

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 W. CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
AUGUST 7, 2025 – 3:00 PM
AGENDA
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1. Call to Order – Chair/Councilwoman Anthony
2. Welcome and Introductions Anthony
3. Approval of Minutes – July 3, 2025 Regular Meeting and
July 18, 2025 Special Meeting Anthony

STATUS AND UPDATES:

4. Winchester Revitalization, Design, Branding Overview and Updates Watson
 - a) Land Design Status/Updates Wells
 - b) July 18, 2025 Special Meeting Photo Presentation Campo/Wells
 - c) Branding/Winchester Cultural Overlay District (Outreach) Campo
5. Winchester Avenue High School - Historical Plaque; Research Campo
6. Brownfield’s Environmental Status/Remnant Properties Update Sholar/Campo
7. Other Business (if any) Watson
8. Adjourn Anthony

Next Meeting: September 4, 2025 @ 3:00pm

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 W. CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
JULY 3, 2025 – 3:00 PM
MINUTES**

The Winchester Revitalization Committee of the City of Monroe, North Carolina met in the City Hall Council Chambers located at 300 West Crowell Street in Monroe, North Carolina at 3:00pm on July 3, 2025 with Chair Surluta Anthony presiding.

Members Present: Council Member Surluta Anthony (Chair), Mayor Robert Burns, Council Member Julie Thompson, Eleanor McGinnis, Celestine Alsbrooks, and Clerk Angie Carnes

Members Absent: Eric Hall and Minnie Atwater

Staff: City Manager (CM) Mark Watson, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Jeffrey Wells, Strategic Projects Manager (SPM) Teresa Campo (Staff Liaison), Senior Staff Attorney (SSA) Terry Sholar, Senior Planner (SP) Keri Mendler, and Planner I (Planner) Patrick Blaszyk

Visitors: S. David Carriker, D.Min.

Item No. 1. Call to Order and Item No. 2. Welcome and Introductions. Chair Anthony called the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of July 3, 2025 to order at 3:00pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present.

Item No. 3. Approval of Minutes – June 5, 2025 Regular Meeting. The Minutes from the June 5, 2025 Regular Meeting were presented for review and approval. Council Member Thompson made a motion to approve the June 5, 2025 Minutes as presented. Member Ellen McGinnis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item No. 4. Winchester Revitalization, Design, Branding Overview and Updates.

- a) **Land Design Status Updates.** CM Watson introduced ACM Jeffrey Wells. ACM Wells provided the following update from the LandDesign team:

“What’s been done since our last meeting:

- **Legacy Sites Map** – updated per the comments received during the visioning session and in the follow-up email. (see attached)
- **Greenway Opportunities** – refinement ongoing.
- **Linear Park + Redevelopment area** – refinement forthcoming pending action items outlined below.
- **Goals & Vision Statement** – refinement ongoing to best reflect Committee feedback.
- **Community Celebration / Engagement Session** – preliminary outline in development. We will look to provide a draft outline in the coming week that will address:
 - the specific questions we’ll ask the neighborhood about each project component
 - activity/station ideas to collect the feedback
 - ways the Committee can help promote and participate

Information we still need:

1. CSX Railroad details for the rail-controlled portions of the redevelopment area.
2. Status of the brownfield grant/application, including any mitigation commitments or development restrictions.

Upcoming site walk:

Still need to schedule a brief, on-site walk with several Committee members the week of **July 7** or **July 14**. Please let us know which dates/times work best.

Thank you for your help with the railroad and brownfield information and for letting us know your availability for the site walk. With those pieces in place, we’ll be ready to develop design options for the park and redevelopment area for committee review.”

ACM Wells stated we were still waiting on the boundary survey from Lawrence and Associates that would be able to give us additional information that LandDesign needs as well as getting our environmental consultant (Resolve) and LandDesign connected. He also stated one other thing before the pending engagement sessions was that LandDesign was looking for an opportunity to walk the area with the committee and do some field reconnaissance. ACM Wells asked if the week of July 14 would work, and the committee members indicated July 17th (before 3:00pm) or 18th would work so he would reach out to LandDesign to get that scheduled.

CM Watson inquired of ACM Wells if we knew when the boundary survey would be finished. ACM Wells referred to SSA Sholar who indicated no and that he would try to get a timeline on that because that was a critical step. CM Watson indicated it was one of the next most critical things that had to happen, and SSA Sholar stated he would follow up on that.

CM Watson advised ACM Hollowell found a contact for CSX that was their governmental liaison, and they had a conversation with him about this project. CM Watson advised the contact had some comments on how CSX does things today and if we were acquiring this land today from CSX, CSX would put some limitations on what we could put on the property. CM Watson indicated the

City Attorney's office did some deed research and found that there were two restrictions that we needed to take into consideration when developing the property; one was we had to put up a barrier to keep people away from the tracks and trains and CSX wanted to review it and approve it, and the other was that they did not want any storm water turned on to their property or to the tracks. CM Watson indicated those two things were pretty minor, but we needed to know where that property line was, because at some point we were going to want to invite that gentleman to come out so we could talk to him a little bit more about moving their things off our property and needed to know where that property line was located.

CM Watson stated that he thought at one of the last two meetings it was mentioned that possibly Winchester Avenue was named for the first Postmaster in Monroe and that was correct. CM Watson stated his burial plot was in Suncrest, and his family was here from the time Monroe actually became a town, as they were involved in the legislative action that made Monroe a municipality, or advocated for that all the way through the early part of the 20th century and from what CM Watson had been able to find and read, they were very active in Monroe. Chair Anthony inquired if they had some relatives still here and CM Watson stated he was sure they did and from what he was able to read, they had a presence in the Mineral Springs area. Committee Member McGinnis stated yes around the campground, and Council Member Thompson stated it would be nice to find some of those folks.

- b) **Winchester Cultural Overlay District and c) Branding.** SPM Campo indicated after we met with LandDesign, it was suggested that we incorporate much of the branding and the cultural overlay into that process so the Cultural Overlay District would be removed as an item and incorporated into the Branding item of the agenda.

Item No. 5. A Monroe, North Carolina Railroad Story: The Roundhouse and Turntable – A Study for the Winchester Revitalization Project by S. David Carriker, D.Min. – Book Presentation. SPM Campo introduced Dr. Carriker and advised that we had the pleasure of receiving the wonderful books that Dr. Carriker put together regarding the Winchester project research that he had done and all committee members were given a copy. SPM Campo noted that all committee members and the Clerk were listed in the front of the book and also that the library had asked for a copy of the book as well. The committee members all thanked Dr. Carriker for his work and asked him to sign their copies of the book.

Item No. 6. Winchester High School, Historical Signage. Chair Anthony introduced SPM Campo. SPM Campo advised she met with the Union County Library – Monroe Branch History and Genealogist Librarian Gypsy Houston (HGL Houston) and they had researched the Winchester High School “Buffalo” annuals with the historian at the library and were able to find some great pictures, but one of the things that they discovered was there was no signage on the actual building itself. From the research, they found that the signage was out front. She also advised that the school was referred to as Winchester Avenue High School and not Winchester High School. She indicated she would make the change in the historical record with LandDesign to work from since

there was no signage. She advised the committee now had to decide if they want to have signage on the building or maybe place a plaque. She advised if we did put signage on the building, it would not be historical. She advised they could try to make it look according to the era, but it would not be actually contributing to that timeframe; so, that was something the committee would need to determine, and it would be Winchester Avenue High School, as opposed to Winchester High School. SPM Campo advised the other issue they found in looking through the yearbooks was that the school only went through the 11th grade. Chair Anthony advised that originally it did only go through the 11th grade, because when it was first built, that was the highest high school went. Chair Anthony indicated she wasn't sure what year, but her mom and dad graduated from there and her dad graduated in 1940 so she knew it was before then, but she didn't know anybody that graduated before 1940. SPM Campo advised they were working to ensure everything was exactly how it should be to contribute to the history. SPM Campo indicated HGL Houston was going to continue the research. She also indicated one of the things they did find were the original fire pictures which would be incorporated into the archives, so they would need to work on getting better quality pictures from the yearbooks. Council Member Thompson asked if the Heritage Room had more information. SPM Campo stated they were the ones that referred her to the library saying they had three yearbooks, and they were locked up and very delicate. SPM Campo advised when HGL Houston removed them for review, she used gloves and displayed them for her so she could take photos. SPM Campo advised they were doing some renovations at the library so there was not a good place in that room to lay things out to get good light, and they would try to get better lighting for better quality pictures once those repairs were complete.

Chair Anthony stated she knew several people that had yearbooks and maybe we could make some calls to see if someone would lend their yearbook. Chair Anthony advised that during the time they were doing the oratorical filming, James Hood brought approximately eight yearbooks, and she also indicated the Winchester reunion celebration was coming up in August and she would be happy to speak with the President to ask people to bring the yearbooks they had and see if the committee could borrow them for a little while. SPM Campo stated yes and that if anyone wanted to leave that legacy through their yearbooks to the library, it would be welcomed because they had reserved a place for that history there, but they only had three now and they were from different years. The library also listed whom the items were from so there was a record of the donation and generations could have access. SPM Campo indicated if they would just like to bring the yearbooks for her to take pictures, she would be gentle with them but if they would like to donate them, they would be preserved at the library.

Chair Anthony inquired if the committee would rather have a plaque with Winchester Avenue High School or to try to write it and if it was written, that would not be historic. The committee decided on a nice plaque on the gym. SPM Campo stated the committee should think about whether they wanted a full buffalo or just the head of the buffalo. She indicated she saw pictures of a full buffalo but many more with just the head of the buffalo, which was the mascot, and whether or not they wanted that incorporated into the plaque. Chair Anthony stated she thought the people would love that because they were trying to put a buffalo somewhere other than the statue. SPM Campo stated she would get a couple of designs and bring them back to the committee.

Chair Anthony stated Ms. Massey used to be a librarian at the school ... she wasn't the first librarian, but she was the last librarian, and she was 92 and still living. SPM Campo indicated she thought her picture was in one of the yearbooks. Chair Anthony indicated she might have some more yearbooks.

Item No. 7. Brownfields Environmental Status/Remnant Properties Update. Chair Anthony introduced SSA Sholar to present the item. SSA Sholar stated, to follow up on what CM Watson said, when they pulled the deeds, they were expecting to find use restrictions on that property, and there were none. SSA Sholar stated we were not restricted in that way and the only thing we had to do was comply with the things CM Watson mentioned, so that was very good news. SSA Sholar stated as an update on Brownfields, everything was waiting on the LandDesign work, because one of the critical pieces of the Brownfields approval was what the property was going to be used for and what was going to be put on the property, so we were waiting on what developed as part of the evaluation process that Resolve Environmental and DEQ needed to do. SSA Sholar advised another thing to report was with the discovery of the roundhouse base and some other things out there, they asked Resolve to put together a work plan, and they had done so and were ready to move forward if we wanted to do any type of excavations on the property to discover what type of historic relics may be there. SSA Sholar advised we were in a position to be able to do that, and Resolve would oversee the sampling, soil remediation, and things that needed to be done, but we were in a position to move forward with excavating the historic relics. Mayor Burns inquired if that was contingent based on the Brownfields and SSA Sholar indicated yes, because when you start digging in property that was contaminated, Brownfields was very careful about what you did with it, so Resolve had submitted a work plan to oversee that work. Chair Anthony inquired as to how deep we would be digging. SSA Sholar referred to CM Watson, and CM Watson stated probably at a minimum, around the perimeter, six feet or more, and then more than likely it was deeper in the middle with the surface sloping down to the middle. CM Watson advised he was out on the property and found the storm water drain and it was probably 15 feet deep and apparently there was a pipe in place to drain it. CM Watson advised that in talking with a City storm water engineer, it would have drained from the turntable into that collection system and emptied out down at the culvert that was next to the barber shop, the one that the City was getting ready to replace; and, coincidentally, all that water that backed up at Five Points drained through the old water filtration print plant parking lot across Crow Street underneath the railroad and came out on Winchester, and that was the reason it was in the condition it was in because it was taking a lot of water. CM Watson advised there were two culverts underneath the railroad and at least one of them was almost completely plugged up. He advised CSX had been made aware, so there was quite a bit of storm water work that needed to be done in that area, but the storm water folks knew about it; they were just waiting to do the replacement of the culvert that crosses Winchester Avenue first.

Item No. 8. Other Business (if any). CM Watson indicated the work on the Winchester Community Center porch continued.

Committee members indicated they were very excited and thrilled about everything that was happening! Committee Member Alsbrooks stated she lived in that area and was thrilled and impressed that everybody was now noticing that we were still over there, and there were some people like her that live there, who plan on staying there, and so all of this updating and revitalization sounded great! She advised she and the community appreciated it, and the pecan trees were doing great! ACM Wells stated the Committee appreciated her saying that and we were all very motivated now that it was moving along. He advised the Brownfields was slow and methodical and required a lot of patience so there would be some stops and starts, but he felt great about the progress they had made in this short time.

CM Watson stated there were a couple of other projects that would be underway relatively soon, one being the roof replacement on the Winchester building where the ceramics program was and also that the City's Property Management department had plans and had gotten quotes for pulling all the boards and siding off the windows in that building, replacing the windows that had been broken, and re-glazing and painting them. CM Watson also advised for that same building, Kingdom Outreach Citizens Ministry had requested from the City if there was a facility they could use, probably starting around the last of September. CM Watson advised they needed a space to store all the donations they received to provide food and items for children at Christmas. CM Watson indicated the office part of the building would not yet be renovated, but by taking out that middle wall in the shop, that huge room would be accessible and a great place for them to store all of those items. Mayor Burns advised in her grand opening for her building for the Kingdom Outreach Citizens Ministry, he and Council Member McGee were talking with her and the building came up through the conversation, and she only needed it for a few months. CM Watson advised that would be a great place for it; because the City would not be actively using it for City services at that point in time, but it would have a new roof and new windows, the heat and lights worked, and the City would make sure the bathroom worked. Mayor Burns inquired from CM Watson if he could send her an email letting her know we knew this was coming up, and CM Watson advised Mayor Burns to set something up so they could meet her over there and look at the space.

Item No. 9. Adjourn. There being no further business, Council Member Julie Thompson made a motion to adjourn the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of July 3, 2025. Mayor Robert Burns seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:34pm.

Attest:

Surluta Anthony, Chair

Angie Carnes, Clerk

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
WINCHESTER COMMUNITY SITE VISIT
SOUTHERN END OF PARKING LOT
DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM 1008 BISHOP BOWENS DRIVE
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28110
JULY 18, 2025 -- 1:00 PM
MINUTES**

The Winchester Revitalization Committee of the City of Monroe, North Carolina met at the Southern End of Parking Lot Directly Across From 1008 Bishop Bowens Drive, Monroe, North Carolina at 1:00pm on July 18, 2025 with Chair Surluta Anthony presiding.

Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Surluta Anthony (Chair), Mayor Robert Burns, Council Member Julie Thompson, Eleanor McGinnis, Celestine Alsbrooks, Eric Hall, and Clerk Angie Carnes

Members Absent: Minnie Atwater

Staff: City Manager (CM) Mark Watson, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Jeffrey Wells, Strategic Projects Manager (SPM) Teresa Campo (Staff Liaison), Director of Planning & Development (DP&D) Lisa Stiwinter, Senior Planner (SP) Keri Mendler, Planner I (Planner) Patrick Blaszyk, Police Sergeant I Mark Isley, and Master Police Officer II Jason Eubank

Visitors: S. David Carriker, D.Min. and Beth Poovey, Jeff Mis, Eli Lowry, and Emily Condon of LandDesign

Item No. 1. Site Visit of the Area of the Winchester Revitalization Project. Chair Anthony called the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of July 18, 2025 to order at 1:06pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present. Mayor Pro Tem Anthony presented the item and turned it over to ACM Jeffrey Wells.

ACM Wells advised representatives from LandDesign were in attendance and would be identifying areas of the site to aid in preparing a GIS map for the project.

CM Watson led a tour of the project site and identified areas of interest, including the roundhouse, turntable, water sources, railroad tracks, and parameters of the project.

Item No. 9. Adjourn. At the conclusion of the site visit, Council Member Julie Thompson made a motion to adjourn the Winchester Revitalization Committee Special Meeting of July 18, 2025. Mayor Robert Burns seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:17pm.

Surluta Anthony, Chair

Attest:

Angie Carnes, Clerk

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