



TOWN OF JEROME

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MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF JEROME JEROME CIVIC CENTER 600 CLARK STREET, JEROME, ARIZONA TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025, AT 6:00 PM

Due to the length of this meeting, Council may recess and reconvene at the time and date announced.

6:00PM (0:33) 1. CALL TO ORDER

Present were Chair Lance Schall, Vice Chair Jeanie Ready and Commissioners Rebecca "Becca" Miller and Jera Peterson.

Staff Present included Zoning Administrator William Blodgett and Accounting Clerk, Michele Sharif

6:01PM (0:46) 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. The board will vote on approval of the minutes of the regular meeting from April 15, 2025.

Chair Schall introduced the approval of minutes.

Vice Chair Ready made a motion to approve April 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Ms. Miller seconded the motion.

Mr. Schall called the question and by unanimous vote the meeting minutes for April 15, 2025, were approved.

Motion to

BOARD MEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
MILLER		X	X			
PETERSON			X			
READY	X		X			
SCHALL			X			

6:01PM (1:38) 3. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

6:01PM 4. NEW BUSINESS

6:02PM (1:52) A. The board will discuss the possibility of changing meeting times and meeting scheduling.

Chair Schall introduced item 4A for discussion.

Mr. Blodgett shared that he had put this item on the agenda for both the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the Design Review Board meetings this month.

Ms. Peterson suggested a new meeting time of 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Ready said that she would like to start no later than 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Schall said he had no complaint with a 6:30 starting time.

Mr. Blodgett said he would take that information and check with the Town Manager and Legal Counsel to be sure they are following any procedural steps necessary to make the change. He said this would likely be an agenda item for voting at the next meeting.

6:05PM (5:37) B. The board will engage in a study and work session regarding the TOJ commercial off-street parking regulations in section 510 of the Jerome Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Schall introduced item 4B.

Mr. Blodgett further added that this is the first work session regarding commercial parking. He said he's thought about it for a while and had consulted with the Town's legal counsel who agrees this is a step in the right direction. He thanked everyone in the audience for being present adding that it is important that everyone be involved because if we get this right this will benefit the entirety of Town. He read his analysis for the Commission aloud adding clarifying statements during his reading. He said there are situations that will likely never be fully compliant, but the goal is to improve the situation to the best of our ability. He shared that he wants to give us more ability to regulate while also allowing these buildings to continue to exist historically. He said that our ordinance and permitting processes in place will help to mitigate potential parking issues, but our parking strategy should not be to push businesses to purchase and pave lots but to come up with creative and holistic solutions with the shuttle program being a core source of mitigation. He described how the General Plan and current parking requirements are at odds with one another, and his proposed changes take into consideration future changes and updates to the zoning ordinance language. He shared his proposed recommendations adding that this is a draft of proposed changed and none of it is up for vote tonight. He finished his introduction and asked for input from the Commission.

Ms. Peterson sought clarification on 510-2-D about recognizing historic nonconforming. She asked if it would be all buildings that exist now, or if everything is historical from a certain point on?

Mr. Blodgett answered that we are recognizing a historic district that will include every existing building, but not every building within that district is a historic building but are under the same constraints as the historic buildings. He shared that at a chosen date, a suggestion by the Town Attorney, the existing C1 district becomes a historic commercial district as we look at parking calculations. He continued that should a new business come in and try to develop an undeveloped lot at that point, yes, we are going to start providing parking or other mitigation measures, reiterating that our General Plan does not want to see green spaces turned into parking. He said if there's not enough parking one day the businesses are going to feel that, and there's no amount of parking regulation that will ever fix that. He said it will get to the point that only people with money from out of town will be able to afford to operate a business and he wants to see more locally owned businesses. However, if they are hit with a \$15-20,000 cost of trying to provide parking, sometimes that can prevent a small business from even getting off the ground. He said there are a lot of considerations here.

Ms. Peterson asked if now there are allotted parking spaces for the existing buildings in C-1, and are there businesses that have a set amount of parking that needs to be written down.

Mr. Blodgett answered no that has been done, adding we've had parking studies and counts done. He said there are overlapping systems of counting parking, adding there are so many situations that can dictate parking is addressed that he cannot give a brief summary of all of them. He shared there are also situations in which buildings lost their non-conformity status accidentally and in error those parties had to spend money to provide parking where they likely shouldn't have.

Mr. Schall said in the past is existing businesses here prior to the parking overlay were counted as having imaginary parking spaces that are in the ether in C1 someplace.

Mr. Blodgett stepped in to clarify that he doesn't think of it that way because it messes with the math because their historic non-conformity means we are not counting that parking. They're not providing imaginary spaces, however there are new constructions that have had to buy into parking spaces, that have spaces that exist in reality but are not in the c1 zone and it's not technically that they've added parking to reduce traffic so much as they've met a requirement.

Ms. Peterson asked if there could be a walking situation for certain businesses, where the assumption is people are walking around, so they don't have to have designated parking.

Mr. Blodgett said that would be the kind of thing that if they had the flexibility to consider it, then the boards and the council could also consider if it is a walking business or would have any parking impact. He said he wants to give creative flexibility to work with unique and interesting businesses so we can solve problems as we go.

Ms. Peterson asked how far we will expand, adding it seems like we are getting more and more people.

Mr. Blodgett answered it is not going to be a free-for-all for business expansion because if the businesses are considering expansion, or increased occupancy that is where fire, health safety and building codes come into play. They run the risk of running into the need to provide parking, because now they've intensified to the point where mitigating increased traffic becomes necessary. He then explained the differences between conditional uses and permitted uses, adding if you want to intensify and expand your business you're going to have the possibility of a conditional use permit, or you are going to have the possibility that you've expanded too much in a small town that can't support it and that is another risk of doing business.

Ms. Peterson said she would think hotels and those sorts of establishments would need to have parking for sure.

Mr. Blodgett said yes definitely, adding there are some historic ones in situations we can't regulate, because they're legally non-conforming. He said a new hotel absolutely would need to provide parking. You can see how our situation is so unique that having the flexibility to solve problems in a case-by-case circumstance is going to be important down the road.

Mr. Schall asked if there is a restaurant that has refrained from adding tables because of historical limitations due to parking, they would no longer be constrained for that reason.

Mr. Blodgett answered no, not by parking but fire and health and safety or other building codes could limit that ability.

Mr. Schall continued, if I wanted to reduce my waiting room and add another table, I could.

Mr. Blodgett answered that he could.

Ms. Peterson said that would be occupancy, right?

Mr. Blodgett answered yes, the table is occupancy and then they are in Chief Blair, Fire Chief and Barry, Building Inspector's, wheelhouse.

Mr. Schall agreed that fire requirements must be met and can't exceed the occupancy of the building.

Ms. Ready said but you wouldn't be constrained by adding more parking. She said he's right that we can't really expand parking, what we have is what we have. She said some businesses are destination businesses where people are driving here specifically to go to that business. But a lot of businesses are, as we discussed, walking businesses where people are going to come to town, find a place to park and walk the town. She said she can see the need for flexibility to consider the business based on walking versus destination.

Mr. Blodgett said our shuttle service is incredible, and we need to lean into it, it is the single greatest parking mitigation measure we have.

Ms. Ready asked how we promote it better.

Ms. Peterson asked if we could have 2 shuttles.

Mr. Blodgett said that is a topic for Council, but it is on their mind.

Ms. Peterson asked if we were to go through how many parking spaces we have now, including paid and 300-level parking. Are there enough existing parking spaces right now for all those businesses, regardless of where you park in town?

Mr. Blodgett answered the existing buildings, uses and parking counts are all very close. There are discrepancies in which some buildings have been required to provide more parking in error so we may have more parking required than we should have. He said the exact amount for each he could not provide at the meeting without doing major amounts of research and digging into past files and decisions. He said we are close to having the requirements as they are met, and that is because if a new business can't meet the requirements, we don't let them open. Some of the historic businesses, if they were to lose their non-conforming status there is absolutely no way they would meet that requirement. He gave an example using one of the bars in town and how a scenario like that could be the death of a business.

Mr. Schall said he doesn't want to see our ordinance kill a business in town like that at all.

Ms. Ready said, like we said, the amount of parking we have is the amount we have and is the number of people we can accommodate here. To the extent you exceed that it is not going to work.

Mr. Blodgett said it becomes a bottleneck.

Mr. Schall said if a restaurant requires a certain number of spaces, and then 3 or 4 retail businesses have a certain number per square foot, and a tourist comes to visit Jerome they may visit 4 retail spaces and 2 restaurants while they are here. He said they are using one spot even though each business has a certain number of parking spaces they need to provide.

Ms. Ready said it's basically shared parking; it's all just shared parking.

Mr. Blodgett said he noticed we have a well-working shared parking strategy, but we don't talk about it, identify it or use the phrase anywhere. Most of the tourism leaves usually by 4, and it does flex either way, but just about the peak hours for restaurants hits and we have available parking. It's a shared parking strategy in action. He said the flexibility of using shared parking strategies is something he'd like to embrace.

Ms. Ready added she feels we can be a lot more creative in helping both business and residential situations by being more creative and less rigid.

Mr. Schall said we've felt the parking limitation is a barrier to the introduction of chain restaurants in town.

Mr. Blodgett said it's a dumb way to restrict chains and there are better ways to do it.

Mr. Schall said he understood, adding it was part of the intent, but he wished it did not restrict local businesses.

Mr. Blodgett pointed out as a National Historic Landmark chain restaurants could be banned due to their impact on local businesses. There are enough checks and balances for that.

Ms. Miller asked, when talking about a chain business coming in and razing a blank lot or buying up lots to pave them, what lots are being talked about.

Mr. Blodgett answered that it is broken down by acres in the General Plan. He said it is not likely, but it is possible.

Ms. Ready added that they could create one or two spots, not a whole lot 2 spots for a business, if they needed to.

Ms. Miller said that lead to another question, referencing the Haunted Hamburger expansion and moving the power pole, she said it was mentioned that that area could be turned into 8 parking spaces. She asked if that is what they're talking about by building new parking areas and green spaces?

Ms. Ready confirmed that it might be an area that could be subject to happening.

There was additional discussion and clarification regarding the expansion and if seating was added or not. As well as clarification that under current ordinance adding seating would have required more parking but with the proposed changes it wouldn't.

Ms. Ready asked at what point do we have checks and balances over increased intensity. For example, turning a gift shop into a restaurant. She asked if there is still a review process in place.

Mr. Blodgett answered that yes there are processes in place, and they would be reviewing if there is an increased intensity of use. He shared that both a gift shop and a restaurant are permitted uses in the C1 zone. So, they would have to review changes of use for a threshold of intensity. He then posed a hypothetical discussion about a gift shop turning

into a taco shop with 4 tables in the building.

Ms. Ready said even a small taco shop could be a destination business versus a walking by business, and therefore patrons might want to drive directly to it.

Mr. Blodgett said that had been an unregulated issue before, adding that we did have a store in town owned by a celebrity that attracted people to it, that didn't have a negative impact.

Ms. Peterson asked, "What about the employees?" She sees the intensity of parking could be increased due to employees, because they are going to want to park close by, especially in bad weather.

Mr. Blodgett said we have a wonderful 300-level parking lot and a shuttle program that we need to enhance. This is already a problem here and the truth is unless we want to build more parking, it's going to continue to be a problem, and we don't have a good way to regulate that with anything we have now.

Ms. Peterson asked about double levels of parking.

Mr. Blodgett said as a National Historic Landmark he doesn't want to see that. The engineering would be a nightmare and as a National Historic Landmark it's his job to protect that status.

Ms. Ready asked if the 300-level lot ever gets to the point of being 100% full.

Mr. Blodgett said we've seen it close to a couple of times.

Ms. Peterson added when there is an event going on.

Ms. Ready asked if there is an opportunity to expand, not go up, but expand and provide more parking out there.

Mr. Blodgett said it might be possible but would be a conversation he would need to have with Council down the road, but those are creative solutions we need.

Ms. Ready acknowledged a hand in the audience.

Mr. Scott Kolu, Town of Jerome Shuttle Driver, said the parking lot doesn't get filled except in October.

Ms. Ready said good to know she didn't recall seeing it reach capacity. She said to the extent we are increasing business and increasing traffic in Jerome it might be something that could be an option in the future. She asked if employees use the shuttle now, is it something that we could expand or incentivize them to use.

Mr. Blodgett said the shuttle is not operational during the week or early hours in the morning, but if we can expand and enhance the shuttle operations, we could make that a possibility potentially.

Ms. Miller asked generally are we trying to match the language of policy to be reflective of what is already happening in Jerome.

Mr. Blodgett answered yes, essentially.

Ms. Miller continued this in effect would encourage the use of current buildings that may be unoccupied, and we have a handful of those.

Mr. Blodgett answered yes, he sees it as vital to the redevelopment strategy. He continued that if we can take the buildings and say you will have a future of business in this building then it might attract investment, and our historic preservation is our economic redevelopment.

Ms. Peterson acknowledged another hand in the audience.

Mr. Mark Krmpotich, Jerome Resident, said his residential home happens to be in the C1 zone. Referring to the chart for parking in the packet, he questioned the number of spaces he needed.

Mr. Blodgett answered that he is looking at the schedule of required off-street parking for the commercial district, and his home is a residential use with his own off-street parking, therefore none of this would impact him in any way. He said this will not affect anyone's residential parking, this is for businesses in the commercial district, and any residences that exist in the commercial district or have existing agreements in place will stand.

Ms. Ready reiterated the only proposed changes are regarding commercial buildings.

An audience member, whose name was inaudible, spoke regarding trying to open a business here in Jerome. She said she had looked at two separate buildings. One that she wanted to build a deck off the back and increase occupancy, the other is a 3-story building she was hoping to open as an event space, it has a current occupancy threshold of 40 people, but to increase the occupancy means providing more parking spaces. She added that she can't use the parking lot near the building so how does someone like her start a business in town.

Mr. Blodgett said this would be where he would consider problem solving. Some considerations might be a conditional use permit, addressing the fact that this is primarily evening business so parking might be available, or maybe they have a valet service. There are viable options to make a business work. He said this would be the opportunity to negotiate and problem-solve with business owners.

Ms. Miller asked about the cost of purchasing parking spaces, could it be over \$10,000 in some cases.

Mr. Blodgett said he couldn't quote an exact number, but it could be quite a lot.

Ms. Miller then asked if a middle ground might be for starting business to pay a minimal amount that would go directly to supporting the shuttle services to expand hours and pay drivers.

Mr. Blodgett said yes, mitigation measures like that would be good.

Ms. Miller continued not a significant enough amount to be a hinderance, but enough to recognize that we're going to be relying more on an encouraging business to use the shuttle, then we need to support that.

The audience member shared they had previously investigated purchasing parking spaces and that what she found was approximately \$3,000 per space so if her business required 10 spaces that's \$30,000.

Ms. Miller then asked what impact \$2,000 would be then? It could be put towards the shuttle service, for more drivers or

expanded hours.

Mr. Blodgett said ideally it gets us a few steps closer to the goal.

Ms. Peterson said she was thinking if a business had their own person that would pick up people from the 300, but if we incorporated something with the shuttle where money is put in by businesses that have more traffic.

Mr. Blodgett said they would troubleshoot mitigation measures later but that her mind is in the right place.

Ms. Peterson continued that the 300 level, is already not historic to Jerome as far as parking and she feels it is a detriment to the town to continue paving more parking lots. She suggested the idea of instead expanding parking on land, why not take it up a story.

Mr. Blodgett said that would be a whole separate thing to deal with down the road.

Chair Schall acknowledged another audience member who wanted to speak.

Mr. Shane Qualls introduced himself as the owner of 310 Queen St. He shared that they've had businesses inquire about starting an operation in Town. He shared some of the business ideas and his feelings on how parking is a detriment to new businesses starting.

Ms. Ready shared that she likes the idea of encouraging businesses away from Main St. and expanding out so everything's not so concentrated. Encouraging that type of growth to make things maybe not as congested.

There was continued conversation about ideas to incentivize and utilize the shuttle, to consider shared parking, and to consider the time of day a business may encounter their peak traffic.

Ms. Miller added when she thinks of other destination locations, for example the Seattle Fish Market, nobody drives their car and expects to be parked within a stone's throw, or going to a game at Wrigley Field, you don't drive, you take public transit. She thinks all business should be treated equally because Jerome is entirely walkable.

Ms. Ready agreed, adding that parking is available or it's not.

Ms. Miller agreed and said the 300-level parking lot is not 2 miles away.

Mr. Blodgett said the point of the exercise at the meeting was to introduce the topic, give them a chance to think about it, digest it and return any feedback to him, and that also includes members of the public. He said he hoped to be able to introduce a more finalized version in the next month or so as a recommendation to the Council. He encouraged everyone to share their feedback with him personally or via email.

Ms. Peterson asked if a building collapsed. How would that be handled in the historical context?

Mr. Blodgett shared that there are situations and ways that you can do a reconstruction, but it will lose its legal nonconforming historic status. However, by doing a reconstruction, which requires a lot more effort, you can retain a certain level of historic significance, because the property essentially becomes like a museum quality replica. He said they're not that common and usually have a lot of hoops to jump through.

Ms. Peterson asked about the parking part, using the Cuban Queen situation.

Mr. Blodgett said he was unsure how to answer the question, but if the building went away then the use went away. He said those situations would need to be addressed in a unique way. Continuing, the idea here is not to be so stringent in adherence to the law, but to work with and for the town to solve problems and work with people.

Ms. Peterson asked if we were to count the businesses and all the parking, including paid parking and the 300-level, is there enough? Because people can walk.

Mr. Blodgett said yes there is enough. He asked if the board had any specific comments or input that they wanted him to take into mind right now.

Mr. Schall said he likes the direction Mr. Blodgett is headed, adding he's thought about it more than once. He said he doesn't want to see the ordinance strangle local businesses and is more than happy to make conditional use decisions if it will help a business. He said he saw that we've defined what a parking space looks like at 9' x 20' but wondered if we couldn't also get creative with that, maybe squeezing a compact car parking space in where they may fit.

Mr. Blodgett answered that it is a separate issue to be addressed later.

Mr. Schall said he understood, adding further clarity to his statement.

There was a conversation regarding compact car parking.

Ms. Ready said as the ordinance is written now, we as a board are constrained when reviewing conditional use permits by the parking requirements. Can we issue a conditional use permit outside of the parking requirements.

Mr. Blodgett answered yes, the Board can issue whatever conditions it chooses, that is part of a conditional use permit. It allows flexibility of approval with conditions that fit the situation. It's not been used historically to its potential, but the purpose.

Ms. Ready asked if that only comes into play when use changes and they come before us for a conditional use permit.

Mr. Blodgett answered yes.

Ms. Peterson said she would like to not see new parking lots put out.

Mr. Schall agreed to avoid paving over green spaces in Jerome. He proposed expanding the 300 level or paving next to the sliding jail.

Ms. Ready said that she thinks you can find additional parking without creating paved parking spaces.

Mr. Schall added that he doesn't want to find lots where homes and businesses should be turned into parking lots. He thanked everyone for their participation and hoped to see more public present at these kinds of conversations.

7:01PM (1:01:00) 5. NEXT MEETING ITEMS

A. Updates on upcoming projects and meetings for July 2025.

Mr. Blodgett said he has no current applications pending review. He said he is letting every board know that likely come August the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office will close due to being defunded. He said the fund has been gutted and will hurt towns that are not CLGs in terms of their historic preservation review. He said it is not going to hurt us, he has a plan in action to keep our adherence to Section 106 and compliance with all of our historic preservation requirements with or without a reviewing agency.

7:04PM (1:03:00) 6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schall introduced adjournment.

Ms. Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Ready seconded the motion.

Mr. Schall called the question, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:04p.m.

Motion to adjourn at

BOARD MEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
MILLER			X			
PETERSON	X		X			
READY		X	X			
SCHALL			X			

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Chair Lance Schall, Planning & Zoning Commission Vice Chair

Attest: _____ Date: _____

Kristen Muenz, Deputy Town Clerk