

Addressing Ordinance

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ADDRESSING ORDINANCE

Section 1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish a consistent and coherent addressing system and to establish an official process by which roads are named and signed, addresses are assigned and displayed, and the addressing system is maintained.

Section 2. Authority

This Ordinance is adopted under the authority granted by N.C.G.S. 153A-238 et seq.

Section 3. Jurisdiction

- A. *Initial.* This Ordinance applies to addressable structures located within unincorporated Pitt County, including structures within all municipal extraterritorial planning jurisdictions except as outlined in the interlocal agreement regarding the addressing jurisdiction between the City of Greenville and the County of Pitt.
- B. *Supplemental.* This Ordinance may also be applied within the jurisdiction of any municipality whose governing body agrees, by resolution, to such applicability and agrees to the requirements contained in this Ordinance. In the event that a municipality no longer chooses to participate, and unless otherwise specified in the resolution, the withdrawing party must provide written notice to the County two (2) years in advance of withdrawal as provided by N.C.G.S. 160A-360(g).

Section 4. Address Assignments

All addresses required by this Ordinance shall be established in accordance with N.C.G.S. 153A-239.1 and Appendix A of the Ordinance from which this Ordinance derives.

Section 5. Number Display

- A. *Time to comply.* In the case of existing structures, the property owner shall display the address number(s) in accordance with this Section within thirty (30) days of notification of address assignment(s). In the case of new construction, address number display shall be in accordance with Section 10(B). Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the penalties cited in Section 11.
- B. *Location.* The address number is required to be displayed on the structure itself so that the structure can be easily and uniquely identified, and so that the number is oriented towards the named road or named access at all times during the year. If the address number posted on the structure is not legible from the named road or named access, then the address number is required to be posted in a suitable location to afford easy identification at all times during the year. When applicable, unit designators shall be displayed on all units within multi-unit structures. In no case shall numerals be less than four (4) inches in height. No additional information may be affixed to/with the address numbers, except as required by the U.S. Postal Service on the mailbox or mail container.

Section 6. Road Names/Private Access Names

Names required for new roads and proposed name changes shall be reviewed in accordance with this Section. Unique road names are required, and names which refer to landmarks, places, and natural features are preferable. In no case shall any proposed road name exceed twenty-three (23) characters in length or be phonetically similar to any other road or access name in the County unless specifically authorized by the Address Administrator or her/his designee. All approved road names shall be

added to the official road name list either through administrative action in the case of new developments or action of the Board of County Commissioners in all other cases as authorized in this Ordinance.

- A. *Future roads within planned developments.* Road names for proposed new roads shall be submitted to the Address Administrator by the developer for review and approval through the plan review process. Acceptability of proposed names shall be evaluated using both the official road name list and the unofficial list of pending road names maintained by the Address Administrator. Once approved by the Address Administrator, proposed names shall be added to the pending road name list and shall remain on the list until (1) the final plan for the development is approved, (2) the approval of the preliminary plan becomes invalid, or (3) the developer submits and gains approval for substitute road names prior to final plan approval. Road names shall be placed on the official road name list when final plans are approved. Any changes to such road names shall follow the provisions of Section 7.
- B. *All other roads.* The Address Administrator shall identify such roads and notify property owners with frontage along that road that a name is needed. Upon receipt of a proposed name from the property owners, the Address Administrator shall review the name in accordance with Section 6 within five (5) working days. When an acceptable response is not received within fourteen (14) days of notification, the Address Administrator shall propose a name. The recommended name shall be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval at an advertised public hearing as required by N.C.G.S. 153A-239.1. Following approval, the road name shall be added to the official road name list by the Address Administrator.
- C. *Private access.* The Address Administrator shall identify such accesses and notify property owners with frontage along the access that a name is needed. All of the property owners that abut and/or have access are required to sign the petition. Upon receipt of a proposed name from the property owners, the Address Administrator shall review the name in accordance with Section 6 within five (5) working days. When an acceptable response is not received within fourteen (14) days of notification, the Address Administrator shall propose a name. Following approval by the Address Administrator, the private access name shall be added to the official road name list. Affected property owners/residents will be notified of the newly assigned address number for the named private access. If a name cannot be agreed upon, the matter will go before the Board of County Commissioners at an advertised public hearing.

Section 7. Road Name Changes/Private Access Name Change

The Address Administrator is hereby authorized to determine the need for road name and private access name changes and to recommend such changes to the County Board of Commissioners at any time. Other road name change requests shall be signed by not less than sixty-six (66) percent of the property owners who own frontage on the road. Only one (1) owner's signature per individual parcel shall be permitted. All road name changes within unincorporated Pitt County shall be considered by the Board of County Commissioners at an advertised public hearing as required by N.C.G.S. 153A-239.1.

Road/private access name changes within the municipal limits shall be considered by the local municipal governing board at an advertised public hearing. The Address Administrator shall have general authority as outlined in the interlocal agreement to recommend approval or denial of the proposed name(s). The approved name change(s) shall be sent to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval at a regular advertised meeting.

Section 8. Private Access Name Removal

Once private access naming requirements are no longer met, the Address Administrator is hereby authorized to determine the removal of the private access name from the official road name list. Notification of the removal shall be sent to the property owners within fourteen (14) days prior to removal. Existing addresses will be changed to reflect the appropriate access name.

Section 9. Road/Private Access Name Signs

- A. *Additions.* All roads and private accesses shall be identified by a County-approved sign showing the official road name; road type; initial address number; and, if applicable, the secondary road number. Except in the case of new developments, or as otherwise authorized by the Address Administrator, the County shall be responsible for the purchase, construction, installation, maintenance, and replacement of all road name signs required by this Ordinance. In the case of new developments, the initial purchase of road name signs shall be the developer's expense.
- B. *Removal.* The road/private access name signs shall be removed when the road/private access name has been removed from the official road name list and all affected property owners shall be notified.

Section 10. Enforcement

- A. *Building permits.* No building permit may be issued until an official address has been assigned.
- B. *Certificates of occupancy.* No certificate of occupancy shall be issued until the address number is properly displayed in accordance with Section 5(B).
- C. *Display of numbers and road name signs.* Except as permitted by the Address Administrator, no person may display any number or signage which may cause confusion with official addresses, nor post any road name sign not approved by the County.
- D. *Address information.* No person shall affix, append, or attach any type of additional signage, article or item to any County road sign. No person shall remove, obliterate, conceal, or destroy any address number or road sign displayed in accordance with this Ordinance.

Section 11. Violations and Penalties

- A. *Notice.* If the Address Administrator finds that any of the provisions of this Ordinance are being or will be violated, notice of such violation(s) and specific corrective actions, including the time period to comply, which in no case shall be more than thirty (30) days, shall be mailed to the property owner by first class mail. A second notice of violation shall be mailed by certified mail to the property owner if corrective measures have not been taken within thirty (30) days of first notification. If corrective measures have not been taken within thirty (30) days of second notification, legal action may be instituted by the County in accordance with this Section.
- B. *Civil penalties.* Any property owner or occupant who violates any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be subject to a civil penalty of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per violation. No penalty shall be assessed until the person alleged to be in violation has been notified of the violation by certified mail. Each day of a continuing violation shall constitute a separate violation. The Address Administrator or his designee shall make written demand for payment upon the person under the violation and shall set forth in detail a description of the violation for which the penalty has been imposed. If payment is not received within sixty (60) days after demand for payment is made, the matter may be referred to the County Attorney for institution of a civil action in the name of the County in the appropriate division of the General Courts of Justice for recovery of the penalty. Any sum recovered shall be used to carry out the purposes and requirements of this Ordinance.
- C. *Criminal Penalties.* Any property owner or occupant who willfully violates any portion of this Ordinance shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punishable in accordance with North Carolina General Statute Section 14-4.
- D. *Injunctive Relief.* This Ordinance may be enforced by injunction and order of abatement issuing from the General Court of Justice. It is not a defense to the County's application for equitable relief that there is an adequate remedy at law. The County may apply for a mandatory or prohibitory injunction and order of abatement commanding the property owner or occupant to correct the

unlawful condition on the property. In addition to injunction, an order of abatement may direct that structures on the property be removed, or that any other action be taken that is necessary to bring the property into compliance with the Ordinance. If the defendant fails or refuses to comply with an injunction or order of abatement within the time allowed by the court, the defendant may be cited for contempt and the County may execute the order of abatement. If the County executes the order, it has a lien on the property, in the nature of a mechanic's and materialman's lien, for the cost of executing the order.

Section 12. Amendments

The Board of County Commissioners may amend the terms of this Ordinance. Proposals to amend, supplement, modify, or repeal any of the provisions of this Ordinance may be initiated by the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Board, staff, or any other interested person.

- A. *Board of County Commissioners action.* The Board of Commissioners shall consider any Ordinance amendment and the Planning Staff recommendation at an advertised public hearing. Such public hearing shall be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in the County once a week for two (2) consecutive calendar weeks, with the first advertisement appearing not less than ten (10) days and no more than twenty-five (25) days prior to the public hearing date. In computing this advertising period, the date of publication shall not be included, but the day of the hearing shall be included.
- B. *Record of amendments.* All approved amendments shall be recorded in the official County Ordinance Book, and appropriate amendment notations shall be included in this Ordinance.

Section 13. Appeals

- A. *Ability to appeal.* Any aggrieved person may file an appeal to the Planning Director relating to the interpretation or application of this Ordinance by the Address Administrator. In cases relating to a decision of the Planning Director, recourse shall be to the Board of Commissioners.
- B. *Time limitation and notice.* Any appeal must be filed within thirty (30) days of the decision. Written notice which states the basis or grounds for the appeal shall be provided to the Planning Director.
- C. *Decision.* In cases of an appeal of a decision by the Address Administrator, the Planning Director shall provide a written decision regarding the appeal which includes findings of fact, rationale for the decision, and a summary of evidence or testimony presented. The burden of providing substantial evidence or testimony is upon the petitioner who makes the appeal. If the appeal is not granted by the Planning Director, the person may go before the Board of County Commissioners at an advertised public hearing.

Section 14. Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances

Any resolution, ordinance, or parts of ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 15. Severability

Should any provision of this Ordinance be ruled invalid, all other parts shall remain valid.

Section 16. Effective Date

The provisions of this Ordinance shall become effective on January 10, 2005.

Section 17. Definitions

For purposes of this Ordinance, the following words and phrases shall be defined as follows:

Access: Of ingress to and egress from a structure.

Address: Information necessary to uniquely identify a specific addressable structure. The address shall be comprised of the following components: number, road name/private access name, and unit designator.

Address Administrator: The designated official of the County Planning Department responsible for administering this Ordinance.

Address assignment: The notification of the address to the property owner, including initial notification of new or existing address and reassignment of addresses.

Address, initial: Lowest number available for assignment to a structure along a specific road.

Address range: A sequence of consecutive numbers which are available for assignment to structures along a specific road.

Addressable structure: Buildings for which addresses are required, including places which are maintained as places of residence or business or which have the potential to be maintained as places of residence or business, or as otherwise classified by the Address Administrator.

Axis: Geographic features which provide the framework for an equal interval addressing system. In the case of the County, the north/south axis is NC 11 and the east/west axis is the Tar River.

Block: Replication of each axis every one-quarter mile (1320 feet). Used to establish the initial address for each named road.

Building site: A specific location on which an addressable structure will be established.

Cardinal direction: North, south, east or west directive included with addresses assigned along roads which cross the axis of opposite orientation, or as otherwise required. In the case of primary routes, cardinal direction shall be a suffix; for all other routes the cardinal direction shall be a prefix with respect to the road name.

Days: Calendar days unless otherwise specified. A duration of days shall include the first and last days on which an activity is conducted, and all days in between, unless otherwise specified by state law.

Equal interval addressing system: Establishment of address numbers based upon a consistent, specified distance.

Multi-unit structure: An addressable structure which contains two (2) or more single living units or places of business under the same roof structure and which share one (1) or more common walls.

Number: A unique numerical designator assigned to an individual structure along a specific road.

Origin: The intersection of NC 11 and the Tar River.

Primary road: A US or NC numbered route.

Private access: Any private access which serves three (3) or more addressable structures or approved building sites, or as identified by the Address Administrator.

Private road: Any way of passage in which the public has acquired rights by prescription, without regard to whether it is open for travel.

Property Owner: Real and/or personal property owner.

Public road: Any way of passage that has been irrevocably dedicated to the public or in which the public has acquired rights by prescription, without regard to whether it is open for travel.

Road: Both private roads and public roads.

Road name, official: Includes alphabetic or alpha-numeric identifier; road type; and may also include a cardinal direction, as approved by the County.

Road, level 1: Any road or private access in unincorporated Pitt County which originates within or passes through the addressing jurisdiction of Greenville.

Road, level 2: Any road or private access in unincorporated Pitt County which is not a level I road and which originates within or passes through the municipal limits of Ayden, Bethel, Falkland, Farmville, Fountain, Grifton, Grimesland, Simpson or Winterville.

Road, level 3: Any road or private access in unincorporated Pitt County which is not a level I or a level 2 road.

Road type: A suffix which may be a part of the approved road name listed in Section 12.0 of Appendix A of the Ordinance from which this Ordinance derives. (Appendix A is not set out at length in this Code but is on file and available for inspection in the Offices of the County.)

Starting point: Terminus of a named road which is nearest the origin.

Street: See **Road**.

Unit designator: An alphabetic or numeric character which distinguishes between/among residences or places of business within a multi-unit structure.

Editor's Note – This Ordinance, adopted on April 1, 1996, was amended on the following dates:

January 10, 2005

June 20, 2006