

**KENNEWICK PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 5, 2026**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman James Hempstead called the regular meeting of the Kennewick Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Six Commissioners were present, one Commissioner absent and six Commissioners in the Council Chambers.

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Commissioners Present:**

**James Hempstead**, *Chair*  
**Tina Gregory**, *Vice Chair*  
**Michelle Morales**, *Commissioner*  
**Christopher Arneson**, *Commissioner*  
**Douglas Perez**, *Commissioner*  
**Ana Rahimlou**, *Commissioner (online)*  
**\*Commissioner Absent: Mark Barger**,  
*Commissioner*

**City Staff Present:**

**Steve Donovan**, *AICP*  
*Development Services Manager*  
**Joseph Laris**, *Assistant Planner*  
**Melinda Didier**, *Planning Administrative Asst.*

Ms. Didier announced a quorum was established.

**MOTION:** Vice Chair Gregory moved to excuse Commissioner Barger's absence from the meeting.

**SECOND:** Commissioner Arneson.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**VOTE: The motion passed unanimously (6-0).**

Chair Hempstead lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**a. Approval of Minutes Dated November 17, 2025, and December 15, 2025**

**b. Approval of Agenda**

**c. Motion to Enter Staff Report into Record**

**MOTION:** Vice Chair Gregory moved to approve the consent agenda as presented.

**SECOND:** Commissioner Arneson.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**VOTE: The motion passed unanimously (6-0).**

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

Chair Hempstead made the following statement:

"Good evening and welcome to the January 5, 2026, Kennewick Planning Commission meeting.

It is important that everyone who wishes to do so has an opportunity to speak. Each person who has either signed-in (in person) or registered (via Zoom) will have one, three-minute opportunity to address the Planning Commission.

If you are attending via Zoom, please confirm your microphone has been unmuted before you begin your comments.

Please state your name and address for the record; once you begin your remarks the countdown timer will start. At the end of your time, please mute your microphone.

The order of the hearings shall be as follows:

1. Planning staff shall provide a staff report; the Commission may ask questions of staff;
2. The Applicant or Applicant's Representative(s) Presentation;
3. Testimony in Favor of the Request;
4. Testimony Either Neutral or Against the Request;
5. Final Applicant Comments;
6. Final Staff Comments;
7. Close the public hearing and discuss the request."

- a. **Change of Zone (COZ) 2025-0005 – an application proposing to change approximately 4.61 acres generally located at 3805 S. Vancouver Street from Residential, Suburban Density (RS) to Residential, Low Density (RL). Comprehensive Land Use Designation is Low Density Residential (LDR). Applicant is Jessica Bruce, AHBL Engineering, 2215 N. 30<sup>th</sup> Street #300, Tacoma, WA 98403. Owner is Melgarejo Hilario Zaragoza, 3805 S. Vancouver Street, Kennewick, WA 99337.**

Chair Hempstead opened the public hearing at 6:37 p.m. for Change of Zone (COZ) 2025-0005, a zone change from RS to RL for 4.61 acres of land located at 3805 S. Vancouver Street.

Applicant:  
Jessica Bruce  
AHBL Engineering  
2215 N. 30<sup>th</sup> St. #300  
Tacoma, WA 98403

Property Owner:  
Melgarejo Hilario Zaragoza  
3805 S. Vancouver St.  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Assistant Planner Joseph Laris described the application, presented the staff report, and Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for approval of COZ-2025-0005 to City Council.

Planning Commission Questions of Staff: Was the surrounding area rezoned from RS to RL (2006); the Planning Commission decision is a recommendation to City Council – City Council either approves or denies the proposal.

Testimony by Applicant/Applicant's Representative: None.

Testimony in Favor of the Request: None.

Testimony Against the Request:

Debbie Clark  
1907 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Donna Brockman  
1805 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Laura Staley  
3804 S. Vancouver St.  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Larry Singleton  
1809 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Patrick Blaire  
2003 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Arnold Porter  
3702 S. Vancouver St.  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Deanne Lemley  
3902 S. Vancouver St  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Heather Blaire  
2003 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Kennewick, WA 99337

Comments included: The zone change not compliant with Comprehensive Plan; not a suitable location for dense development; streets (Vancouver) are not pedestrian friendly or suitable for emergency vehicle access; increased traffic count detrimental to pedestrian and motorist safety; will lower property values; Vancouver is currently not in sufficient condition to handle current traffic, increases will cause safety issues for children walking to school.

Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: None.

Staff Final Comments: Staff commented the zone change request is a “non-project” action, and this hearing is for the change of zone only. The surrounding properties are zoned RL and developed according to the RL district zoning standards. The WA State Senate Bill for Middle Housing was passed and determines densities for residential zoning districts in Washington State.

Public Testimony Closed at 7:24 p.m.

The Planning Commissioners asked clarifying questions of staff.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Arneson moved that the Planning Commission concur with the findings and conclusions in staff report COZ-2025-0005 and recommend approval of the request to City Council.

**SECOND:** Commissioner Perez.

**DISCUSSION:** Statements by Planning Commissioners included the request meets requirements and is a recommendation to City Council; the zone change is a non-project action.

**VOTE: The motion passed 5-1; Commissioners Arneson, Hempstead, Gregory, Morales & Perez in favor; Commissioner Rahimlou opposed. (5-1).**

**4. VISITORS NOT ON AGENDA:** None.

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

**a. CITY COUNCIL ACTION UPDATES:**

Mr. Donovan reported that the City Council approved the Co-Living Ordinance at their last meeting.

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

**a. DCA-2025-0006: Amend Kennewick Municipal Code (KMC) Section 18.12.010.B.1 to allow vehicle sales, incidental repair and service as permitted use in the Urban Mixed-Use Zone, other than Vista Field area.**

**b. New Chapter proposed in the Kennewick Municipal Code to establish development regulations for Unit-Lot Subdivisions.**

Development Services Manager Steve Donovan presented Power Point slides for Items 6.a and 6.b, and answered clarifying questions for the planning commissioners.

**7. REPORTS, COMMENTS, OR DISCUSSION OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFFBOARD COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:**

Planning Commissioners thanked staff and commented on residential housing ordinance education for Kennewick residents. Mr. Donovan said the Planning Commission Chair will be presenting the 2026 Planning Commission Work Plan at the January 27<sup>th</sup> Council workshop meeting.

**8. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Hempstead concluded the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Melinda Didier, CPT  
Administrative Assistant, Community Planning