

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 W. CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
APRIL 2, 2026 – 3:00 PM
AGENDA
www.monroenc.org**

1. Call to Order – Chair/Councilwoman Anthony
2. Welcome and Introductions Anthony
3. Approval of Minutes – February 17, 2026 Regular Meeting Anthony

STATUS AND UPDATES:

4. Winchester Revitalization Updates Watson/Wells
 - a) Winchester Community Engagement Session 2 Recap Wells
5. Other Business (if any) Watson
6. Adjourn Anthony

Next Meeting: May 7, 2026 @ 3:00pm

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 W. CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
FEBRUARY 17, 2026 – 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 February 17, 2026 with Chair Surluta Anthony presiding.

Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Surluta Anthony (Chair), Mayor Robert Burns, Council Member Julie Thompson, Eleanor McGinnis, Eric Hall, Celestine Alsbrooks, 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, Senior Planner Keri Mendler, Planner I Patrick Blaszyk, and Grant Administrator Lisa Kerner

Visitors: Dr. David Carriker

Item No. 1. Call to Order and Item No. 2. Welcome and Introductions. Chair Anthony called the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of February 17, 2026 to order at 3:03pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present.

Item No. 3. Approval of Minutes – November 6, 2025 Regular Meeting. The Minutes from the November 6, 2025 Regular Meeting were presented for review and approval. Council Member Thompson made a motion to approve the November 6, 2025 Minutes. Mayor Burns seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item No. 4. Winchester Revitalization Updates.

- a) **Winchester Community Engagement Session 2.** Chair Anthony advised the second public engagement session would be held that afternoon from 4pm – 7pm. She then introduced ACM Wells and he advised since the last meeting the Winchester Redevelopment consultants, LandDesign, completed the first public engagement workshop which was in early December. He advised that at that session the public learned about the existing conditions, the community history, shared values, memories, and the deep sense of community pride. He advised questions were asked to gain feedback on why Winchester

was great, what they would like to see changed, and images were displayed representing different uses and spaces to gain feedback on what people would like to see the area become. He advised the public also learned about the project components that the committee had talked about and looked at, including the linear park, the redevelopment area, neighborhood connections, and branding. He stated that brought us to public engagement session 2 which was scheduled for that afternoon from 4pm – 7pm at the Winchester Community Center. He advised it was designed basically the same way as the first session, as in there would be stations so when people walked in, they would sign in and then go from station to station providing feedback. He advised what LandDesign intended to do was reaffirm the project goals and confirm that feedback from the first engagement was accurate, confirm understanding and gather clear, targeted feedback for the walking connections, the redevelopment area, project components, and branding. He advised that the engagement session format would again be drop-in style, stations would be a repeat of the introduction board from session one reviewing the project schedule, and its components, the proposed greenway connections, as well as three distinct design approaches to the redevelopment area, and that would be the real meat in getting the feedback from the public that day. He advised some of the questions they would be asking the public: (1) Was the info you shared with us at the first public engagement reflected accurately? (2) As the project moved forward, were there things that should be emphasized more strongly? (3) Comfort level with the walkway types and locations depicted? (4) Were there additional pedestrian connections that should be considered? (5) Which elements of each concept felt the most successful or meaningful? (6) Were there specific features or ideas from each concept to carry forward? (7) Which approach best fit the community culture, history, and future? and (8) Did the logo and imagery feel authentic to Winchester? He advised those were just some of the examples of some of the questions that would be asked of the public, and said perhaps, most importantly, Gingham Girls would have cake rolls and dirty sodas available for the public while supplies lasted. He advised this session would inform the next phase of the process by documenting the new feedback received, concept refreshment and refinement, development of the implementation framework which would include the final report and implementation strategy over the next several months. ACM Wells also advised he knew it had been several months since it was discussed, but he hadn't forgotten about the idea of placing a real estate sign advertising the redevelopment initiative. He stated once the second public engagement session had been held and the committee started making the choices of how to move forward, some marketing and advertising could be put out there on the property in the form of a real estate type sign to start showing the public the future vision.

- b) ACM Wells advised that as a quick Brownfield update, the Catawba Oil property was added to the Brownfield area so that was a small triangular piece of property that was at the very west edge of the redevelopment area so that property assessment was in process to be added to the Brownfield area. He advised that in looking forward, the next steps for the Brownfield property would come once a concept to move forward had been decided on and provided to the consultants, then they could look at those land uses and finish up the Brownfield assessment based on the proposed way that the redevelopment area would look.

Chair Anthony asked what the dimensions of the roundhouse were and ACM Wells advised he did not know but there would be a couple of different concepts at the engagement session that recreated that roundhouse look on the redevelopment area. Chair Anthony advised she had been thinking about possibly putting a small event area there because the only thing left in Monroe was the Armory and it was a great place but not appropriate for everything like weddings or small reunions, etc. Mayor Burns asked where would she like to put that and Chair Anthony advised she didn't know and that was why she was wondering about the dimensions and said she visited one in Kannapolis and it was huge and had the Police Dept in there and several non-profits in one area and had the middle where it could be closed off and it had a stage in there. She advised she had been to two weddings there and it was beautiful and there were several ways that you could come in, and it had a commercial kitchen. Member Hall advised having more event space in the city would be great! ACM Wells advised he happened to know quite a few local government friends in Kannapolis and could follow up on that and see what that space/location was, and was happy to do that and that would be something great to share with the consultants at the engagement session tonight, and it would be a revenue maker as well.

Item No. 5. Other Business (if any). There was no other business.

Item No. 6. Adjourn. There being no further business, Member McGinnis made a motion to adjourn the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of February 17, 2026. Council Member Thompson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.

Surluta Anthony, Chair

Attest:

Angie Carnes, Clerk

MEMORANDUM

DATE	March 03, 2026	PROJECT #	1024248
PROJECT NAME	Winchester Revitalization Initiative		
PURPOSE	Community Engagement 02 Summary		
SUBMITTED BY	Jason McMiller		

Key Takeaways from the Open House

Overall, the community prioritizes a balance of open space and economic development, a hybrid of the concepts. All three concept themes received similar levels of support. Most comments focused on the density and intensity of the proposed buildings rather than the overall vision.

- **Building scale and intensity are the most sensitive factors**
 - Respondents expressed concern that Concept C: Main Street Winchester is too urban and dense. Possibly too intense for Winchester.
 - Attendees supported the idea to have civic/community spaces, retail, food, and beverage, and expressed a desire to have vendors and coworking spaces.
 - Attendees expressed interest in how the retail, food, and maker spaces will be determined, as well as the ROI of the concepts, and set milestones.
 - Attendees expressed concern about their property taxes rising.
- **Connectivity is strongly supported with safety and parking concerns**
 - Attendees expressed the desire to improve Winchester's connection to downtown, bringing residents of Monroe in to experience the redevelopment.
 - Respondents expressed concern with getting across the railroad tracks safely to connect Winchester to Downtown Monroe, proposing a pedestrian bridge.
 - Respondents expressed concern about having adequate parking.
- **The Roundhouse and historic interpretation remain essential**
 - The concept of the Community Roundhouse received immense positive feedback from respondents. Attendees expressed a desire to imitate the Roundhouse and the turntable at its original location.
 - Showcasing and preserving the history of Winchester is a critical element of the redevelopment. Respondents expressed the importance of Winchester's history to be integrated within the design, having an immersive experience through various methods.

Attendance Summary

- Total attendees who signed in: **41**
 - Residents, city staff, county/partner agencies, and community leaders
 - Activity guides collected: **20**, at varying levels of completion
-

Individual Board Summaries

The community responded positively to all three concepts, with Option C: “Main Street Winchester,” receiving the most critique related to scale and intensity.

Option A: Park Commons

- **What did people like about it?**
 - It reflects the history and atmosphere of Winchester
 - The density of buildings and the amount of open space
 - Activity connection to the Community Roundhouse
- **What did people not like?**
 - The lack of everyday use, it's not active enough
- **Suggestions**
 - Incorporate history markers, murals, and or statues
 - A path to travel across the railroads safely
 - To have street parking and or city transportation
 - A trail that goes through the original Roundhouse site. Wildflowers in the partially dug-out turntable pit

Option B: Community Commons

- **What did people like about it?**
 - Design will attract the younger generation, and visitors outside of Winchester
 - The balance of the density of buildings and the amount of open space
 - The blend of community and history
- **What did people not like?**
 - N/A
- **Suggestions / Concerns**
 - Prefer a closed Roundhouse over the pavilion style
 - To have vendors
 - Need adequate parking for visitors
 - Local artist competition to design murals and or sculptures
 - More shade

Option C: Main Street Winchester

- **What did people like about it?**
 - The preservation and exposure to the community's history
 - The linear park route along Winchester Ave
- **What did people not like?**
 - Too urban and dense. Possibly too intense for Winchester.

- Not enough community open space
- **Suggestions / Concerns**
 - Want the Roundhouse to be incorporated
 - Dining cars placed along the railyards
 - Having coworking spaces as one of the building uses

Greenway Connection

- Respondents were drawn to the painted lane of Bazemore and the designated linear park of Skyway Drive
- Respondents proposed a pedestrian bridge
- Respondents had concerns about the feasibility of the Skyway Drive and Morgan Mill Road connections due to traffic demand
- Respondents expressed concerns with private property impacts along English Street
- Respondents provided clarity on the existing conditions of Jerome Street, stating it is currently changing, suggesting turning it into a one-way drive

Other Design Ideas

- To have the linear park, or a trail that goes through the original Roundhouse/turntable site
- To plant wildflowers in the remnants of the turntable
- To incorporate rentable and coworking spaces
- Involve local artists for a design competition to design murals and or sculptures
- Beautiful landscape for photo opportunities
- Incorporate playful elements into the linear park, like hopscotch and boulders to climb
- Pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks
- Dining cars along the railyard

Quantified Responses from the Activity Guides

Based on the 20 completed activity guides, the following results should be viewed as directional rather than statistically definitive.

Which option best reflects Winchester's identity?

- Option A Park Commons: 5
- Option B Community Commons: 5
- Option C Main Street Winchester: 5

Where do you picture yourself spending time?

- Option A Park Commons: 5
- Option B Community Commons: 6
- Option C Main Street Winchester: 6

Does any option feel disconnected from "Who" Winchester is/wants to be?

- Option A Park Commons: 2
- Option B Community Commons: 2
- Option C Main Street Winchester: 8*

If we had to prioritize ONE THEME to lead the design, which should it be?

- History & Legacy: 8
- Community Togetherness: 6
- Economic Vibrancy: 4

Which logo option best reflects Winchester's identity??

- Switchyards: 12
- Guiding Light: 1
- Community Reflection: 6

*The highlighted text indicates clear community input.

Rank the three concepts from most to least aligned with community priorities.

- Average rankings were nearly identical across all three concepts, with concepts A and B tying for first, and concept C ranking slightly lower.
 - Option A Park Commons: 2.00*
 - Option B Community Commons: 2.00
 - Option C Main Street Winchester: 2.09

*Ranked from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most aligned.

Design Implications

A hybrid of all three concepts

- Combining the strongest elements of the three concepts

Building scale and density

- 1-2 story buildings
- Clear transitional design strategies
- Phasing strategy to manage the scale of redevelopment

Increase pedestrian connectivity

- Prioritize pedestrian and bike improvements while minding traffic operations, safety, and residential concerns.

Parking strategy clarity

- Event parking
- Shared parking strategy
- Clearly delineate and communicate the designated parking areas
- Relationship between redevelopment and parking

Utilize the Roundhouse as a signature identity feature

- Include immersive historic elements

Overall Summary

Overall, feedback confirms strong support for revitalization, provided it preserves historic identity, maintains meaningful open space, and introduces economic development at an appropriate neighborhood scale. Residents are prioritizing balance and signaling a preference for a hybrid of the three concepts anchored by the Roundhouse, strengthened by daily-use gathering spaces, supported by safe and functional connectivity, with parking clearly addressed. Implementation should follow a phased approach that introduces economic vitality while protecting Winchester's character.