



Planning Commission Minutes

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note the public testimony may be limited by the Chair.

May 26, 2026
STUDY SESSION
Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Verner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

Commissioners Present:

Lisa Verner
Jay Lininger
Susan MacCracken Jain
Eric Herron
John Maher
Kerry KenCairn

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant

Absent Members:

Russell Phillips

Council Liaison:

Jeff Dahle (absent)

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Staff Announcements:

Community Development Director Brandon Goldman made the following announcements:

- The City's held its annual Historic Preservation Awards ceremony on May 21st, the following awards were presented:
 - **Compatible ADU award** – 53 Pine Street
 - **Compatible New Residential within a Historic District** – 114 Bush Street
 - **Historic Compatible Commercial** – 27 North Main
 - **Multifamily Historic New Construction** – 292 Gresham Street
 - **Individual Award** – Madeline Hill, recognized for championing the creation of the Mountain Meadows area, which staff noted may qualify as a historic district in approximately 15 years.

2. Advisory Committee Liaison Reports – None

III. PUBLIC FORUM – None





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IV. **OTHER BUSINESS**

PA-TI-2026-00297, 40 North Main Street – Finalization of Planning Commission Recommendation to City Council

Ex Parte Contact

No ex parte contact was disclosed.

The Commission reviewed the written recommendation regarding a similar use interpretation under AMC 18.1.5, concerning the distinction between private parking and public parking as a regulated use. No amendments to the written report were proposed. Staff confirmed that a formal motion was not required, and that the recommendation would be forwarded to City Council at its June 16th meeting.

V. **DISCUSSION ITEM**

Legislative Amendments in Senate Bill 974

Mr. Goldman presented draft amendments to the Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) in response to Senate Bill 974, which shifts qualifying residential land use processing to administrative decisions by staff. Appeals go to the Planning Commission, with further appeals to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). The proposed changes include:

- **Performance Standards Option Subdivisions**
Moving such subdivisions to an administrative review, allowing appeals to the Planning Commission, and proposed raising the mandatory two-step plan threshold from 10 to 20 lots. The Commission showed preference for 12 lots due to alignment with cottage housing standards, agreeing to this change.
- **Residential Variances – Driveway Grade**
To address a LUBA ruling, the staff proposed allowing driveway variances above 18% grade for pre-existing lots lacking compliant access, requiring a specific date tied to the hillside ordinance to define "pre-existing." Variance decisions would be staff-administered but appealable to the Commission.
- **Residential Design Standards**
SB 974 limits design standards for larger one- and two-family developments. In Ashland, this mainly affects the North Mountain Neighborhood Plan. Commissioner Lininger suggested aligning with SB 974's sunset clause of January 2, 2033, to ensure it's a temporary measure, which staff agreed to include.
- **Definition of Urban Housing Application**
Commissioner Lininger noted the use of "proposed" instead of "planned" when defining "urban housing application" in municipal code, and staff agreed to align this definition with state statute to avoid legal issues.





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VI. OPEN DISCUSSION – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

*Submitted by,
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant*

