



PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Thompson at 6:01 pm.

Chair Dan Thompson, Vice Chair JB Gibson, and Planning Commissioners Kate Akyuz, Nazim Nice and Anthony Perez were present.

Staff Participation:

Alison Van Gorp, Deputy CPD Director
Molly McGuire, Senior Planner
Raven Gillis, Recreation Specialist

Kellye Hilde, Deputy Public Works Director
Deb Estrada, Deputy City Clerk
Eileen Keiffer, Contract Legal Counsel (Remote)

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

There were no public comments.

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of October 22, 2025, Regular Meeting:

A motion was made by Gibson; seconded by Nice to:

Approve the minutes.

Motion Passed 5-0

2. PCB25-20: Public Hearing for Rezone of Two City-Owned Properties

A. Appearance of Fairness Questions

Assistant City Attorney Keiffer asked appearance of fairness questions of all Commission members.

Commissioner Nice noted for the record that Mayor Salim Nice is his brother.

i. **Opportunity for Challenges** – There were no challenges raised.

B. Public comment

The following individuals spoke **in opposition** of rezoning two City-owned properties, identified by parcel numbers 2655500075 and 2655500185, also known as the City Hall and Public Works Maintenance and Operations properties:

- Matt Goldbach, Mercer Island
- Pat McGugen, Mercer Island

C. **Presentation from Proposal Proponents** Kellye Hilde, Deputy Director Public Works, spoke to the rezoning of the two City-owned properties, identified by parcel numbers 2655500075 and 2655500185, on behalf of the City of Mercer Island. Hilde explained the parcels' current uses:

Parcel A: Unoccupied City Hall, Police Trailers, and Staff Parking

Parcel B: Public Works Operation, Maintenance, CIP Staff, Loading and Delivery, City Equipment and Vehicle Parking, Material Storage, and Decant Facility

Hilde explained the surrounding zoning designations, the rezone application, and the proposed reclassification of the property. She further explained that the proposed reclassification is consistent with the following criteria:

1. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan
2. Consistent with the purpose of the development code
3. An extension of an existing zone or logical transition between zones
4. Not an illegal site-specific rezone
5. Compatible with surrounding zones and land uses
6. Does not adversely affect public health, safety and welfare
7. Comprehensive plan required prior to approval of the rezone (not applicable to this application)

Presentation from City

Molly McGuire, Senior Planner, and Alison Van Gorp, Deputy CPD Director, presented on behalf of the City of Mercer Island.

Molly McGuire, Senior Planner, reviewed the background to date and summarized the criteria to reclassify property (rezone). She explained the staff findings on the consistency of the application with the review criteria for rezones, and staff’s recommendation based on that review.

McGuire reported that the City Council would consider the Planning Commission’s recommendation at its December 2 public meeting.

D. Rebuttals

There were no rebuttals.

E. Planning Commission Deliberations

F. Closing of the Record

Chair Thompson closed the record at 7:36 PM

G. Adopt Findings on Property Reclassification Criteria:

A motion was made by Perez; seconded by Gibson to:

Concur with the staff’s conclusion that Criterion 1 (proposed reclassification is consistent with the policies and provisions of the Mercer Island comprehensive plan) was met.

Approved 5:0

A motion was made by Gibson; seconded by Akyuz to:

Concur with the staff’s conclusion that Criterion 2 (proposed reclassification is consistent with the purpose of the Mercer Island development code as set forth in MICC 19.01.010) was met

A motion was made by Gibson; seconded by Akyuz to amend the motion to:

Replace public, safety, and maintenance facility with ‘public facilities’

Approved 5-0

Main motion approved, as amended, 5-0

A motion was made by Perez; seconded by Nice

Concur with the staff’s conclusion that Criterion 3 was met

A motion was made by Gibson; seconded by Akyuz to:

amend the staff recommendation to read as follows:

The applicant asserts that Parcel A fronts SE 36th St (zoned PI) to the north and is adjacent to C-O zoning, which is compatible with the PI zone given the shared emphasis on employment, service delivery, and larger building forms. Parcel B abuts SE 40th St to the south and is adjacent to R-8.4 zoning. ~~The PI designation would provide a civic buffer between higher-intensity municipal uses and the surrounding low-density residential neighborhood. Both parcels are bounded by C-O and R-8.4 zones to the east and west, further reinforcing the appropriateness of the PI zone as a unifying classification that bridges residential and commercial contexts. The presence of steep slopes, streams, and wetlands along the east, south, and west borders of parcel B creates a natural buffer and logical transition between higher-intensity municipal uses~~

[and the low-density residential neighborhood.](#) Rezoning the properties to PI would create a clear, predictable, and context-sensitive transition between commercial and residential areas while formalizing the long-established role of this site as Mercer Island’s civic and operational hub.

Approved 5-0

Main motion approved, as amended, 5-0

H. Recommendation

Recommended Action: Make a recommendation to the City Council for the rezone of two city-owned properties.

A motion was made by Akyuz; seconded by Perez that

The proposed reclassification does not constitute an illegal site-specific rezone.

Approved 5-0

Motion by Akyuz; seconded by Perez that:

Criterion 5, the proposed reclassification, is compatible with surrounding zones and land uses.

A motion was made by Gibson; seconded by Thompson to
amend the staff finding for Criterion 5 to read as follows:

The subject properties currently contain City Hall and the Public Works Maintenance and Operations facilities, both of which are long-standing civic uses that have coexisted compatibly with the adjacent residential and commercial areas for decades. The reclassification would formalize this civic use and align with the Mercer Island 2024 Comprehensive Plan Public Facility designation.

The applicant asserts that the proposed PI zone would be compatible with the C-O zone as both accommodate larger building forms, structured parking, and employment or service-related uses. Staff agree with this assertion. Both the C-O and PI zones allow similar uses at a similar scale. The adjacent R-8.4 zone is a low-density, single-family zone. ~~The proposed PI zone would provide an appropriate civic transition between municipal functions and residential neighborhoods.~~ Compatibility would be reinforced through site design standards.

The PI zone is intended to accommodate government and institutional uses and is applied in multiple locations across Mercer Island where public facilities are located adjacent to residential and commercial districts. ~~The proposed zone reflects the existing civic land use pattern and ensures long-term compatibility with surrounding zones and land uses.~~

Approved 3-2

Main motion approved, as amended, 5-0

Motion by Perez; seconded by Akyuz that:

Criterion 6, the proposed reclassification, does not adversely affect the public health, safety and welfare.

Motion by Akyuz; seconded by Perez to

Amend the staff finding for Criterion 6 to read as follows:

The proposed rezone would directly support public health, safety and welfare by enabling the replacement of outdated municipal facilities with a modern ~~Public Safety and Maintenance (PSM) Facility~~ [public facilities](#) designed to enhance the City’s ability to deliver essential services. The proposed rezone is consistent with the Public Facility designation in the Mercer Island 2024 Comprehensive Plan and would allow the City to consolidate Police, Emergency Management, GIS, IT, and Public Works Maintenance and Operations in a single, purpose-built facility which would improve service coordination, emergency response times, and overall operational efficiency and advance public safety and welfare.

Approved 5-0

Main motion approved, as amended, 5-0

Motion by Gibson; seconded by Perez

That Criterion 7, the proposed rezone, does not require a comprehensive plan amendment and therefore is not applicable.

Approved 5-0

A motion was made by Perez; seconded by Akyuz to

Recommend that the City Council approve the reclassification of the two City-owned parcels to the Public Institution (PI) zone.

Approved 5-0

OTHER BUSINESS

3. Staff Report

CPD Deputy Director, Alison Van Gorp, reminded the Commission that the November 26 and December 24 Regular Meetings were canceled, and the next regular meeting would be January 28, 2026.

ADJOURNED - The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

Deborah Estrada, Deputy City Clerk