the broader economic health of a community is a valid planning**

consideration (*Metromedia, Inc. v. City of San Diego*). When rezoning enables a use that is likely to eliminate existing local services, decision-makers may consider those impacts.

Dollar stores operate on a market-capture model rather than economic expansion. Planning literature and rural development studies repeatedly show that such stores divert limited rural consumer spending away from existing businesses, often leading to closures.

The local country store currently fulfills the same essential retail function. The rezoning would unfairly disadvantage an existing small, family-owned country store. Unlike a national chain, the local store purchases goods locally, reinvests its profits locally, provides stable employment, and contributes to the social fabric of the area. Dollar stores rely on corporate scale, centralized purchasing, and aggressive pricing strategies that small rural businesses cannot compete with. Allowing rezoning for a chain retailer effectively uses government action to tip the scales against a locally owned business, which contradicts the principles of fair competition and community economic resilience.

In addition, dollar store profits are taken from the community and returned to corporate headquarters, resulting in economic leakage rather than sustainable local growth. This pattern weakens rural economic resilience by concentrating retail access in a single corporate operator with no obligation to the community.

4. Scattered Commercial Development, Irreversible Loss of Rural Land and Precedent Setting

Rezoning rural land for commercial retail use constitutes a permanent change in land-use pattern. Once the precedent is established, it becomes increasingly difficult to deny similar rezoning requests, leading to fragmented development, loss of agricultural land, and erosion of rural identity. This is leapfrog development, which land-use law strongly disfavors. Leapfrog development patterns in rural areas blur the distinct edge between urban and rural areas, which can lead to conflicts over land use making it difficult to implement effective land management and preservation policies. Courts have upheld denials of such rezoning requests (*Ashby v. Town of Cary, North Carolina*).

Sound land-use planning requires evaluating not only the immediate proposal, but also its cumulative impact over time. Approving this rezoning prioritizes short-term convenience over long-term planning objectives and undermines the county's ability to guide growth in a deliberate and sustainable manner.

Closing Position

In conclusion, rezoning this rural land to allow a dollar store, is incompatible with the area's character, undermines an existing local business, and sets a damaging precedent for future development. Protecting rural zoning and supporting locally owned enterprises are essential to preserve the economic health, identity, and sustainability of the community.

Based on established planning principles and supporting case law, denial of the rezoning request is legally defensible.