SUMNER COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
JULY 21, 2026
REGULAR MEETING 5:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:
DAVID KLEIN, CHAIRMAN
CHRISSI SMITH MILLER, VICE CHAIRMAN
DEBORAH HOLMES
ADAM ISSA
JON BELCHER
RON STRAHLE
TOMMY ELSTEN

STAFF PRESENT:
SYDNY SIMPSON, COUNTY PLANNER
MARSHALL BOYD, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENGINEERING/COUNTY ENGINEER
KATHY YOUNG, ASSISTANT COUNTY PLANNER
KRISTINA BLACK, STAFF PLANNER (MINUTE TAKER)
STEVE WEINER, COUNTY STAFF ATTORNEY
ERIC SITLER, COUNTY LAW DIRECTOR

Mr. Klein called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Mr. Strahle provided the Invocation. Mr. Issa led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 16, 2026, MINUTES

Mrs. Miller made a motion to approve the June 2026 minutes. Second by Issa. The motion passed with all voting members in favor.

APPROVAL OF JULY 2026 AGENDA

Mrs. Miller made a motion to approve the July agenda.
Mr. Issa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Klein stated that Public Comment will follow the presentation of the item on the agenda. He then turned the floor over to Ms. Simpson for staff presentation.

1. **AUSBROOKS AUTOMOTIVE AND MACHINE – SITE PLAN – Trey Ausbrooks, Represented GreenLID Design** – 7th Commission Voting District (Danny Sullivan). Applicant requesting Site Plan approval related to a building addition at **147 Dobbins Pike, Gallatin, TN**. Subject property is Tax Map 113, Parcel 031.01, containing 4.6 acres and zoned Rural Residential (RR).

Ms. Simpson reviewed the agenda item and advised that Mr. Andy Leath with GreenLID Design was present as the applicant's representative, noting public water will be provided by Gallatin Public Utilities. She explained the property was formerly in the City of Gallatin Planning Region, and the automotive use was established in 1970 as Volunteer Diesel Service. In 2024, the former planning director determined that the use is legal nonconforming based on the former business and historical aerial imagery.

The applicant is requesting to expand the business with an 8,800-square-foot building addition, removing an existing building and constructing the addition in its place as shown on the site plan. A legal nonconforming structure may be expanded provided there is no change in use, which is not being proposed, and all site plan requirements are met.

Ms. Simpson displayed the site plan with the existing building and proposed addition. She stated that parking spaces are shown on the plan; however, the applicant is not proposing to stripe or pave them. The site plan demonstrates that 30 parking spaces can be accommodated. Ms. Simpson also showed the location of the closest fire hydrant.

Ms. Simpson advised that the applicant was requesting several waivers. The first was for paved parking, which is required by Chapter 11 for a Commercial Site Plan. The applicant intends to expand the existing shop by 8,800 square feet, while the remainder of the site would continue to be used as it has been for the past 20 years, with compacted millings used as paving material across much of the site.

The second request was a waiver from the landscaping requirements. The applicant was not proposing additional landscaping. Properties to the west and south operate in an equivalent manner. Existing vegetation along the southern property line provides screening, and due to the elevation of the property, most of the site is not visible from the road. The building is set back approximately 270 feet from the property line along Dobbins Pike, which is an arterial road. Traffic volumes are not expected to reach 100 peak-hour trips per day; the estimated volume would be approximately 25 additional trips and below that threshold , which would not warrant a traffic study based on zoning requirements. However, the Planning Commission may require a traffic study at any time. A commercial entrance permit from TDOT will be required to verify access.

Ms. Simpson displayed photos of the site from Google Earth, along with updated photos showing that the entrance has been expanded. The photos showed that the north side area has been stabilized.

Ms. Simpson stated that Gallatin Utilities has confirmed availability for the use. The applicant is not proposing to add restrooms or plumbing, so no additional septic approvals are being requested. Fire hydrant data was provided. Runoff is not anticipated to change, and activities will be covered under the Land Disturbance Permit. Typically, lighting may be associated with a parking lot; however, the parking lot is not proposed to be accessed by the public and is set back considerably from the road. No signage is proposed. Elevations were shown, reflecting that the proposed building is similar to the taller building in the rear. If approved, the applicant will be required to have a pre-construction meeting with staff, staff will evaluate the need for the NOC, and the applicant will be required to provide state permits; which could then be followed by grading and building permits.

The Example Motions were presented.

Mr. Klein opened the public hearing.

Ms. Simpson stated that property owners Trey and Stephanie Ausbrooks, and Andy Leath, the project engineer, were present to speak.

Mr. Issa asked why the applicant was requesting a waiver from the landscape screening that is usually required. He stated that the church property next door stood out to him and that he did not want to create an eyesore for the church.

Ms. Simpson stated that, beyond the explanation given in the presentation, it was her understanding that the property owner wanted to address the Board regarding the requested waivers and provide justification for them.

Mr. Andy Leath with GreenLID stated that the site has been operating since the 1970s and has been a long-contributing business to Sumner County. He provided background on the property, explaining that it was once in the planning region of Gallatin and had Gallatin zoning that was not residential. He stated that this was where much of the activity around the property received its approvals, including the Williams site to the west or northwest and south, where concrete operations are located.

Regarding the landscape buffer, Mr. Leath stated that the church is still actively pursuing the site to the north and that they are working with Faith Church. They had submitted a septic permit to the State and anticipated coming before the BZA once the permit was returned. Although the church may be a couple of years away from construction, it is still actively pursuing the site. The church had communicated with Mr. Ausbrooks, and Mr. Leath had met on site with one of the pastors, Billy Fuqua. They walked the property line, and afterward the church contacted Mr. Ausbrooks regarding issues with the site. Mr. Leath stated that most of the vegetation is on the property line between the church and the subject property and that

they are not proposing to remove it. The church site sits approximately 30 feet below the building site, so there will be a significant elevation difference. Mr. Leath stated that they were not opposed to planting landscaping if it would benefit the church, but he did not believe additional plantings would add to the existing vegetation.

Mr. Leath stated that the sites to the west and south have very similar or somewhat more intense uses. The area to the west along the railroad track is the Garrett Brothers dump site, where old concrete is emptied into a large concrete valley. The remainder is the Williams Concrete operation to the west and south. He stated that there is good vegetation between the subject property and the church and that the church will sit considerably lower than the site.

Mr. Issa stated that his major concern was that once the waiver was granted, the Commission could be in a position where, if the church developed and the site became an eyesore, the applicant could point to the Commission having granted the exemption. He stated that he was more uncomfortable with that than with the paving. He noted that many properties along the road have gravel driveways and similar conditions, so the paving was less of a concern, but the visibility from the church was his primary concern.

Mr. Leath stated that if they agreed to a landscape buffer, he would argue that it should be limited to the north side rather than all property lines. He believed Mr. Ausbrooks would be amenable to some form of landscape buffer between the properties.

Mr. Trey Ausbrooks stated that there is already a well-established tree line that blocks the site for the most part and that typical shrubs would not be visible.

Mrs. Miller asked Ms. Simpson how the commercial use could have an approximately 8,000-square-foot commercial building when the property is zoned Rural Residential.

Ms. Simpson stated that, as Mr. Leath mentioned, the property was formerly in the planning region of Gallatin and was permitted at that time. She had contacted Gallatin, but they were unable to confirm whether the property had gone through any BZA approvals. The first automotive building was constructed in 1970, while most zoning in the area was established around 1972-1973. She stated that her assumption was that the use was grandfathered.

Ms. Simpson explained that other industrial operations in the area also did not have identifiable approvals, although Gallatin could not locate anything associated with this property. Staff did find that the automotive use existed in 1970. When Director Suddath evaluated the aerial imagery, he determined the use predated zoning. Because the applicant is adding 8,800 square feet, commercial site plan approval is required. A grandfathered use may continue if it has been in operation and existed before zoning was established or changed. When the property came into the County, a blanket overlay designated the properties in the planning regions as Rural Residential, which is how the subject property became residentially zoned.

Mrs. Miller asked whether the County was effectively grandfathering in another 8,800-square-foot commercial building.

Ms. Simpson stated that the property has been used commercially. She stated that what would be more appropriate would be for the County to go back and review the uses and zone the property based on those uses; however, the County instead designated the properties Rural Residential without reviewing each use. She stated that this is a commercial property and has not been used residentially since the 1970s.

Mrs. Miller stated that she did not have a problem with the grandfathering because the use already exists. However, she had concerns about not providing landscaping and not paving, stating that if those are the rules, they should be followed. She stated that if she voted for the project, she would not be voting for those exceptions.

Mr. Belcher stated that he had a minor comment regarding Drawing C1. The construction dates show beginning construction in 6/26 and ending in 7/26, which needs to be corrected. He also noted that several buildings on the site appear to be outside the setbacks and asked for clarification.

Ms. Simpson stated that the buildings are closer to the property lines than would be allowed under current requirements, but they were present before zoning was established. As long as the buildings are not encroaching closer to the setback than the existing condition, the nonconformity is not expanding. For example, if a building were 10 feet from the property line, it could not be moved to 8 feet. The proposal maintains the existing line and does not increase the degree of nonconformity.

Mr. Belcher asked whether the southern boundary of the building would be no farther south than the existing structure. Ms. Simpson confirmed that it would.

Mr. Belcher stated that Sumner GIS shows two separate lots in front of the property that are not represented on the drawings. He asked whether the white line on the drawing was an error because it appears to cut through the house.

Mr. Ausbrooks stated that the line should be farther to the right.

Mr. Belcher stated that the drawing did not match the GIS. Regarding paving, he stated that he had visited the site and, in his opinion, the existing milled material is permeable. Adding a roof would make the area impermeable, resulting in approximately 8,000 square feet of additional impervious area. Regarding landscaping, he did not disagree with the applicant's explanation. He noted that the site drops off to the north and that a buffer would require very tall trees to shield the building. However, he shared the concern that granting an exception to the regulations could create a precedent. He asked how many employees the business currently has and how many are anticipated after the expansion.

Mr. Ausbrooks stated that there are currently five employees and that he does not know what staffing will look like after completion. He is primarily looking to fix the existing building, move into the new building, and then renovate the old portion. He is not currently looking to add

employees, although the building would provide room for growth. He stated that the existing building's siding and other components need to be replaced, but he cannot complete the work while continuing to operate in the existing space. He is also looking for additional storage and workable space.

Mr. Belcher asked Ms. Simpson whether she knew the distance to the closest fire hydrant.

Mr. Leath stated that it is just under 1,000 feet, at Trixie's on the corner, and that the distance from that location to the driveway is approximately 1,000 feet.

Mr. Belcher stated that one of the questions from staff concerned the size of the existing septic field. The applicant had responded that no bathrooms would be added but had not answered how many bathrooms the existing septic field could support.

Mr. Leath stated that the short answer is no. The site was established in the 1970s and there is no permit for the system. They know there is a functioning system, but they do not know where the field lines are located, which is not uncommon for older sites.

Mr. Belcher stated that he believed the millings are permeable material but that there would still be runoff. The site is large enough that he did not know whether runoff would be detrimentally affected, but there were no calculations to demonstrate that. He stated that he was reluctant to waive the landscaping requirement because of potential future implications.

Mr. Klein summarized the proposal, stating that there is a 55-56-year-old building with an office in front. The office will be removed, and an 8,800-square-foot building will be constructed and attached to the existing building. The southern building line will remain aligned with the existing structure even though it encroaches into the side setback, which is permitted because it does not increase the existing nonconformity. He asked what material is currently used for the site.

Mr. Leath stated that Mr. Ausbrooks could speak to the material, but he believed it was crushed concrete.

Mr. Ausbrooks stated that it is a mix of slag and asphalt and that water typically runs off it. He added that it is not particularly dusty.

Mr. Klein stated that the material would typically be asphalt, but that was one of the waivers under consideration. The other waiver was landscaping. He stated that he was thinking about the future and was concerned that the entrance is gravel and that there appears to be asphalt connecting to the highway. He was also concerned about setting a precedent that the Commission might regret.

Mr. Klein stated that he did not want to impose an excessive cost on the owner. He noted that there is no requirement for filtration banks because the proposal is not a parking lot, although paving the parking lot would trigger those requirements. He asked Mr. Ausbrooks whether he

had originally been a diesel mechanic and whether he had owned the property since that time. Mr. Ausbrooks indicated that he had purchased it from someone relatively recently. Mr. Klein noted that the business was originally diesel-only and now includes automotive repair.

Mr. Ausbrooks confirmed that the business includes automotive repair as well as some diesel work.

Mr. Klein stated that the business is a full-service machine shop and that he understood the proposal. He asked whether the applicant planned to add bathrooms or plumbing fixtures in the future.

Mr. Ausbrooks stated that he does not plan to do so at this point.

Mr. Klein stated that if bathrooms or additional plumbing fixtures are added in the future, the applicant would have to go through the septic system process. He stated that he did not believe traffic would be a problem and was not concerned about requiring a traffic study. He also stated that he could see Dobbins Pike becoming more of a commercial/industrial artery in the future as homes gradually transition away.

Mrs. Miller made a motion to approve without the waivers of the landscaping and paving requirements.

Mrs. Holmes seconded the motion.

Mr. Elsten asked to see the photograph showing the entrance. He stated that he did not have a problem with not paving the parking lot, but because the entrance is on a downhill slope onto Dobbins Pike, he believed the entrance should be paved so gravel does not wash onto the state highway.

Mrs. Miller stated that she was agreeable and amended her motion to provide no landscaping waiver, allow the parking lot to remain unpaved, and require the driveway entrance to be paved.

Mrs. Holmes seconded the amended motion.

Mrs. Miller stated that she did not have a problem with not requiring a traffic study because there are five employees and she did not believe traffic would be an issue. She also raised the issue of lighting.

Mrs. Miller stated that there is a house nearby and she did not want the site lit excessively.

Mr. Klein asked whether she was proposing that no lighting be required.

Mrs. Miller confirmed that she was. She stated that the motion addressed landscaping and paving the front driveway entrance and that she was satisfied with the proposal.

Ms. Simpson asked whether the motion should specify a distance for the paved entrance or simply require whatever TDOT requires, such as the first 50 feet or any additional distance TDOT may require.

Mr. Elsten stated that the paving should extend far enough to prevent gravel from washing onto the road.

Mr. Leath stated that TDOT only requires paving within the right-of-way. He stated that Mr. Ausbrooks was willing to pave all the way to the building. Mr. Leath requested clarification regarding landscaping and whether it referred to the buffer along the church or all property lines. He stated that they were agreeable to landscaping along the church side, but the other properties are different.

Mr. Issa asked what is located on the other side and whether it is residential.

Mr. Leath stated that it is zoned Rural Residential, but Williams Concrete operates there, including dumping concrete and staging construction-related commercial activities.

Ms. Simpson stated that landscaping is typically required to screen the parking area and along the perimeter. Buffers are not required because the proposal does not involve a change in zoning between properties, but landscaping around the perimeter of the parking area is typically required.

Mrs. Miller stated that she was satisfied with landscaping along the church side.

Mr. Strahle asked Mr. Leath to explain the concrete pile.

Mr. Leath stated that the pile of concrete is along the railroad tracks and consists of a large amount of concrete. The area in between is where Williams Concrete stages and operates, and Williams also owns the site to the south. He stated that Williams owns most of the block except for Trey Ausbrooks' property and perhaps one or two other sites. He stated that they agreed with screening the parking area.

Mr. Eric Sitler (Law Director) stated that there had been considerable discussion and suggested that the motion be restated.

Mr. Klein agreed. He stated that he did not know whether to make landscaping along the highway a requirement, but he thought it would be beneficial to have something in the front to break up the view. He understood the buffer along the church side. Because the driveway area is narrow, he would like the area visible from the street to be more attractive than a driveway.

Mrs. Miller stated that because the building is set back 270 feet from the road, she did not include front landscaping in her motion because she did not believe it would be visible.

Mr. Leath asked that the street view be displayed. He stated that if the parking area is screened, it is located back by the first building, and once the landscaping grows it will not be visible. He stated that screening the parking area would protect the church and improve the view from the highway.

Mr. Klein asked Mrs. Miller to restate the entire motion.

Motion by Miller:

1) **To find that all County requirements are met and to approve a Site Plan for Ausbrooks Auto & Machine Site Plan with all staff comments, related to construction of access drive and parking lot, and associated improvements with a waiver from the lighting requirements, landscape requirements with the exception of providing screening for the church (north) property, and a waiver from the paving requirements with the exception of providing asphaltic paved access to the building/parking area contingent upon:**
    a) **Applicable State Permits (NOC & COMMERCIAL ACCESS) shall be obtained prior to issuance of any County Permits.**
    b) **A Land Disturbance permit must be obtained from Sumner County prior to initiation of grading activities on site.**
    c) **Approval must be granted from the stormwater Manager of Erosion protection/sediment control related to fill activity and parking lot expansion.**
    d) **Any future additions/construction to the site requires additional site plan approval.**

Seconded by Holmes.

Aye: Holmes, Belcher, Miller, Elsten, Strahle, Issa.
The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klein turned the meeting over to Ms. Simpson.

2. **LAKE WESTMORELAND ESTATES - PRELIMINARY PLAT (Major) – Thomas Campbell- Represented by Richard Graves Land Surveying –** 1st Commission Voting District (Terry Moss) – Applicant is requesting Preliminary Plat approval for an 8-lot residential subdivision located on **Lake Westmoreland Road, Westmoreland, TN.** Subject property is Tax Map 045, Parcel 007.02, contains 22.54 acres and zoned Rural Residential (RR).

Ms. Simpson began by reviewing the agenda item description, adding that there will be two large 5-acre tracts that are not shown on this plat. They are included in the construction plans that were inadvertently omitted from the packet that was given this evening so that you could see that information. They are over 5 acres, so they are not required to be on this plat. The public water is provided by Westmoreland Utility District.

The proposed plat was displayed along with a topographical view and soils map. Ms. Simpson stated they are designated as Critical lots, so each one will have an individual plot plan that's reviewed with the building permit. Ms. Simpson stated it is not in your packet but added to the presentation, the pre-development and post-development reflecting no significant change. The water letter states there is adequate water and fire pressure to serve the development. Fire protection is provided by the relevant volunteer fire department and there's fire hydrants within 500 feet of each lot. The approved septic soils map was submitted.

The next steps were displayed and explained. Ms. Simpson stated that, if approved, the applicant would need to obtain construction plans from the County Engineer and any applicable permits from TDEC. They would then file for Final Plat approval from the Planning Commission. After the Final Plat is approved and recorded, the lots may be sold. The standard findings of fact were reviewed.

The Example Motions were presented.

Mr. Klein stated, as a point of clarification, that the property is within the urban growth boundary for Westmoreland, so the applicant would have the right to develop 1-acre lots. He noted that the proposed lots are substantially larger, with most being almost 3 acres.
Mrs. Miller stated that her question was whether the property was within the urban growth boundary, and she had assumed that it was. She stated, "I'll make a motion since it's legal."

Motion by Miller:

To find that all County requirements are met and approve a Preliminary Plat for Lake Westmoreland Estates, contingent upon the following conditions:

a) **Applicant shall obtain signed approval from County Engineer for required Construction Plans prior to issuance of a Land Disturbance Permit.**
b) **Any applicable TDEC permits must be obtained prior to issuance of permits by the County.**

Seconded by Issa.

Aye: Holmes, Belcher, Miller, Elsten, Strahle, Issa.
The motion carried unanimously.

3. **SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS JUNE 8, 2026 - PRESENT:**
   a) Anderson Property, Minor Plat
   b) Eric and Tonya Gregory Property, Minor Plat
   c) Kellie Mires, Minor Plat
   d) Lot 1, Tiffany Jernigan Thomerson Property, Plat Amendment
   e) Jackson Lot, Minor Plat
   f) Ronnie McDowell Estates, Minor Plat
   g) Lot 18, Branham Mill Reserve, Plat Amendment
   h) Bonelli Acres, Minor Plat

Ms. Simpson reviewed the administrative approvals and stated that there were fewer this go-around and nothing unusual about any of them. Mr. Strahle asked about the Branham Mill item.

Ms. Simpson stated that it was a plat amendment to amend the soils area.
Mr. Klein asked what happened with Branham Mill and whether the soils area had been moved.

Ms. Simpson stated that sometimes property owners want to add a pool, change the location of their house, or other changes, so they go to the State and amend the soils area.

Mr. Klein asked about two other lots that were under an 2.3 acres and whether they were grandfathered in as existing lots or whether something else had occurred.

Ms. Simpson stated that staff uses a checklist for every application and that zoning is the first item reviewed, noting that if a lot is 1 acre, it would have to be within the Rural Residential zoning district, or a plat amendment involving a soils area. She stated that she was not sure which situation Mr. Klein was referencing, but staff carefully reviews zoning to ensure that lots smaller than the zoning minimum requirements are not approved, and that all setbacks are met.

Mr. Klein asked whether the Jackson Lot, shown as 1.75 acres on the final plat, was an existing lot.

Mrs. Miller stated that they were moving on to the Director's Update, but the Director was not present. She asked whether Ms. Simpson could provide an update on the Cottontown study. She stated that she thought someone was going to reach out to her but she had not received a call.

Ms. Simpson stated that Mr. Boyd thought Mrs. Miller was going to call him with the addresses. He was waiting on those addresses but had approval from the Mayor to conduct the study once he had them. She asked Mrs. Miller to email the addresses so he could begin the study.

Mrs. Miller stated that it was not one address but the whole area that flooded, requiring people to be rescued from cars and homes. She stated that she could provide some addresses.

Ms. Simpson stated that they could begin to map the area if they could pinpoint where the flooding occurs.

Mrs. Miller stated that he (Mr. Boyd) could probably check with Ken Widener, who had rescued people from the creek and their homes.

Mr. Klein asked about the Anderson Property, noting that it was 1.69 acres. He asked whether it was a new subdivision or a new lot line creation and whether it might be within the urban growth boundary.

Ms. Simpson stated that staff reviews the zoning on each application to ensure that the proposed lots comply with the applicable requirements. She stated that the Anderson Property is zoned Rural Residential.

Mr. Klein asked why the property was Rural Residential, since he understood that the zoning had been changed and that the minimum lot size was now 2.3 acres.

Ms. Simpson clarified that the change to the 2.3-acre minimum lot size only applied to areas outside the urban growth boundary.

4. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Ms. Simpson noted the flood study information was previously covered.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Miller made a motion to adjourn.
Second by Mr. Strahle.
The meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM.

APPROVED BY _____ **DATE** 8/18/26
(Chairman)

_____ **DATE** 8-18-26
(Secretary of the Planning Commission)