

TOWN OF FORT MILL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 20, 2026
205 North White Street
6:00 PM

Present: Chairman Mark Kerr, Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli, Dan Stout, Sarah Curtis, Jonathan Hutchinson, Daniel Reynolds, Erin Pratt, Planning Director Penelope Karagounis, Deputy Planning Director Joey Adams-Raczkowski, Planner Emily Hawkins

Absent: None

Guest: See attached sign-in sheet

Chairman Mark Kerr called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20th, 2026.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Chairman Mark Kerr asked for a motion to nominate a Chairperson. Commissioner Sarah Curtis made the motion to nominate Mark Kerr as Chairperson. Commissioner Dan Stout seconded the motion. The motion to nominate Mark Kerr as Chairperson was approved by a vote of 7-0.

Chairman Mark Kerr asked for a motion to nominate a Vice Chairperson. Chairman Mark Kerr made the motion to nominate Matt Lucarelli as Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Erin Pratt seconded the motion. The motion to nominate Matt Lucarelli as Vice Chairperson was approved by a vote of 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Mark Kerr asked for a motion to approve Planning Commission meeting minutes from December 16th, 2025, to be made. Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli made the motion. Commissioner Johnathan Hutchinson seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes from December 16th, 2025, was approved by a vote of 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Commercial Appearance Review: The Print Shop

Planner Emily Hawkins gave a brief report of the request from Travis Tolson, to grant Commercial Appearance Review Approval for a change in the height of the grain silo at The Print Shop. The height was previously approved April 20, 2021, for 24' tall, and is seeking for a change to 31', with 29' being an option after removal.

The applicant, Travis Tolson, added that he was unaware of the difference in height before installing the grain silo, and it now stands at 31' instead of the previously approved 24'. Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli asked if the top two feet were essential for use, and Mr. Tolson noted that the optional 29' height does not affect the usability of the grain silo itself.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli made a motion to recommend approval to maintain the height at 31'. Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to recommend approval of the change in silo height to 31', was approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Commercial Appearance Review: McDonalds (Catawba Ridge Market)

Deputy Planning Director Joey Adams-Raczowski gave a brief overview of the request from McDonalds USA LLC, to grant Commercial Appearance Review approval for the construction of a new McDonalds. Mr. Adams-Raczowski noted that the applicant had spoken with the Commission on October 21st, 2025, and that they were here to confirm changes from that meeting, and to ask some further questions regarding landscaping and dumpster enclosure.

Mr. Adams-Raczowski suggested two things for discussion with the applicant: Altering the color of the brick of the dumpster enclosure, to improve the street-facing façade of the enclosure, and to enhance the landscaping buffer around the enclosure, following zoning ordinances.

Oliver Kaija, with Bohler Engineering, representing the applicant, presented plans that identify the change from standard McDonalds design language to the proposed alterations from October 21st. Mr. Kaija addressed Mr. Adams-Raczowski's concerns, agreeing with his additions for the dumpster enclosure. Mr. Kaija noted some additional changes that would be implemented regarding landscape lighting and adding trees. Chairman Mark Kerr agreed with Mr. Adams-Raczowski's sentiment, noting that the dumpster enclosure is the primary issue at hand today.

Commissioner Sarah Curtis requested clarification on the location and amount of canopy trees in front of the property. Mr. Kaija indicated that the number of trees is a CAD problem, and that the plans will contain the correct amount and type of trees. Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli asked about the color and type of gate on the dumpster enclosure, noting concerns for degradation. Mr. Kaija clarified that the material will stand up to the elements. Commissioner Dan Stout asked about outdoor seating and bike racks. Mr. Kaija indicated that there were no plans for outdoor seating, but that he could check with his engineers and see if there is room for an addition of a bike rack. Commissioner Jonathan Hutchinson suggested the inclusion of lighting along the pedestrian path from the road.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Hutchinson made a motion to recommend Commercial Appearance Review approval upon the condition that staff is allowed to make minor administrative changes. Commissioner Erin Pratt seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to recommend approval of the Commercial Appearance Review with the condition that staff can make minor administrative changes, with the amendment from Chairman Kerr to include the dumpster enclosure aesthetics, dumpster enclosure plantings, site lighting, gate materials, and bike racks, was approved.

2. Commercial Appearance Review: MPV Elizabeth LLC

Planner Emily Hawkins gave a brief overview of the request from Bailey Patrick, MPV Elizabeth LLC, to grant Commercial Appearance Review approval for the construction of a 12,000 square foot neighborhood commercial building.

Ms. Hawkins noted that the property is located at the intersection of Hillside Roll Road and Fort Mill Parkway and is part of the overall Elizabeth subdivision. Ms. Hawkins added that the site is currently zoned MXU, and is in the COD, Corridor Overlay District. Ms. Hawkins noted that the applicant states the purpose of the development is to bring essential retail services to the area.

Bailey Patrick added that they had taken the Commission's suggestions to add a pedestrian-scale light on the north side of the building, to aid in pedestrian access. Mr. Patrick added that landscaping had been improved around their dumpster enclosure and made a verbal commitment to adding a bike rack.

Commissioner Jonathan Hutchinson brought up the challenges regarding restaurant tenants, and the ability of the design to conceal mechanical units from Fort Mill Parkway. Mr. Patrick indicated that due to the elevations of the Parkway and the site, cars and pedestrians will not be able to see the roof. Planning Director Penelope Karagounis asked about a screen wall to cover utility meters. Mr. Patrick highlighted an L-shaped brick wall to hide the utility items.

Chairman Mark Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Sarah Curtis made a motion to recommend Commercial Appearance Review approval to allow staff to make minor modifications upon the conditions the bike rack is added, as well as the confirmation of the screen wall and replacing of the canopy trees that are removed during construction. Additionally, Curtis added that staff is allowed to make minor administrative changes. Commissioner Daniel Reynolds seconded that motion. By vote of 7-0, the motion to recommend approval of the Commercial Appearance Review to allow staff to make minor modifications with the condition that proposed changes were implemented and that staff can make minor administrative changes, was approved.

3. Commercial Appearance Review: The Loom at Fort Mill

Planning Director Penelope Karagounis presented the request from Patrick Tormeno, BB+M Architecture, representing Unique USA. to grant Commercial Appearance Review approval for the construction of a new 4-story multifamily building with ground floor retail space.

Ms. Karagounis noted that the request is for the new building and parking deck, not the historic mill site. Jerry Gronske, Patrick Tormeno, and Justin Maxwell presented their development plan, including 4 stories, 80 apartments, ground floor retail, parking deck with sublevel for residents and top level is open to the public. Mr. Tormeno noted that the parking deck fronts the building on 3 sides, and that the basement level parking and top level have separate ingress and egress.

Mr. Tormeno briefs the Commission with an introduction into the design of the proposed building. Mr. Tormeno notes that the new building will use similar design language and materials to the mill, but with a different color palette. Mr. Tormeno described the design of the new building, and how it attempts to retain the historic character of the mill. Mr. Tormeno noted the windows will be dark bronze, and that the color palette of the building will continue around the entirety of the façade.

Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli asked for clarification on the number of residential units in the new building. Mr. Tormeno indicated that the new construction will contain 80 units, and the mill will contain 145, with a total of 225 residential units. Vice Chairman Lucarelli asked about the design of the long face of the building, at the highest elevation of the building, and if it will match the brick of the façade and the mill. Mr. Tormeno noted that their decision to choose board and batten was due to cost, not due to design choices. Commissioner Sarah Curtis added that the road, while being a side road, is still heavily trafficked, and should be treated with the same design effort as the front façade. Mr. Tormeno noted that the design has balcony elements, which will break up the board and batten design of the long face.

Chairman Mark Kerr asked if there had been any input by the current homeowners that would be facing the site. Justin Maxwell indicated that the applicant had held a public meeting during a rezoning, and that the attendees had very little concerns.

Mr. Maxwell presented a new landscaping design. Mr. Maxwell noted that the introduction of concrete and freestanding walls to add to the industrial element, as well as more outdoor seating opportunities. Mr. Maxwell noted the addition of trees, light poles, and trees. Mr. Maxwell noted the addition of a brick sidewalk, as well as a raised sidewalk on the front side to act as a slowing mechanism for pedestrian safety. Mr. Maxwell noted a compromise between their designers and FMFD, to install an amount and type of trees that will still allow for adequate fire access. Mr. Maxwell noted the overall improvement of the site in terms of landscaping density.

Mr. Maxwell detailed some of the materials and design for the plan. Mr. Maxwell noted the use of darker chocolate brown, for accents, and lighter shale grey for the main paver areas and concrete. Most of the outdoor planters will be tenant-based, to customize their space. Mr. Maxwell noted the addition of bike parking inside the tenant parking deck. Mr. Maxwell emphasized the use of lush and floral greenery to soften the walls of the building. Vice Chairman Lucarelli asked about the possibility of urban art or sculpture on site to add to the community and historical aspect of the project. Mr. Gronske noted the implementation of a museum in the leasing office which will help tell the story of the mill's emphasis on the Town and the development.

Vice Chairman Lucarelli noted the importance of lighting on the tabletop parking deck, not only for safety but also for lowering footcandle bleed into neighboring homes. Mr. Maxwell notes their focus on reducing the use of retaining walls and using planters and greenery to soften the view from Williamson St. and other residential units.

Vice Chairman Lucarelli notes the importance of this building and development for the future of the Town's development, and the impact of approving this design on future developments in coming years and suggests a motion to defer.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Sarah Curtis made a motion to defer on the basis of wanting to see architectural façade changes, including parking deck elevations, and for landscaping to be submitted for review as well. Commissioner Stout seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to defer, pending landscaping plan, parking deck elevations, and façade updates submission, was approved.

4. Preliminary Plat Request: Williams Reserve

Planning Director Penelope Karagounis presented the request from Mattamy Carolina Corporation to review and approve a preliminary plat for a proposed Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) called Williams Reserve consisting of 78.26 acres at the intersection of Fort Mill Parkway and Williams Road and along Williams Road. The applicant also is requesting a subdivision variance for the block length.

Ms. Karagounis noted that this PND is proposed to be split into three “villages”. This property was originally given PND zoning in 2008. A sketch plan was approved in 2024, however since there was no concept plan, the Town is required to go through subdivision planning process through the Planning Commission.

Ms. Karagounis indicated that the current minimum required block length is 500 feet, and the applicant is requesting a minimum block length of 150 feet for a specific section of Village 3, for additional design flexibility, which will allow for greater open space.

Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli asked for clarification on the block length proposal. Deputy Planning Director Joey Adams-Raczkowski explained that the Town’s current zoning ordinance does not give a detailed description of a way to measure block length, so this variance is to determine the measurement, not to change any of the parcels. John Holcomb, representing the applicant, indicated the proposed benefits of the change in block length are improved fire access, traffic calming, and increased open space.

Chairman Mark Kerr asked if the board had any concerns about this block length variance. All attendees indicated they were okay with the outcome of this variance.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Jonathan Hutchinson made a motion to grant the subdivision block length variance as submitted. Commissioner Dan Stout seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to grant the subdivision block length variance as submitted, was approved.

Ms. Karagounis presented the second portion of this Plat request; the Williams Reserve Preliminary Plat. Ms. Karagounis noted that this Preliminary Plat will be subject to review by SCDOT, which may necessitate a revision to the entrance alignment and/or design features. The applicant is aware that this may result in seeking revised preliminary plan approval. Ms. Karagounis also noted that the townhouse portion of the development is not subject to Commercial Appearance Review. Additionally, it was made aware that the plan currently meets all the Planning Department’s requirements.

Commissioner Sarah Curtis requested starting with Village 1, and walking through all three plat portions separately. Vice Chairman Lucarelli asked if the applicant is meeting requirements for lot size, width, length, setbacks, access, green space, density, buffers, and all other requirements. Ms. Karagounis indicated that all requirements were met. Ms. Karagounis noted that the variance approval increases the efficacy of the plat and its approval. Commissioner Stout asked about the truncation of the roads in Villages 1 & 3. Mr. Holcomb noted that the ends of these roads allow for future connections with neighboring developments as time goes on. Vice Chairman Lucarelli asked if the right of way will be provided for future road connections as the Town annexes future properties into the Town’s jurisdiction. Mr. Holcomb indicated that is correct.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Erin Pratt made a motion to approve the preliminary subdivision plat as submitted. Vice Chairman Lucarelli seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to approve the preliminary subdivision plat as submitted.

5. Request for Approval of Street Names

Planner Emily Hawkins gave a brief overview of the request from Mattamy Carolina Corporation to approve street and village names for the Williams Reserve PND project in Fort Mill.

Ms. Hawkins noted that Planning Commission approval is required to authorize road and village names within subdivisions.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Dan Stout made a motion to approve the road and village names. Commissioner Erin Pratt seconded that motion. By vote of 7-0, the motion to recommend approval of the road and village names for the Williams Reserve PND project, was approved.

6. Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan: Fort Mill Our Path Forward

Planning Director Penelope Karagounis presented an overview of the collaboration between Bolton & Menk and the Town of Fort Mill to finalize both the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Master Plan. Ms. Karagounis noted that there was extensive outreach with the public to ensure citizen approval for both documents. Ms. Karagounis also noted that the two plans will be further positive growth and preservation for Fort Mill's future.

Chairman Mark Kerr noted that he believed the board would not accept the extension of Main Street down into Springs Street to the intersection of W. Elliot Street. Commissioner Sarah Curtis asked if there the zoning and land use ordinances are stringent, or whether the applications for commercial development will be flexible to fit the needs expressed in the Downtown Master Plan. The Board discussed the power that the Planning Commission holds over decisions regarding business proposals. Vice Chairman Matt Lucarelli noted fears of overdevelopment in Fort Mill, and possibility of the Downtown Master Plan to provide a Downtown Manager that could assist with the process to attract commercial tenants. Ms. Karagounis indicated the need to implement code changes, to allow for current project to meet the expectations of the future Downtown Master Plan.

Commissioner Erin Pratt noted a mismatch between the road identification in a diagram on Page 61 of the document, regarding the Gateway Strategy. Additionally, Pratt proposed a change in syntax regarding pedestrian safety, removing the word "unsafe".

Commissioner Dan Stout asked if the Comprehensive Plan's vision aligns with York County. Ms. Karagounis indicated that the consultant reviewed the York County Comprehensive Plan while working on the Town Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked about the possibility of implementing a pedestrian plan around the railroad. Ms. Karagounis noted that the Town is eager to develop pedestrian access and safety around the railroad, but that it is up to the rail company to agree to collaborate with the Town.

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion. Commissioner Pratt made a motion to approve the resolution of support of the documents with the modification to update page 61's legend for the Gateway Strategy and remove the first sentence from the "D" Spratt Street, Harris Street, Massey Street section of the Comprehensive Plan. Vice Chairman Lucarelli seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion to recommend approval of the resolution of support of the documents with the modification to update page 61's legend for the Gateway Strategy and remove the first sentence from the "D" Spratt Street, Harris Street, Massey Street section of the Comprehensive Plan, was approved.

Ms. Karagounis noted that the public hearing will be on February 23rd, and that it would be great for a few of the Planning Commissioners to attend.

ADJOURN

Chairman Kerr entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Jonathan Hutchinson made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stout seconded that motion. By a vote of 7-0, the motion of adjournment was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carter Bliss, Planner
February 6, 2026

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

JANUARY 20, 2026

ATTENDANCE SHEET

Name	Address
Jerry Grosske	793 Fort Mill Hwy
Travis Tolson	113 Railroad Ave
JENNIFER PEELK	120 ACADEMY
Bailey Patrick	Charlotte, NC
Sara Shirley	580 Kingsley Park Dr.
John Holcomb	580 Kingsley Park Dr.
JOHN MARKS	3024 VIRGINIA TRAIL CT
DUNHAM MARKS	" "
Oliver Kaija	5301 Heatherbrook Circle Raleigh NC
JUSTINE MAXWELL	512 KATONAH AVE, CHARLAK, NC
Lily Carlos	905 Kenilworth Ave, Charlotte, NC
PATRICIA TORMENO	2903 MORRISON STREET, CHARLOTTE, NC