

KENNEWICK PLANNING COMMISSION
January 6, 2025
MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hempstead called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Commissioner Hempstead led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Community Planning Administrative Assistant Melinda Didier called the roll and found the following present:

PRESENT: Commissioners James Hempstead, Nikki Griffith, Tina Gregory, Ken Short (*All in person*).

ABSENT: Vice Chairman Thomas Helgeson.

STAFF: Anthony Muai, AICP Planning Director; Steve Donovan, AICP Development Services Manager; Melinda Didier, Community Planning Administrative Assistant.

Four commissioners were present at the 6:35 p.m. start of meeting, with Vice Chairman Helgeson absent, and two positions are vacant; Ms. Didier declared a quorum was established.

Commissioner Griffith moved to Excuse Vice Chairman Helgeson's absence; Commissioner Short seconded the motion. Motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the minutes dated December 2, 2024.
- b. Approval of the agenda.
- c. Motion to enter Staff Report(s) into the Record.

MOTION: Commissioner Gregory moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: The motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Commissioner Hempstead made the following statement:

"Good evening and welcome to the January 6, 2025 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) #2024-0002:

Commissioner Hempstead opened the public hearing at 6:40 pm for Change of Zone (COZ) #2024-0002, proposing to change the zoning designation for two parcels of approximately 1.23 acres located at 1826 & 1838 S. Washington Street from Commercial, Office (CO) to Commercial, General (CG). Applicant – Paul Knutzen, Knutzen Engineering, 5401 Ridgeline Drive #160, Kennewick, WA 99338. Property owner – The Maurer Company, LLC, 1603 W. 25th Place, Kennewick, WA 99337.

1. Mr. Donovan described the application, presented the staff report, and recommended the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for denial of COZ-2024-0002 to City Council.

Planning Commission asked clarifying questions of staff: Were there any comments received regarding the zone change; would denser residential be better suited; how long has the parcel to the north been vacant; is there any plan by the City to annex the area to the east on Washington Street; does this neighborhood fit the bill for new commercial development; how does this change affect the area negatively; could the applicant declare the use that it wants to develop and ask for a variance.

2. Testimony of Applicant/Applicant's Representative: Paul Knutzen, Knutzen Engineering, 5401 Ridgeline Drive #160, Kennewick, WA 99338. Mr. Knutzen testified he is originally from this area and this parcel area has been vacant for as a long time; residential isn't an option now due to Comp Plan Amendments not accepted until March 2027; the owner has a similar development on Hood Ave/Edison St. area; although it is a large jump from CO to CG, CG allows for flexibility since the City doesn't have a flex zoning designation; the project will be a flex type building. Mr. Knutzen requested Planning Commission recommendation of approval to City Council for this zone change.
3. Testimony in Favor of the Request: Property Owner Ken Maurer, 1603 W. 25th Place, Kennewick, WA 99337. Mr. Maurer lifetime Kennewick resident, the lot/parcel has been vacant for a long time; wants opportunity to develop property and area into something nice.
4. Testimony Neutral/Against the Request: None

5. Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: None
6. Staff Final Comments: None
7. Public Testimony Closed at 7:02 p.m.
8. Planning Commission Questions of Staff: Does current use conform to CO zoning; is staff concern the potential of types of commercial uses allowed in CG zone;

MOTION: Commissioner Short moved to submit findings of support based on value for City development and applicant benefit for COZ-2024-0002 and recommend City Council APPROVE the request. Commissioner Gregory seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Muai and Planning Staff will draft and submit findings to submit to City Council with Planning Commission support.

The motion passed 3-1 on a roll call vote; Commissioners Gregory, Short and Hempstead in favor, Commissioner Griffith opposed.

4. VISITORS NOT ON AGENDA:

- a. None

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. City Council Action Updates – None

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Ben Franklin Transit Long Range Transit Plan Presentation – Gabe Martin

7. REPORTS, COMMENTS, OR DISCUSSION OF COMMISSIONERS/STAFF: None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting concluded at 7:34 p.m.