

KENNEWICK PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED - MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 2, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Tina Gregory called the regular meeting of the Kennewick Planning Commission to order at 6:34 p.m. Six Commissioners were present, one Commissioner absent and six Commissioners in the Council Chambers.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

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

City Staff Present:

Anthony Muai, *AICP Planning Director*
Steve Donovan, *AICP Development Services Manager*
Matt Halitsky, *AICP Assistant Planner*
Melinda Didier, *Planning Administrative Asst.*

Ms. Didier announced a quorum was established.

MOTION: Commissioner Arneson moved to excuse Commissioner Hempstead's absence from the meeting.

SECOND: Commissioner Perez.

DISCUSSION: None.

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

Vice Chair Gregory lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

a. **Approval of Minutes Dated January 5, 2026**

b. **Approval of Agenda**

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

MOTION: Commissioner Perez moved to approve the consent agenda as presented.

SECOND: Commissioner Barger.

DISCUSSION: None.

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

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Vice Chair Gregory made the following statement:

"Good evening and welcome to the February 2, 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. **Development Code Amendment (DCA) #2025-0006 – an application proposing to amend Kennewick Municipal Code (KMC) Section 18.12.010.B.1 to allow vehicle sales, incidental repair and service as a permitted use in the Urban Mixed-Use Zone, other than the Vista Field Area. Applicants are Moe Nassar, 408 W. Columbia Dr., Kennewick, and Hary Mahal, 520 E. Columbia Dr., Kennewick, WA 99336.**

Vice Chair Gregory opened the public hearing at 6:40 p.m. for Development Code Amendment (DCA) 2025-0006, an amendment to KMC Section 18.12.010.B.1 to allow vehicle sales, incidental repair and service in the UMU zone, other than in Vista Field area.

Commissioner Arneson recused himself from the hearing for DCA-2025-0006 due to on-going business connections with the applicants, the Commissioner will not participate in any part of the Public Hearing for this item on the agenda.

Development Services Manager Steve Donovan described the application and presented the staff report.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for denial of DCA-2025-0006 to City Council.

Planning Commission Questions of Staff: There are many existing car lots in the Columbia Drive downtown area, why isn't this compatible with the Comprehensive Plan; is there a way to change codes so that existing car lot businesses can expand and not have many more come in; regarding the Bridge 2 Bridge, River 2 Railway Plan, why has the plan not moved forward; .

Commissioner Perez declared current business connections and transactions with the applicants but chooses not to recuse himself unless staff recommends doing so.

Testimony by Applicant/Applicant's Representative:

Rick Simon, Applicant's Representative, Richland, WA

Mr. Simon stated he is the applicants representative and said the purpose of the amendment is for the businesses located in that district can expand and grow their businesses in the UMU district.

Moe Nassar, Applicant
408 W. Columbia Drive
Kennewick 99336

Mr. Nassar spoke in support of the proposed amendment; it will allow business expansion and be a benefit to the City.

Haray Mahal, Applicant
520 E. Columbia Drive
Kennewick 99337

M. Mahal spoke in support of the proposed amendment; his business has been there since 2006, wishes to continue and expand use of business.

Testimony in Favor of the Request:

Caleb Aldinger, Allied Automotive
834 Klamath Avenue
Kennewick 99336

Has business in this area for fifteen years, in best interest of City to keep existing businesses and allow for growth and expansion of those businesses.

Mr. Aldinger presented a letter of support for amendment of UMU zoning district, entered into record as Exhibit 5.

Ken Williamson
Property Owner on Columbia Drive in UMU Zoning

Has oldest business on Columbia Drive, was on the Bridge to Bridge Committee is in neutral opinion of proposed amendment.

Testimony Against the Request: None

Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: None.

Staff Final Comments: Mr. Donovan gave final comments from staff.

The Planning Commission asked clarifying questions of staff.

Public Testimony Closed at 7:39 p.m.

The Planning Commissioners asked clarifying questions of staff.

MOTION: Commissioner Morales moved that the Planning Commission concur with the findings and conclusions in staff report DCA-2025-0005 and recommend denial of the request to City Council. The motion died for lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Perez moved that the Planning Commission Concur with the findings and conclusions in staff report DCA-2025-0006 and recommend approval of the Planning Commission Minutes February 2, 2026 – **APPROVED**

request to City Council. Mr. Donovan pointed out to Commissioner Perez his concurrence with staff findings and conditions for approval and offered amended findings and conditions for a motion of approval of the request. Motion died for lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Morales moved that the Planning Commission concur with the **amended** findings and conditions of staff and recommend approval of DCA-2025-0006 to amend KMC Section 18.12.010.B.1 to City Council.

SECOND: Commissioner Perez.

DISCUSSION: Statements by Planning Commissioners included what happens with the UMU zone moving forward and alignment with the Comprehensive Plan, design standards and building development.

VOTE: The motion passed 6-0 (Unanimously).

- b. Development Code Amendment (DCA) 2025-0007 – a proposal to amend Kennewick Municipal Code (KMC) Section 17.04.020: Definitions, and create Kennewick Municipal Code 17.14 to establish development regulations for unit-lot subdivisions. Applicant – City of Kennewick, Community Planning.**

Vice Chair Gregory opened the public hearing at 7:49 p.m. for Development Code Amendment (DCA) 2025-0007, a development code amendment for certain KMC Sections 17.

Applicant:
City of Kennewick, Community Planning

Mr. Donovan described the application, presented the staff report, and Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for approval of DCA-2025-0007 to City Council.

Planning Commission Questions of Staff: What does bad State legislation do to City zoning codes.

Testimony by Applicant/Applicant's Representative: Applicant is City of Kennewick; no additional comments.

Testimony in Favor of the Request:

John Lawhead
2319 W. 29th Avenue
Kennewick

Mr. Lawhead gave comments in favor of this request, mandated by the State for Middle Housing, for affordable housing. Not applicable to all subdivisions in the City. Ready to get these developments done.

Testimony Neutral/Against the Request: None.

Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: None.

Staff Final Comments: Mr. Donovan gave final comments from staff.

MOTION: Commissioner Arneson moved that the Planning Commission concur with the findings and conclusions in staff report DCA-2025-0007 and recommend approval of the request to City Council.

SECOND: Commissioner Perez.

DISCUSSION: None.

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

4. VISITORS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

a. CITY COUNCIL ACTION UPDATES:

Mr. Muai reported that the City Council will consider the rezone tomorrow.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Climate and Land Use.

The consultants introduced themselves, gave their respective presentations 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 the consultant work on the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Vice Chair Gregory concluded the meeting at 9:22 p.m.

Melinda Didier, CPT
Administrative Assistant, Community Planning