



The Planning Board meeting was held at the Glendel Stephenson Municipal Building located at 106 E. Washington Street, Mebane, NC 27302 and livestreamed via YouTube. The video can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEJggJCrvtk>.

**Members Present:**

Judy Taylor, Chair  
Kurt Pearson, Vice Chair  
Colin Cannell  
William Chapman  
Keith Hoover  
Gale Pettiford  
David Scott  
Edward Tulauskas

**Members Absent:**

Susan Semonite

**City Staff Present:**

Ashley Ownbey, Development Director  
Briana Perkins, City Planner  
Isabelle Christiansen, City Planner  
Kirk Montgomery, IT Director

**1. Call to Order**

At 6:30 p.m. Chair Taylor called the meeting to order.

**2. Approval of August 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Gale Pettiford made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. David Scott seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**3. City Council Actions Update**

Ashley Ownbey informed the Board that the City Council approved all three proposed rezonings unanimously. She said the City Council approved the rezoning for the NACC subdivision with additional conditions related to the phasing of amenities.

**4. Request to amend a Special Use Permit for a +/- 1.46-acre property addressed 5004 Mrs. White Lane (GPIN: 9826180241) to allow for an increase in clients at an existing childcare center by Donna Hester.**

Donna Hester is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit to increase the number of clients served by her childcare center, Brighter Beginnings Childcare, at 5004 Mrs. White Lane. The current center was approved by a Special Use Permit in 2018 for no more than 12 children. The new request is for the childcare center to serve no more than 30 children, with weekday operation between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The property is located on +/-1.46 acres in the Mebane Extraterritorial Jurisdiction and zoned R-20, Residential District.



The staff report is provided in the meeting agenda packet available [here](#).

Isabelle Christiansen provided a more detailed overview and PowerPoint presentation of the request.

Colin Cannell asked about the gradations of special use permits for daycares in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Ashley Ownbey replied reviewed the three designations of childcare centers identified in the Table of Permitted Uses.

Colin Cannell asked if there was anything different or any additional requirements that had to be met for the special use permit as far as the City was concerned. Ashley Ownbey replied no, it was just an increase of children at the site.

Donna Hester, applicant and owner of Brighter Beginnings Childcare, presented the four findings of the special use permit:

1. Expanding the facility would not materially endanger the public health or safety.
  - The applicant has provided information about the septic tank approval, North Carolina State Licensing Certificate, and a site plan with pick-up & drop-off procedures.
2. Expanding the facility would not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting properties.
  - A report from Patterson Appraisal Co, LLC stated that the expansion of the children at the current site would not negatively affect the property values of adjoining properties or properties within the neighborhood.
3. Expanding the facility would be in harmony with the area in which it is located.
  - Brighter Beginnings Childcare is an existing childcare facility that has been in operation since 2019. The pick-up and drop-off process aligns with the provided site plan.
4. Expanding the facility would be in general conformity with the land use plan or other plans and policies officially adopted by the City Council.
  - The Planning staff has found that the use is consistent with Mebane's long-range plans.

Donna Hester then went through the reports that were provided with the application. She showed an approval permit issued by the Alamance County Health Department for a septic system to serve a larger daycare facility that is valid through March 2028. She showed the site plan with the pick-up and drop-off circulation through the site and the appraisal report completed by Patterson Appraisal Co., LLC. She presented that the daycare features an outdoor learning environment (OLE) which was constructed after completing a required course at NC State University. She also stated that they had received a grant on June 29, 2023, that provided funds for a mud kitchen, outdoor chalk board, and



plant beds. Donna Hester provided that there was a minimum 1,200 square foot play area surrounded by a minimum 4-foot fence that meets State requirements.

Tom Boney Jr., Alamance News, asked if the childcare had received their State license for the expansion. Donna Hester replied that they had to go through the local special use process first before they could get a State license for the expansion.

William Hester, 4962 Mrs. White Lane, lives adjacent to the property and had no complaints about the expansion since the current site was well taken care of.

Kurt Pearson asked if the appraisal report was from Glen Patterson. Donna Hester replied that yes.

Gale Pettiford made a motion to approve the request as follows:

*Motion to approve the Special Use Permit as presented; and,  
Motion to find that the request is both reasonable and in the public interest because it has been found that the request:*

- a. Will not materially endanger the public health or safety;*
- b. Will not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property;*
- c. Will be in harmony with the area in which it is located; and*
- d. Will be in conformity with the land development plan or other plans officially adopted by the City Council.*

David Scott seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Taylor noted that the request will go to the City Council on October 7, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**5. Request to establish R-20 zoning on a property totaling +/- 15.7 acres, located on the corner of West Ten Road and Rock Quarry Road (GPIN 9824854886) outside of the Mebane Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) in Orange County, by Steve Hubrich.**

**AND**

Request for a Special Use Permit to allow for a K-8 charter school on a property totaling +/- 15.7 acres, located on the corner of West Ten Road and Rock Quarry Road (GPIN 9824854886) outside of the Mebane Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) in Orange County, by Steve Hubrich.

Steve Hubrich is requesting to establish R-20 zoning and receive a Special Use Permit to develop a K-8 charter school on a +/- 15.7-acre property on the corner of West Ten Road and Rock Quarry Road (GPIN: 9824854886). The subject property is currently zoned AR, Agricultural Residential, by Orange County. The proposed zoning is R-20, Residential District, by the City of Mebane. Elementary and secondary schools are allowed with development standards and a Special Use Permit approved by the Mebane Board of Adjustment in the proposed R-20 zoning district.

- Initial Phase: Modular trailers will be used to operate a K-4 school for approximately two years. A parking lot with approximately 72 spaces will be provided in the initial phase. One



- site access will be provided on West Ten Road along with a driveway to a bus loop. An entrance-only access will be provided on Rock Quarry Road.
- Final Phase: A +/- 34,000 square foot school building for K-8 instruction. An additional parking lot will be added with 147 spaces. An additional access will be provided on Rock Quarry Road in the final phase.

The staff report is provided in the meeting agenda packet available [here](#).

Briana Perkins provided a more detailed overview and PowerPoint presentation of the request.

Tom Boney Jr. asked if the trailers would remain after the new 4,000 square foot building was constructed. Briana Perkins replied that the trailers would be removed when the new 34,000 square foot building was constructed in the final buildout.

Tome Boney Jr. asked how long the trailers would remain before the new building was constructed. Briana Perkins replied that trailers are expected for about two years and the applicant could provide more information.

Leticia Shapiro, Attorney at Morningstar Law Group, representing the applicant Steve Hubrich, owner of Hubrich Contracting, Inc., stated she was present to answer questions. She stated that Hubrich Contracting, Inc specializes in constructing Class A charter schools across North Carolina, such as Carolina Achieve. She provided that Carolina Achieve was a tuition-free charter school. She reviewed others also in attendance: Trip Cogburn, the Founding Head of School at Carolina Achieve, Jeff Oxaal, Board Chair at Carolina Achieve, Jim Ashley, site designer from Summit Engineering, and Lyle Overcash, traffic engineer from Kimley-Horn. She said that there was also an affidavit provided by Richard Kirkland, Appraiser from Kirkland Appraisals. She said that Nick Kirkland was on his way to present for Richard Kirkland.

Jim Ashley, Summit Design Engineering, stated that he is a landscape architectural designer with some 28 years of experience.

Colin Cannell asked if Summit Design Engineering did both the site design and landscaping. Jim Ashley replied yes.

Colin Cannell asked if the firm had worked with Carolina Achieve on building schools before. Jim Ashley replied that they had not worked with Carolina Achieve but had worked with Faith Charter in constructing a new charter school.

David Scott said he believed that in the staff presentation earlier, it was mentioned there would be approximately 3,000 feet of stacking within the site and asked if that was correct. Jim Ashley replied



that it was correct and that there were two lanes entering the site off Rock Quarry Road. He said there would also be a third lane that would come in about halfway into the site that would provide about 360 additional feet of stacking space. David Scott asked if that amount was sufficient for when the school was fully built out. Jim Ashley replied that it was designed for the final buildout. David Scott commented that many public and charter schools within Mebane had issues with school traffic backing up onto major roads.

Jim Ashley stated that in the final build out, that there would be three entrances to the site. He said there would be two stacking lanes coming in off of Rock Quarry Road and exiting out onto West Ten Road. He said that the final buildout would include the second parking lot which had more parking than was required, meaning some could be removed if needed. He said that, in the final phase, there would be another access on Rock Quarry Road that would be both an entrance and exit from the site. He said that there would also be an access on West Ten Road that would be the entrance and exit for the bus loop. He reported that during the final buildout, all of the initial trailers would be removed, and those utilities would be abandoned. He also said that at final buildout the 3-story building would be completed that would house K-8.

Judy Taylor asked if the long-term plan was for the traffic to enter on one side and then exit at the other end. Jim Ashley replied yes, they would enter and loop around to the exit on the other side of the site. He also said that the drive shown would be built out in the initial phase of the project. He said that everything shown on the plan would be built in the first phase, except for the main building and the second large parking lot.

Judy Taylor asked about how many cars would fit in the 3,000 feet of stacking area. Jim Ashley replied that he did not have the calculation of how many 9-foot by 12-foot stacking spaces would fit within the two lanes of stacking space. Judy Taylor commented that there were several schools within Mebane that stacked out into the main roads, and it was a top priority to make sure that stacking stays within the site. Jim Ashley replied that they were confident that the stacking would not spill over onto the road. Colin Cannell commented that it looked like maybe 200 would be able to fit in the lot. Judy Taylor said that vehicles do not typically park, but drive through, drop-off, and leave. Jim Ashley provided that there were also unloading spaces provided to pull over and drop off.

Lyle Overcash, traffic engineer with Kimley-Horn and Associates, said he was a traffic engineer with over 30 years of experience and had completed studies for about 50 schools over his career. He stated that he had worked with the applicant Steve Hubrich for many years. He said that Kimley-Horn and Associates conducted the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) in coordination with the City of Mebane and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). He provided that the NCDOT stacking requirements for a school was 22.5 feet per car and their site at 3,450 feet could fit about 153 cars. He stated that the TIA was conducted in August 2023 and studied the worst-case scenario



of 900 students. He said that the worst-case scenario was the K-5 with a 45-minute bell schedule and that the stacking was designed for at a minimum of 3,318 feet.

Lyle Overcash explained the traffic design starting with the two entrance lanes off Rock Quarry Road. This road has fewer than 1,000 cars per day. He said that his firm had mentioned a turn lane, but NCDOT did not think turn lanes were necessary. He said the exit would be on West Ten Road where the stacking lanes go from three lanes down to two. At final build-out there would be additional access off Rock Quarry Road into the larger parking lot. This driveway would allow for entering and exiting vehicles. He reviewed access off West Ten Road for a bus loop. The school plans to begin with two buses and eventually expand to four. He said that it was mentioned that someone could jump the queue, and a traffic guard is recommended within the traffic management plan for the site. He stated that in his professional opinion the site plan presented was in accordance with the land use plan or other plans and policies officially adopted by the City Council. He stated also in his professional opinion that the proposed site plan mitigates traffic and other adverse impacts generated by the new school along with improving access for emergency vehicles. He said in addition, the development would not adversely affect public health and safety, and the application adequately addressed all the review factors identified in the Mebane UDO.

Colin Cannell asked if staff discussed or considered how the NACC Properties project would affect the proposed project. Ashley Ownbey replied that the TIAs for both projects were reviewed together and staff considered the effects of both projects. Colin Cannell asked if the NACC Properties project was using Danny Drive as their driveway and how that aligned with the proposed project. Lyle Overcash replied that their TIA considered 11 different developments, including the NACC Properties project. He said that it was impossible to align the driveways, and the driveways would be offset by about 100 feet. He also provided that in the future, there may be a pedestrian crossing at the Carolina Achieve entrance for the residents in the NACC Properties subdivision to access the school. He mentioned that the driveways were set up well enough that there could be a small median put in for that crossing. Colin Cannell commented that his main concern was how the NACC residents were getting to the highway, but it looked like they would be avoiding most of the school traffic.

Tom Boney Jr. asked how many parking spaces were provided in the front parking lot and the back parking lot. Jim Ashley and Ashley Ownbey reported 72 spaces in the front parking lot and 147 in the rear parking lot.

Jim Ashley showed that the site would be extensively buffered on all sides of the site. He said that the buffering would provide a nice visual appeal, and the school would fit in with the neighborhood. He stated that there were a few subdivisions in the vicinity and the school fit within that context, meeting the special use condition of keeping in harmony with the surrounding area. He mentioned that the location of the soccer field was in an area with existing vegetation. He said that the lighting would also be in accordance with the requirements of the Mebane UDO using full cut-off lighting



that would not bleed over to adjoining properties. He said that there would be sufficient markings and stop controls throughout the site for safety. He then mentioned that open space would be provided where the trailers are to be removed and all around the soccer field.

Colin Cannell asked if the open space would also be used as recreation space for the children. Jim Ashley replied that the open space could also be used for recreation. He said that the space where the trailers were to be removed would especially work for recreation space since it would already be graded flat.

Jim Ashley mentioned again that the larger parking lot was designed with excessive parking and could be reduced or removed entirely since only 55 spaces were required by the Mebane UDO. He said they had included parking for the soccer and future basketball game attendance.

Judy Taylor asked about preservation of existing large trees along the buffer areas. Jim Ashley said that the tree line shown on the site plan would remain untouched.

Kurt Pearson asked what geographical location would be used for the student population. Jim Ashley replied that he would have to defer that question to others. Someone from the audience spoke. Ashley Ownbey repeated the audience member's reply that the student population would be derived from Alamance County, Orange County, and a portion of Durham County.

Jim Ashley also reviewed how landscaping buffers would mitigate noise from the soccer field.

Laticia Shapiro read the affidavit provided by Richard Kirkland since the property appraiser was not present. She said the affidavit stated that a detailed study of adjoining properties and other similar properties located next to schools was conducted. The study had concluded that the subject property and adjoining area was similar to those compared with similar densities and distances to adjoining homes. She said that the study included a series of match pair analysis, considering homes that are similar in sales with one only having a difference in being located next to a school. She said that the match pair analysis did not show a negative impact on the residential properties located next to a school as opposed to those not located next to a school. She stated in Richard Kirkland's professional opinion that the proposed facility developed to the site plan provided, would not have a substantial adverse impact on the values of adjoining properties and also concluded that the proposed facility would be in harmony with the existing area.

Tom Boney Jr. asked what the student count would be for the first phase as opposed to the full build out. Lyle Overcash replied that Kimley-Horn had studied 300 students in the initial phase for K-2 and then ultimately 900 students at full build out. Tom Boney Jr. asked about the students after the K-2. Lyle Overcash replied that it is estimated at about 100 students per year.



Colin Cannell said that he had looked at the Carolina Achieve website that showed for a K-12 school, but the proposed was only K-8 and asked if they were planning for a K-12 before the site was selected. Steve Hubrich, applicant with Hubrich Contracting said that when a license from the State is issued for a charter school, the concept is licensed as a K-12 school. He said that it was the same for NCDOT as they are looking at the possibility of the school growing in 10 years to a K-12 school. He said that it may be that the proposed charter school may stay at K-8. The board and parents may also elect to expand the school to K-12 in the future. He said that at the moment they are focused on just K-8, but if it moved to include the high school then there was adjoining property that they may purchase. He also mentioned that regarding the concern of stacking, that about five years ago, the minimum required was only 2,000 feet of stacking space.

Colin Cannell asked how the buses would be utilized if most parents would be dropping off their children. Steve Hubrich replied that they would work like typical charter school buses where there would be remote pick-up spots. He said that there would be two buses to start, with possibly four buses total.

David Scott asked if it was the goal to go up to high school. Steve Hubrich said that the State approves it at a K-12. Judy Taylor commented that the special use request was only for the K-8 school at this time and the applicant would have to come back if they want to operate a K-12 school. Steve Hubrich commented that it would be a whole different site plan, and it may not be on the same site.

Tom Boney Jr. asked if the school did go up to a high school, if the building would be placed in the open space where the modular units were initially. Steve Hubrich replied it was possible if the high school could fit there or there may be other options.

Tom Boney Jr. asked if the main building was going to be the three stories as proposed. Steve Hubrich replied that the building shown was just conceptual and the building had not been designed. He said that the request was to allow for a K-8 school on the property with the modular units being part of phase 1. He said the driveway and initial parking was not going to change, but the building itself may change.

Kurt Pearson asked where the pair analysis examples were pulled from. Nick Kirkland, Kirkland Appraisals, said they started with the school to the east of the site on West Ten Road. Kurt Pearson asked how far out was researched. Nick Kirkland replied that they looked at adjoining properties around the schools. He said that the analysis was to look at how property values of properties next to a school sell as opposed to properties not next to a school.

William Chapman made a motion of the rezoning request as follows:

*Motion to approve the R-20 zoning as presented.*





*Motion to find that the application is consistent with the objectives and goals in the City's 2017 Comprehensive Land Development Plan Mebane By Design. Specifically, the request:*

- *Is for a property within the City's G-2 Industrial Growth Area (Mebane CLP, p. 76).*

Keith Hoover seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

David Scott made a motion to approve the special use request as follows:

*Motion to approve the Special Use Permit as presented; and,*

*Motion to find that the request is both reasonable and in the public interest because it has been found that the request:*

- Will not materially endanger the public health or safety;*
- Will not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property;*
- Will be in harmony with the area in which it is located; and*
- Will be in conformity with the land development plan or other plans officially adopted by the City Council.*

Gale Pettiford seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Taylor noted that the request will go to the City Council on October 7, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

## **5. Announcements**

Ashley Ownbey informed the Board that the November meeting was currently scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> due to Veterans Day. She asked the Board if they would like to change the meeting date or keep it the same. The Board had agreed to keep the meeting scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **6. Adjournment**

Chair Taylor adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:34 p.m.

