

OFFICERS:
JOHN F. CONNET
City Manager
ANGELA S. BEEKER
City Attorney
JILL MURRAY
City Clerk

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PLANNING DIVISION

Community Development Director's Report

Neighborhood Compatibility Meeting Summary – Cottages at Hendersonville (LEO)
Project: Conditional Zoning District Application – File # 25-48-CZD
Date of Meeting: June 30, 2025

Introduction

A Neighborhood Compatibility Meeting (NCM) for the proposed *Cottages at Hendersonville* development was held on June 30, 2025. Approximately 115 area property owners, community residents, the development team and City staff attended the meeting in person. An additional 30 area property owners and community residents, approximately, participated via an online portal established through Zoom.

The purpose of the meeting was to collect feedback from community members on the compatibility of a proposed 180-unit residential development project and associated rezoning for a 20.95-acre property along Haywood Road hereinafter referred to as the Justus tract. The City of Hendersonville Zoning Ordinance defines compatibility as "Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment (rezoning) is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject property."

This report summarizes the compatibility concerns that were raised by the community during the meeting. This is not intended to be a literal recounting of the discussion, but rather a report highlighting the zoning compatibility-related issues that were raised and discussed. The report also notes the developer commitments presented at the NCM which exceed the regulatory standards in place under the City's ordinance.

The Planning Team is grateful for the dedicated interest of the community in this project. We present this report to document our understanding of the concerns the community has with this development proposal as they were represented in the NCM, along with presenting what we understand the developer has offered in terms of proposals to address concerns raised.

160 6th Ave. E. Hendersonville, NC 28792

www.hendersonvillenc.gov

Phone: 828.697.3010 Fax: 828.698.6185



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Developer Commitments:

The following commitments were presented by the developer at the Neighborhood Compatibility Meeting held on June 30th, 2025. The commitments were presented as a response to concerns raised during an informal Town Hall¹ meeting held on March 12, 2025, at 125 S. Main St., Hendersonville (formerly the Main Event).

1. Enhanced Stormwater Management

- o Increased stormwater retention capacity to exceed minimum requirements.
- o Added consideration of underground detention systems.
- o Commitment to protect the on-site blueline stream.

2. Tree Canopy and Natural Buffers

- o Increased the preservation target for tree canopy from the minimum 20% to approximately 30% of the site.
- o Maintained natural vegetation buffers along the southeastern property line adjacent to existing single-family homes.
- Added an 8' privacy fence along portions of the eastern and western boundaries as requested by neighbors.

3. Building and Site Layout Modifications

- Placed single-family style structures (duplexes) along the eastern edge to improve compatibility with existing homes.
- o Increased the buffer distances from the property line to the proposed buildings.
- o Limited building heights to one or two stories in certain areas to align with neighborhood character.

4. On-Site Amenities and Design Features

- Incorporated pocket parks, a greenway trail along the stream, a dog park, and interconnected sidewalks.
- Provided private, fenced backyards for all units.
- o Implemented an on-site trash concierge service with sealed bins to address wildlife concerns.

¹ There were no City Planning staff in attendance at this event. As a private event there is no official record of the discussion.

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Community Compatibility Concerns:

The information provided below categorizes community feedback into a series of topics with some additional details for each. These are representative of an extensive conversation on these topics and highlight elements that were raised repeatedly:

1. Access Concerns

- Concern that the single access point on Haywood Road is insufficient; residents strongly believe a secondary access point is needed to alleviate congestion and address emergency response access.
- Concern that flooding at the proposed bridge could isolate residents and hinder emergency response.

2. Traffic Concerns

 Concern that additional vehicle trips will worsen traffic congestion along the Haywood Road (Rte 191) corridor, which was described by meeting participants as an overburdened corridor with existing functional deficiencies.

3. Density and Zoning Compatibility

- Concern that the proposed density (8.59 units/acre) is incompatible with the surrounding R-15 single-family zoning and that the project should remain at a lower density consistent with current zoning.
- o Concern that the project's housing styles, primarily attached cottages (duplexes) and townhomes does not align with the character of adjacent neighborhoods.

4. Environmental Impact

- Questions about stormwater management during major storm events and the potential impact on downstream properties.
- Concerns about impacts on existing wildlife habitats and the adequacy of wetland and stream buffer protections.

5. Neighborhood Character and Affordability

- o Some attendees expressed skepticism that the proposed attainable rental units align with local income levels and do not meet the definition of "affordable housing" for families in the area.
- Several participants requested that the developer pursue alternatives such as a property swap with the City to preserve the parcel as parkland.



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Community Development Director's Notes:

Developer Commitments:

Each of these commitments will be reviewed as a component of the Development Review process by City Staff from all relevant departments. Commitments made by the developer during the NCM may be formalized via city recommended conditions introduced to assure adherence to said commitments made at the NCM. Staff will have any city staff recommended conditions in the staff report prepared for the Planning Board review stage.

Community Compatibility Concerns:

Compatibility issues raised during the Neighborhood Compatibility Meeting must be legally defensible within the context of North Carolina law to be used to require a development proposal to be denied, altered or approved. North Carolina law establishes a basic right to develop property and a basic right for a local government to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community, with both being assessed from a "reasonableness" standard. In short, what is a reasonable amount of development for a specific parcel to accommodate and what is a reasonable regulatory requirement to impose to limit undue impacts on the surrounding community from said development. Staff will review the issues raised during the NCM, consider the requirements of our ordinance and present any city staff recommended conditions as a component of the staff report prepared for the Planning Board review stage.

Prepared by:

Lew Holloway Community Development Director City of Hendersonville 160 6th Ave. E. Hendersonville, NC 28792 www.hendersonvillenc.gov

Phone: (828) 697-3010 | Fax: (828) 698-6185

July 14, 2025