

January 6, 2026

A public hearing of the Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, January 6, at 6 p.m. in City Council Chambers, 155 Johnston Street, Rock Hill SC.

MEMBERS PRESENT Randy Graham, Duane Christopher, Shelly Goodner, M. Stephanie Haselrig, Stephen Loney, and Darrell Watts

MEMBERS ABSENT Jarrunis Yates

STAFF PRESENT Shana Marshburn, Dennis Fields, Leah Youngblood, and Ainsley Ellis

1. Call to Order

Chair Randy Graham called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2. Recite the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Recognitions

- a. Shana Marshburn introduced Stephen Loney as a new Planning Commission member.

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approval of Minutes from the October 7, 2025, meeting.

Commissioner Duane Christopher made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Stephanie Haselrig seconded, and the motion carried by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent).

- b. Approval of minutes from the September 22, 2025, Planning Commission-City Council joint workshop.

Commissioner Christopher made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Haselrig seconded, and the motion carried by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent).

5. Public Hearing Items

- a. **Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition M-2025-17 by Riverchase Realty, LLC (Hitesh Patel) to rezone approximately 13.2 acres including right-of-way a 1505 and 1515 Riverchase Blvd. from General Commercial (GC) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) to Master Plan-Commercial (MP-C). Tax Parcels 662-05-01-248 & -244.**

Shana Marshburn, Planner III, presented the staff report.

Chair Randy Graham asked whether the one-year extension for the length of stay would still be an exception or would it be standard. Ms. Marshburn stated that this would be standard, since they are expected to be extended stay hotels.

Commissioner Darrell Watts questioned who would provide enforcement for the one-year extension. Ms. Marshburn said that staff would work with code enforcement. Mr. Dennis Fields, Development and Zoning Manager, stated that the Neighborhood Services department would handle any code violations.

Chair Graham asked how the extended stay limit would be tracked. Mr. Fields said that staff would have to ask for the hotel's registration rolls month to month with Neighborhood Services if they believed there were violations at a specific location. He reminded the Commission that this project would contain kitchenettes and other home appliances, but the current request is to extend the limit for the length of stay.

Commissioner Stephanie Haselrig asked the reason for the exception request to revert back to Office and Institutional (OI) after the 2-year vesting period. Ms. Marshburn stated that the Single-Family 2 (SF-2) zoning district does not allow for a lot of uses other than residential, but that OI zoning district would allow for the applicant to have more commercial uses.

Chair Graham mentioned that there are a few substantial deviations and that he wanted to make sure that the Commission is setting precedent and not just granting the deviations. He noted that the 20 ft wide buffer and 45 ft deviation are very large variances and wanted confirmation that this is due to the undevelopable area on the east side of the property. Ms. Marshburn confirmed and noted that there are many physical restraints, which restricts the development to only a portion of the property.

Commissioner Watts noted his concerns with past issues on extended stays. He was also concerned with the traffic impact on Celanese Rd by I-77. Commissioner Watts agreed with Chair Graham about the buffer and asked why the development couldn't be shifted toward the stormwater ponds and moving the parking to the back.

Chair Graham asked whether there was a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA). Ms. Marshburn confirmed that a TIA was completed but the proposed development did not warrant any issues.

Commissioner Stephen Loney also mentioned his concern for the traffic and for the residential area. He asked if Ms. Marshburn could elaborate on the TIA to make sure that this is the best option for the residents. Ms. Marshburn explained the process of the TIA and stated that although there have been traffic issues around Celanese Rd. in the past, this current TIA did not warrant any improvements. She also explained the recent and proposed traffic improvements for the area.

Chair Graham opened the floor to the applicant.

The applicant, Hitesh Patel, and engineer, Michael Newman, 215 Johnston St., stated that this is an infill development that fits in with the City's Comprehensive Plan and maintains the core value of not having a suburban sprawl. Mr. Newman pointed out that over 50% of this site is constrained by the physical aspects, which is why there are so many deviations. He also said that the City has requested an additional 25 feet for the existing raw water line easement for protection and future maintenance and he is

providing that for them. He reiterated that the developer had already agreed to participate in the planned future landscape district that the City is looking to do.

Mr. Newman addressed Chair Graham's and Commissioner Watt's concerns and stated that there is an existing floodplain and stormwater pond, which is the reason that they are unable to move the development back. He noted that today's standards do not make it viable for them to reach the City's requirements.

Commissioner Watts asked whether the Duke easement was why they cannot shift the development. Mr. Newman confirmed and stated that the City's request for an additional 25 feet to the raw water easement is why the building couldn't be shifted west any further.

Commissioner Duane Christopher asked why they have two facilities and not just one larger structure with more rooms to take advantage of the space. Mr. Patel stated that his company is lacking two extended stay, mid-level upscale products. He noted that they are both upscale properties with 24/7 security around the buildings and 24/7 service. Mr. Patel said they had asked for the time extension because it is an upscale property, and he does not want to turn down individuals who are doing business in the area for an extended period of time.

Commissioner Watts asked whether the rate would be at a higher level. Mr. Patel stated that the rate would be approximately \$180-\$250 a night. Commissioner Watts asked whether he was a franchise for Residence Inn. Mr. Patel confirmed and also said that Marriott and Hilton have both been interested in these properties.

Commissioner Christopher talked about the difference between sizes for the properties. He stated that the most practical and efficient number is somewhere between 115 and 125 rooms. He asked for confirmation on whether the two hotels with 115 to 125 suite units would be a better option than a single hotel with 200 rooms. Mr. Patel confirmed the two hotels would typically be a better option, especially during the off season with only 20-30% occupancy. He said differentiating between the two properties helps financially.

Commissioner Haselrig asked how the buildings would impact the vested rights because they have a two-year period. Mr. Fields stated that in the event that the applicants start the project with phase one, then staff would assume that they go through with phase two, since they started the project. He said that this would come back to the Planning Commission for major site plan approval at some point, which would then add the new vesting stage. Mr. Fields noted that certain approvals restart the vested rights deadline. He stated that eventually the vested rights would expire in a case where there was no work being done. Ms. Marshburn added that they can apply for an extension for the vested rights.

Mr. Patel mentioned that the second hotel is projected to be Hilton, Marriott, Hyatt, or ISG, and they are in active conversation with them. He noted that

they are aggressive on locking in the brand as quickly as possible, and the decision will hopefully have a solution within the next few months.

Chair Graham opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Commissioner Shelly Goodner made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning of 1505 and 1515 Riverchase Blvd from General Commercial (GC) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) to Master Plan-Commercial (MP-C). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Christopher. The motion was approved **by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent)**.

- b. Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition M-2025-19 by Bill Elliott (Elliott Paetners, LTD) to annex and rezone approximately 4.4 acres at 540 Mt. Gallant Rd. from Urban Development (UD) in York County to Industry General (IG). Tax Parcel 664-00-00-008.**

Shana Marshburn, Planner III, presented the staff report.

Chair Graham opened the floor to the applicant.

Matt Sinkovitz, 1111 Metropolitan Ave, Charlotte, NC 28204, was present as the Civil Engineer on behalf of the applicant to answer any questions.

Chair Graham opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Commissioner Christopher made a motion to recommend approval of the annexation and rezoning of 540 Mt. Gallant Rd. from Urban Development (UD) in York County to Industry General (IG). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion was approved **by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent)**.

- c. Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition M-2025-20 by Vincent Hicklin (Camp Flight Academy) to rezone approximately 3.88 acres including right-of-way at 648 and 652 S. Jones Ave. from Single Family-5 (SF-5) to Office and Institutional (OI). Tax Parcels 625-04-01-014 & -033.**

Shana Marshburn, Planner III, presented the staff report.

Commissioner Watts asked whether the City has regulations for operating hours for a daycare. Ms. Marshburn stated that they cannot operate the playground after 8pm, but the Office and Institutional (OI) zoning district does not have any hours of operation restrictions other than the playground areas.

Chair Graham asked whether the existing playground was 30 feet away from the property line. Ms. Marshburn answered no, but that a new playground would have to stay out of the buffer or if they expand the current playground on the property.

Chair Graham noted that there is a historical marker located in the front and asked if any other historic related issues could affect the use of property. Ms. Marshburn stated that there is a marker, but the property is not within the City's historic overlay, so there would not be any additional regulations with the rezoning.

Chair Graham opened the floor to the applicant.

The applicant, Vincent Hicklin, 351 Pendleton St, was present to answer any questions. He stated that this site would be their second location, with 30 kids, and they will only be using a portion of the church. The operating hours with the Department of Social Services (DSS) can only be open for four hours during the school year (2:30pm-6:30pm), and twelve hours during the summer. The daycare will not be operating during the church hours.

Chair Graham asked what ages they serve. Mr. Hicklin said that Camp Flight Academy help ages 5-12 and recently started a program for middle school and high school students.

Commissioner Watts asked whether they would have DSS certification. Mr. Hicklin stated they are currently already registered with DSS and have been in operation for ten years, so they are familiar with the DSS guidelines.

Chair Graham opened the floor for public comment.

Bishop Eric Gailliard, 2418 Caleb Pointe Circle, Fort Mill, SC 29715, the Pastor for the church, was present in favor of the request.

Commissioner Watts made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning of 648 and 652 S. Jones Ave. from Single Family-5 (SF-5) to Office and Institutional (OI). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Haselrig. The motion was approved **by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent)**.

- d. **Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition T-2025-03 by the Rock Hill Planning Commission to amend the Zoning Ordinance standards related to the Rural (RU) zoning district. *This item was deferred.***
- e. **Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition T-2025-04 by the Rock Hill City Manager to amend the Zoning Ordinance standards related to Chapter 5, Land Use: Accessory and Temporary Uses related to Mobile Food Vendors and Special Event Permits.**

Dennis Fields, Development and Zoning Manager, presented the staff report.

Commissioner Christopher asked whether the mobile food vendors are required to ask the City for a permit if they are only moving to each allowed location. Mr. Fields stated that the vendors only need the property owner's permission for allowed sites, but must still follow the City's rules with business licensing. He stated that the only time the vendors would need the Planning Commission's permission is if the location is not listed in an allowed location.

Commissioner Christopher asked whether there is a fee required for special events permits. Ms. Leah Youngblood, Planning and Development Director, stated that there is a \$50 fee for temporary use permits, which are used as special events permits.

Commissioner Loney asked how staff will regulate which special events allow alcohol. Mr. Fields stated that the applicant would have to include that request on their application, including if they have approval from the State for liquor licenses. He noted that mobile food vendors are prohibited from selling alcohol or THC products, unless it is part of an approved special event permit.

Chair Graham opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Commissioner Christopher made a motion to recommend approval of the amendment of the Zoning Ordinance standards related to Chapter 5, Land Use: Accessory and Temporary Uses related to Mobile Food Vendors and Special Event Permits. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Goodner. The motion was approved **by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent)**.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consider approval of the 2026 Planning Commission meeting calendar.** *This item was deferred from the October 7, 2025, meeting.*

Commissioner Haselrig made a motion to approve the 2026 Calendar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0 (Yates absent).

- b. Continuing Education Opportunities**

Staff welcomed the Planning Commission to the new year and reminded the members that their Continuing Education credits have restarted, with three hours to complete before 2027.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

- a.** Staff reminded the Planning Commission about the upcoming holiday dinner on Wednesday, January 28th, at 6pm.

8. Adjourn.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.