Planning Boards

Several food councils in NC have worked with their planning boards to address food system issues including the allowance of commercial crop production within city limits, zoning to allow for mobile farmers markets and roadside stands in residential areas, zoning to allow for dual-use of agricultural and solar farms, and backyard chicken ordinances..

Responsibilities of the Board

Planning Boards are responsible for the development and land use in their communities. They create zoning ordinances, while taking into consideration numerous factors, including economic development, affordable housing, andenvironmental considerations.

Joining the Board

Members ara appointed by city councils or city commissioners. Boards must have at least three members. Some counties, like Wake, have fourteen board members, whereas more rural boards tend to have fewer members.

Boards Across the State

Some rural counties, such as Cherokee and Robeson Counties, do not have planning boards. In other rural counties, towns within the county have their own planning board. Some counties have boards that represent both the urban and rural communities within a county.

Collaboration & Community

The Vice-Chair of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commision, Sam Spencer, believes it is crucial that public opinion is integrated into every one of the board's projects. Many planning boards benefit when working alongside community members and stakeholders.

Relevance to the Local Food System

These boards have the power to restrict or support commercial and community-based agricultural enterprises. They can make decisions regarding the location of grocery stores and foodbanks in a community

Terms of Service

Members of the board are appointed for three-year terms. Some boards have restrictions on how many terms a member may serve, while other boards do not.

Sam Spencer:

"It's absolutely amazing to work on projects...and see them get built and see things that you asked for as a representative of the community come to fruition."