

KENNEWICK PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED - MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 16, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair James Hempstead called the regular meeting of the Kennewick Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Seven Commissioners were present in the Council Chambers.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

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

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; twelve members of the public were present in the Council Chambers.

Chair Hempstead lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. **Approval of Minutes Dated February 2, 2026 & March 2, 2026**
- b. **Approval of Agenda**
- c. **Motion to Enter Staff Report into Record**

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

SECOND: Commissioner Arneson.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Chair Hempstead made the following statement:

“Good evening and welcome to the March 16, 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) #2026-0001 – an application proposing to change the zoning district for approximately 37.67 acres located at 4501 S. Olympia Street from Residential, Suburban (RS), to Residential, Low (RL). Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map designation is Low Density Residential (LDR). Applicant is Peter Harpster, Harpster Land Development, 5804 Road 90, Suite C, Pasco, WA 99301. Property owner is Big Sky North LLC, 12406 Eagle Reach Court, Pasco, WA 99301.**

Chair Hempstead opened the public hearing at 6:34 p.m. Change of Zone (COZ) 2026-0001, proposing to change 37.67 acres located at 4501 S. Olympia Street from Residential, Suburban (RS) to Residential, Low (RL).

Assistant Planner Joseph Laris described the application and presented the staff report.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for approval of COZ-2026-0001 to City Council.

Planning Commission Questions of Staff: Chairman Hempstead asked staff to review for the Planning Commission and members of the public present describing a change of zone and land uses.

Testimony by Applicant/Applicant's Representative:

Chris Yourdan, Harpster Land Development for Big Sky North LLC, 5804 Road 90 Suite C, Pasco, WA 99301, Applicant's Representative:

Mr. Yourdan stated he is the applicant representative and said the purpose of the change of zone is for future housing development; requests Planning Commissioners to approve the request.

Testimony in Favor of the Request: None

Testimony Against the Request:

Stephanie Weyn
315 W. 47th Avenue
Kennewick

John Bussert
W. 49th Avenue
Kennewick

Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: None.

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

The Planning Commission asked clarifying questions of staff.

Public Testimony Closed at 6:48 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-2026-0001 and recommend APPROVAL of the request to City Council.

SECOND: Commissioner Rahimlou.

DISCUSSION: Statements by Planning Commissioners included residential housing is needed; what can be built under new State Middle Housing Bill.

VOTE: The motion passed 7-0 (Unanimously).

4. VISITORS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

a. CITY COUNCIL ACTION UPDATES:

Mr. Donovan reported that last week the City Council remanded back to the Planning Commission the Development Code Amendment request in the UMU zone. The Planning Commission will consider the remanded application at their April 6th meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS: None.

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

Planning Commissioners thanked the public for attending and staff for their work and recommended more public education on the new residential zoning requirements.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Hempstead concluded the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Melinda Didier, CPT
Administrative Assistant, Community Planning