



# Chatham County Planning Board Agenda Notes

**Date: December 2, 2025**

**Agenda Item: VI-1**

**Attachment #: None**

**Subdivision**

**Special Use Permit**

**Rezoning Request**

**Other:**

<b>Subject:</b>	A legislative request for a text amendment to the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance by Gregory Smith to have the use of Recreational Facilities (gyms, yoga studios, et cetera) as a “P” Permitted use in the Industrial Light (Ind-L) zoning districts.
<b>Action Requested:</b>	See Recommendation
<b>Attachments:</b>	Applications materials can be viewed on the Planning Department webpage at <a href="http://www.chathamcountync.gov/planning">www.chathamcountync.gov/planning</a> under Rezoning & Subdivision Cases, 2025

**Introduction & Background:**  
 A legislative public hearing was held November 17, 2025. Planning staff presented the item and the applicant provided an explanation for the requested amendment. No one signed up to speak and no written comments were provided to staff.

**Discussion & Analysis:**  
 This request is a citizen-initiated amendment to the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance to modify the Table of Permitted Uses in Section 10.13.

Currently the use of Recreation Facilities is a “P” Permitted use in B-1 (legacy district), NB, CB, and RB. This request is to also allow the use as “P” Permitted in the IL Light Industrial zoning districts.

Zoning District	R5	R2	R1	O&I	B-1*	NB	CB	RB	IL	IH
Public parks and recreation areas including marinas and concessions with a minimum lot area of three acres and provided that all buildings, structures and high intensity activity areas shall be set back a minimum of two times the minimum yard requirement for the district in which it is located	SUP	SUP	SUP							
Public utility transmission lines	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Radio and television stations and their towers when the towers are located on the same site with the station					P			P		
Rag, bag and carpet cleaning establishments										P
Railroad freight yards, terminals or classification yards and rights-of-way									P	P
Railroad rights-of-way									P	P
Recreational Facilities (Gyms, yoga studios, et cetera)					P	P	P	P		
Recreational Vehicle Storage Facility					SUP	SUP	SUP	SUP	SUP	SUP

The applicant stated that in many jurisdictions, warehouses and other types of larger buildings are being utilized for this type of use. He stated he has seen evidence that the upfitting, repurposing, and utilization of these otherwise abandoned structures has reduced additional rezonings on vacant properties, increases the land value, reduces waste, has community and economic value to the area, and allows for reinvesting in existing buildings.

The applicant understands that the use of any building will require additional permits if the amendment is approved, including building and fire inspections.

All applications for amendments to this Ordinance must address the following items:

1. **The alleged error in this Ordinance, if any, which would be remedied by the proposed amendment with a detailed explanation of such error in the Ordinance and detailed reasons how the proposed amendment will correct the same.** The applicant is not claiming any error in the Ordinance.
2. **The changed or changing conditions, if any, in the area or in the County generally, which make the proposed amendment reasonably necessary to the promotion of the public health, safety, and general welfare.** The applicant states this will provide more options for needed space for athletics. In most cases, there are larger more accessible buildings located within the Light Industrial districts than can be located in a general business district. Generally, ample parking, access, and other infrastructure are already in place or would provide for more intense uses.
3. **The manner in which the proposed amendment will carry out the intent and purpose of the adopted Land Use Plan or parts thereof.**
  - Chapter 3, Goals and Objectives- Obj. 6- encourages providing recreational opportunities and access to open space, specifically to community facilities.
  - Chapter 3, Goals and Objectives-Obj. 10- encourages fostering a healthy community to support active lifestyles
  - Chapter 3, Strategy 4.2- encourages adding more indoor recreational facilities.
4. **All other circumstances, factors, or reasons which the applicant offers in support of the proposed amendment.** The applicant stated he is heavily involved in athletic sports, specifically, volleyball, which needs more indoor recreational facilities in which to practice and hold games. Utilizing buildings that already allow for more intensive uses would be well suited for such activities.

**Recommendation:**

The Planning Board has up to three meetings in which to make are recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval or denial to add Recreational Facilities as a “P” Permitted use in the IL Light Industrial zoning districts.

- If the board recommends approval the following consistency statement is provided for consideration: The requested amendment meets the intent of

Plan Chatham, specifically Chapter 3, Goals and Objectives- Obj. 6- encourages providing recreational opportunities and access to open space, specifically to community facilities, Chapter 3, Goals and Objectives-Obj. 10- encourages fostering a healthy community to support active lifestyles, and Chapter 3, Strategy 4.2- encourages adding more indoor recreational facilities.