City of Lake Forest Park – Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes: September 08, 2026; 7:00-9:00pm
Hybrid Meeting Held in the Emergency Operations Center
at City Hall and Virtually via Zoom

Planning Commissioners present: Chair David Kleweno, Vice Chair Janne Kaje (via Zoom), Jean Reid, Meredith LaBonte, Marty Ross, Hina Shahid (via Zoom), Cherie Finazzo (via Zoom)

Planning Commissioners absent: John Drew

Staff and others present: Mark Hofman, Community Development Director; Josh Rosenau, City Council Liaison (via Zoom), Kim Pratt, City Attorney (via Zoom), Tracy Furutani, Deputy Mayor

Members of the Public present:
Jolene Jang, Stacey Auger, Brian Saunders (via Zoom), Brian Highberger, Brian O'Connor, Mark Wierenga, Gordon Stephenson

Call to order: Chair Kleweno called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Land Acknowledgement: Cmr. LaBonte read the land acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda: Cmr. Ross moved to approve the agenda; Cmr. LaBonte seconded, and the motion to approve the agenda was carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:
Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2026, Regular Meeting
Cmr. Reid made a motion to approve the August 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes with edits provided by Mr. Hofman. Cmr. LaBonte seconded and the motion to approve the minutes was carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: No public hearing.

Next meeting: The next meeting occurs on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

Public Comment:
Ms. Auger gave a comment on the impacts of the Garey RUE on her property, including a septic pipe issue, and ideas on how potential RUE code revisions.
Ms. Jang also gave a comment on the Garey RUE and a packet that she provided on dealing with neighboring the Garey RUE property.

City Council Liaison Report: Council member Rosenau announced that due to member availability the second half of August council meetings were cancelled. Council member Rosenau gave an overview of events including that September 12th is Picnic in the Park and that the street sweeper was named Sir Sweeps a Lot at the farmer's market family day event. Council member Rosenau also announced that Chief Zanella's appointment is running smoothly in the process, and the city council will be appointing a new Finance Director. Council member Rosenau also gave an update on the roundabout project.

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Old Business:

Critical Areas Ordinance Update- City Attorney background discussion on reasonable use exemptions (RUE) and continued Commission preparatory discussion on potential Critical Areas Ordinance amendments

The city attorney, Kim Pratt, gave a presentation on Reasonable Use Exceptions. Ms. Pratt gave an overview of Washington state constitutional protection that no private property shall be taken or damaged for public or private use without just compensation. In terms of an economically viable use, Ms. Pratt explained that the landowner has the burden of showing that the mere enactment of a regulation constitutes a taking. If RUE permits are eliminated from the municipal code, that does not eliminate the constitutional claims of owners. During an RUE hearing, the City includes evidence that a judge will use in a superior court to decide the constitutional issues.

Ms. Pratt also gave an overview of the city code section LFPMC 16.26 Land Use Procedures and the roles of the city, applicant, and hearing examiner. Ms. Pratt also gave an example of the city of Sammamish of an RUE.

Ms. Pratt also answered questions from the commissioners on the process of RUEs and interpretations on code issues.

Affordable Housing Next Steps and Direction Discussion- guest representatives for middle housing barrier perspectives

Mr. Highberger gave his perspective as a developer in the permitting process, specifically code surrounding middle housing cottages. Mr. Highberger also stated that although zoning was amended to allow for more housing on the lot, the zoning regulations of tree canopy, critical areas, and setbacks have not changed, which makes it difficult to develop lots.

Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Wierenga brought up removing requirements for parking to allow builders to provide more flexibility for developers. They also stated that the city of Shoreline increased their maximum percentages of impervious surface and lot coverage to allow for bigger development.

Mr. Highberger, Mr. O'Connor, and Mr. Wierenga also discussed the issues of feasibility studies regarding critical areas, drainage review, and other issues. The planning commissioners discussed questions and potential solutions with the developers.

The planning commissioners recapped the information they heard during the meeting and how to move forward with the information they obtained.

New Business:

Reports and Announcements:

No reports and announcements.

Agenda for Next Meeting: Discussion on critical areas ordinance update, and questions for developers on middle housing.

Adjournment: Vice Chair Kaje made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cmr. Reid seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Chair Kleweno adjourned at 9:13 PM.

APPROVED:

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David Kleweno, Planning Commission Chair

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