



Chester County Council Workshop

Subdivision Ordinances

R. Carlisle Roddey Government Building
1476 J A Cochran Bypass | Chester, SC 29706
Monday, June 2, 2025 | 4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Pete Wilson, Vice Chair Erin Mosley, Councilman Bobby Raines, Councilman William Killian, Councilman John Agee, Councilman Corey Guy, County Administrator Brian Hester, County Attorney Nicole Workman, Clerk to Council Kristie Donaldson

1. Call to Order

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:04pm and thanked the Planning Commission for the work they do and the time and efforts to help make our county a better place to live.

2. Consideration of Subdivision Ordinances

Jeremy Ward discussed minor subdivisions by outlining the current situation and proposing several changes aimed at creating a more structured and balanced approach. He explained that, currently, Chester County allowed up to nine lots in a minor subdivision with minimal regulation—there were no requirements for internal roads, mandatory sidewalks, or other infrastructure. Director Ward emphasized that minor subdivisions functioned as largely unregulated developments, and he highlighted the need to establish a clearer distinction between minor and medium subdivisions. Director Ward underscored the importance of balancing development regulations with affordability, especially in rural areas.

Marshall Giles with Bolton and Menk, a regional planning and engineering firm, presented background research on minor subdivision policy, focusing on case studies from South Carolina and North Carolina. He recommended setting a threshold for minor subdivisions between four and six lots to align with national averages and neighboring counties. Mr. Giles emphasized the importance of specific frontage widths to separate driveways and supported the use of private streets made of gravel. His research showed that most case studies limited homes on shared drives and required recorded maintenance agreements. He encouraged the use of private streets—preferably called “drives”—and suggested design standards for materials, street connections, width, and shoulders. He also recommended exemptions for family subdivisions and larger parcels, while maintaining flexibility through zoning appeals.

a) Minor Subdivision Cutoff Point

The Planning Commission was asked by County Council to share their thoughts on the matter, and Planning Commissioners Love, Walley, and Hough spoke in depth on these issues, including the themes of family minor subdivisions, affordability concerns, and the difference in requirements between minor and medium subdivisions. Councilman Raines said that the cutoff point for minor subdivisions should be larger than 4. Councilman Guy stated that one of the most pressing issues to consider are streets and the cost to the county to fix roads. Chairman Wilson stated his worry about incentivizing minor subdivisions through making the cutoff point too high. Interior roads were also discussed, with Director Ward stating that the current draft would require internal asphalt roads for all medium subdivisions, meaning that this cut-off point between minor and medium subdivisions would also regulate that issue. There was discussion on

changing other medium subdivision infrastructure requirements for large lot subdivisions, such as Victorian Hills and Peden Oaks.

Councilman Guy recommended 5 homes as a cutoff for minor subdivisions, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 6-0.

b) Private Gravel Streets

Councilman Guy referenced several private roads in his district, and that it was better for the developer to pave the roads upfront. Councilman Raines stated that many private roads do not have adequate standards for materials and drainage. There was discussion on whether it was necessary to regulate the length of these private streets, with 1000 feet being stated by Councilman Raines as a suitable length. Councilman Guy stated that the top consideration needed to be what was suitable for the county and what was safe, not developer income. Chairman Wilson strongly stated that no new roads needed to be taken over by the County, and that there needed to be the option for majority-family, not just exclusively family, minor subdivisions to be able to be approved for exemptions by the ZBA. The Planning Commission was invited to speak on the issue, and Commissioners Love, Hough, and Walley discussed these issues. Commissioners Walley and Hough expressed their approval for a ZBA option for exemptions, particularly for families, and Commissioner Hough stated that 4 being the cutoff point is not bad for gravel streets.

Councilman Raines motioned to have no more than 5 homes on gravel roads with any excess approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Mosley. Vote 6-0.

c) Interior Access Roads

Council members discussed setting the interior access road requirement at the same threshold as the minor/medium subdivisions cut-off at 5 lots with flexibility through the Zoning Board of Appeals. The goal was to ensure that roads are wide enough for emergency vehicles and maintain the rural character of developments.

d) Waste Management

e) Road Frontage Buffer

f) Street Trees

In essence of time, County Administrator Brian Hester provided updates on waste management, road frontage buffers, and street trees. He emphasized the need for solid waste solutions in major subdivisions, suggested options for natural or landscaped buffers, and addressed proper placement and management of street trees to enhance community aesthetics without damaging infrastructure.

3. Council Comments

4. Adjourn

Vice Chair Mosley motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 6-0 to adjourn.

Time of adjournment: 6:18pm

Kristie Donaldson

Clerk to County Council