



LEBANON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Library Community Meeting Room
55 Academy Street, Lebanon, Oregon

CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chair Don Robertson
Vice-Chair Lory Gerig-Knurowski
Kristina Breshears
Don Fountain
Alternate Shyla Malloy
Alternate Michael Miller
Alternate Regina Thompson

ABSENT

Karisten Baxter

STAFF

City Manager Ron Whitlatch
Development Services Director Shana Olson
City Attorney Tre Kennedy

MINUTES

The May 21, August 20, and November 19, 2025, and February 18, 2026 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

CITIZEN COMMENTS – none

COMMISSION REVIEW

City Attorney Kennedy reviewed the public hearing process.

1. Public Hearing – Planning File S-22-03

Request: Three-year extension of approval for a 28-lot subdivision originally expiring April 1, 2026. The property has new ownership; and no changes to the approved plan are proposed.

Chair Robertson opened the public hearing. No conflicts of interest, biases, or ex-parte contacts were disclosed.

Development Services Director Olson delivered the staff report and explained that the request only extends the timeline and does not modify the original approval. Staff determined that the application meets Development Code requirements; approval recommended.

No testimony was received. The public hearing was closed.

Olson confirmed to Chair Robertson that any changes would require submission of a new application.

Decision: Motion to approve by Commissioner Fountain, seconded by Commissioner Malloy. Voting Yea: Chair Robertson, Vice-Chair Gerig-Knurowski, Commissioners Breshears, Fountain, Malloy, Miller and Thompson. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Hearing – Planning File S-26-02, VAR-26-01

Request: Approval of a 52-lot subdivision and Class III Variance to increase the maximum building height from 25 to 33 feet for small-lot, single-unit detached dwellings on property at 31707 S. Fifth Street (12S02W22D, tax lot 1001)

City Attorney Kennedy reviewed public hearing procedures.

Vice-Chair Gerig-Knurowski disclosed living near the site, receiving notice, and limited exposure to public comments but stated that she could remain impartial. No other ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest, or biases were reported.

Olson presented the staff report and recommended approval, subject to conditions. A correction to the notice closure date (March 18, 2026) was noted. Public concerns included traffic, density, building height, neighborhood compatibility, privacy, parking, sidewalks, and fencing.

Staff clarified that the proposal is for detached single-family small-lot homes, not apartments, and any changes would require further review.

Additional clarifications included that fencing along Joy Street must be placed on the north easement line to ensure proper drainage access and allow for ongoing maintenance.

Staff noted that the commission's variance review is limited to the requested building height variance, while street-related considerations are addressed separately through engineering standards and are not part of this decision.

Applicant testimony – Blake Weiler and representative, Andrew Rappe of Udel Engineering and Land Surveying, LLC, stated that the proposal is largely consistent with the 2024 approval, with increased density reflecting recent zoning code changes. The development is planned to include one- and two-story homes ranging from approximately 800 to 1500 square feet.

The height variance is needed to accommodate practical two-story designs compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Without the variance, design flexibility would be reduced, and lots would likely have less usable yard space. Representatives also confirmed that, if the variance is denied, they would not revert to the previously approved 35-lot layout.

Public Testimony (Favor) – none

Public Testimony (Opposition) – Donna Clark expressed concern that the required fencing may not extend far enough to adequately buffer adjacent properties and suggested extending it to the additional lots. The speaker also asked whether landscaping, such as trees along the fence line, could be required to help screen views and improve privacy. Concerns were raised regarding the compatibility of the proposed building heights with the surrounding neighborhood. Staff provided clarification on building height measurements. The commenter also noted potential traffic impacts and questioned how the increased density might affect circulation and connectivity in the area.

Rebuttal – none

The public hearing was closed. There was discussion regarding fencing requirements and whether the variance criteria were met.

Decision: Motion to approve Subdivision application S-26-02 and to deny the Class III Variance application VAR-26-01, and direct staff to prepare a Final Order consistent with the Commission's decision, was made by Commissioner Malloy, seconded by Commissioner Fountain. Voting Yea: Chair Robertson, Vice-Chair Gerig-Knurowski, Commissioners Breshears, Fountain, Malloy, Miller and Thompson. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSION BUSINESS AND COMMENTS

- Commissioner Breshears volunteered for the SDC Committee.
- The next meeting scheduled for April 15, 2026 will include Chair and Vice-Chair elections.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM.