

Meridian Planning and Zoning Meeting

January 15, 2026.

Meeting of the Meridian Planning and Zoning Commission of January 15, 2026, was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Maria Lorcher.

Members Present: Commissioner Maria Lorcher, Commissioner Jared Smith, Commissioner Matthew Sandoval, Commissioner Jessica Perreault, Commissioner Sam Rust and Commissioner Matthew Stoll.

Members Absent: Commissioner Brian Garrett.

Others Present: Tina Lomeli, Kurt Starman, Bill Parsons, Nick Napoli and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
|---------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| _____ | Brian Garrett | _____X_____ | Jessica Perrault |
| ___X___ | Matthew Sandoval | _____X_____ | Matthew Stoll |
| ___X___ | Sam Rust | _____X_____ | Jared Smith |
| | _____X_____ | | Maria Lorcher - Chairman |

Lorcher: Good evening. Welcome to Planning and Zoning Commission for January 15th, 2026. At this time I would like to call the meeting to order. The Commissioners who are present for this meeting are at City Hall. We also have staff from the city attorney and the city clerk's office, as well as the city planning department. If you are joining us on Zoom this evening we can see that you are here. You may observe the meeting, however, your ability to be seen on screen and talk will be muted. During the public testimony portion of the meeting you will be unmuted and, then, be able to comment. Please note that we cannot take questions until the public testimony portion of the meeting. If you have a process question during the meeting please e-mail cityclerk@meridiacity.org and they will reply as quickly as possible. If you would simply like to watch the meeting we encourage you to watch the streaming on the city's YouTube channel. You can access it at meridiacity.org/live. With that let us begin with roll call. Madam Clerk.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Lorcher: The first item on the agenda is the adoption of the agenda. There are no changes to tonight's agenda. Could I get a motion to adopt tonight's agenda.

Stoll: Madam Chair, I move to approve the agenda as presented.

Rust: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to adopt the agenda. All those in favor say aye. Any nays? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the December 16, 2025 Joint Meeting of the Meridian City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission**
- 2. Approve Minutes of the December 18, 2025 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**

Lorcher: The next item on the agenda is the Consent Agenda, which includes to approve the meetings of the joint meeting of the Meridian City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission on December 16th and approve the minutes of the December 18th Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. Could I get a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented?

Smith: So moved.

Rust: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

Lorcher: At this time I would briefly like to explain the public hearing process. We will open each item individually and begin with the staff report. Staff will report their findings on how the item adheres to our Comprehensive Plan and our Unified Development Code. After staff has made their presentation the applicant will come forward and present their case and respond to staff comments. They will have 15 minutes to do so. After the applicant is finished we will open the floor to public testimony. Each person will be called only once during public testimony. The clerk will call the names individually of those who have signed up on our website in advance to testify. You may come to the microphones in Chambers or you will be unmuted on Zoom. Please state your name and address for the record. You will have three minutes to address the Commission. If you have previously sent pictures or a presentation of the meeting it will be displayed on screen and our clerk will help you run that presentation. If you establish that you are speaking on behalf of a larger group, like an HOA, where others from that group will allow you to speak on their behalf, you will have up to ten minutes. After all those who have signed up in advance have spoken we will invite any others who wish to testify. If you wish to speak on a topic you may come forward in Chambers or if on Zoom press the raise hand button or if you are only listening on the telephone please press star nine and wait for your name to be called. If you are listening on multiple devices, such as a computer and a phone, please, be sure to mute those extra

devices so we don't experience feedback and we can hear you clearly. When you are finished, if the Commission doesn't have any questions for you you will return to your seat in Chambers or be muted on Zoom and no longer have the ability to speak. And remember we will not call on you a second time. After all the testimony has been heard the applicant will be coming -- will be given a chance to come back up for another ten minutes to respond. When the applicant has finished responding to questions and concerns we will close the public hearing and the Commissioners will have the opportunity to discuss and hopefully make final decisions or recommendations to City Council as needed.

ACTION ITEMS

- 3. Public Hearing continued from December 4, 2025 for Farrington Heights Subdivision RZ, PP, MDA (H-2025-0016) by Studio H Architects, generally located at the NW corner of E. Pine Ave. and N. Adkins Ave.**
 - A. Request: Rezone of 2.9 acres of land from the R-4 to the R-15 zoning district.
 - B. Request: Preliminary Plat on 4.68 acres of land consisting of 25 building lots and 6 common lots.
 - C. Request: Development Agreement Modification to terminate the existing development agreement and establish a new one.

Lorcher: With that we are going to open Item No. H-2025-0016 to continue the Farrington Hills Heights Subdivision at Pine and Adkins for a rezone, preliminary plat and a development agreement modification and we will begin with the staff report.

Napoli: Madam Chair, Members of the Commission, good evening. So, yes, this item was continued -- here, let me get that pulled up first. This item was continued from the December 4th hearing date and during that December 4th hearing date you guys gave the applicant direction to remove the open space to allow for larger building lots to accommodate some single story homes within the development. The applicant did revise their plan to lose an additional lot. This is a comparison of the two. Previous one on the left is the one that you guys heard on the December 4th and the right is the current proposal that they have. So, they did lose an additional lot. They did remove the majority of the open space that was in the development and as well as rerouting the road to actually be on that north boundary, so there is not going to be any homes abutting those northern neighbors to the north. In addition to this I did talk with the applicant and in my staff report I did recommend a DA provision that all the homes -- so, Lots 2 through 8 -- so, this whole lot -- this whole side will be restricted to single story homes. So, that is in the DA. The applicant -- I did briefly talk with them on that and seems to be in agreement with that, you know, so that -- I will go over what they are requesting again just so you guys have that on the record. The applicant is requesting

-- their updated request is a rezone still of the 2.9 acres of the 4.68 acres of land from the R-4 zoning district to the R-15 zoning district, leaving the remaining 1.78 acres of land as R-4. A preliminary plat consisting of 24 building lots -- so, 21 new lots and three existing. So, the three existing homes will remain on the southern portion of the site. And seven common lots on the 4.68 acres of land and a new development agreement to replace the current one. So, that is really where we are at tonight. If there is anything else you guys would like me to highlight I would be happy to do so, but, you know, this is their revision to your guys' direction from the last hearing and I will stand for any questions.

Lorcher: Would the applicant like to come forward?

Durtschi: Hello. Had a PowerPoint presentation real quick. I figured since you already heard me do my spiel last month we just will keep it really quick and abbreviated and just stress the changes --

Lorcher: Okay.

Durtschi: -- that we made. So, on that note, Madam Chair, Members of the Commission, hello and good evening. For the record my name is Sabrina Durtschi. I am here on behalf of the applicant. My business address is 5179 South Boven Avenue, Boise, Idaho. 83716. And this evening I am representing our layout of Farrington Heights that Nick so kindly went over with us. So, first, let's go back in time. I just want to tell you -- go back and remind us how we all got here. So, originally our August 7th hearing -- you can see that we had 30 lots and during that hearing we were asked to prepare and revise the layout, so that we provide a little more usable open space. Now on the other side of the slide you can see our December 4th hearing that I presented in front of you and we had revised the layout. We had reduced the lot count to 24 -- or 25, excuse me, and, then, we included the open space. So, the plan, drum roll as you have already seen -- you took out my drum roll and excitement for the new -- to the sign. But here are our changes that we made. We have 24 single family homes. Seven common lots. We actually removed one of the additional lots and, then, our net density has reduced to 5.12 units per acre and really quickly. So, the changes we made we -- we relocated the northern road alignment to create a stronger buffer between the project and the northern abutting properties. Two. We removed the previously proposed open space and, then, redistributed those all on those western side lots. Three. We increased the lot sizes of the western side lots to better accommodate the single story homes and improve the compatibility and, then, finally, I did a follow up and contacted all the neighbors and they were very pleased with the changes. So, with that we feel like, in closing, we are excited about the revisions. We appreciate the time to come back one more time to work with the neighbors to address the changes and I just want to kind of give applause and acknowledgement to the applicant for their willingness to listen, come back a third time, all these changes that, you know, as an extra expense to have a layout and so I just was very impressed with them and their willingness to make a great project that works for everyone. So, with that I will end my presentation. Thank

you all for your time and consideration and respectively ask for an approval to City Council so we can get to that next stop. So, thank you.

Lorcher: Thanks. Do we have any questions for Sabrina before we start public testimony? Thank you very much.

Durtschi: Thank you.

Lorcher: Madam Clerk, do we have anybody signed up to testify?

Lomeli: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we do. The first person is Donald Flaten. And he does have a presentation, too.

Flaten: I should have one or two attached files. And, of course, one of those is duplicate to what Sabrina just submitted also.

Lorcher: While she is getting that if you can state your name and address for the record.

Flaten: Yeah. Don Flaten. 1111 North Adkins Avenue. It adjoins the property.

Lorcher: Thank you.

Flatten: Thank you. The illustration is a PDF, so we don't see the full image of it. If we can actually -- that's great. This is what I submitted after the December 4th meeting and it does coincide largely with some improvements, of course, by the developer. I just did a quick evaluation, but a suggestion based on the irrigation easement and so forth. Within the context of an R-15 zoning this is a good plan. What I'm addressing today is I just think R-15 is inappropriate. It's an R-4 neighborhood on all borders. There are problems with R-15 that I numerated. We could go to another picture -- image there. I think I have a text image here indicating where -- the problem is increased congestion. Parking impact was brought up by three people who testified last time. It was never addressed after that and that hasn't changed. If we look at the site plan there isn't room really to park on the street within the U-shape there. I'm presuming these will be two car garages with two parking spaces on a driveway in front. If it's like most people, like myself, one of those garage spaces will be used for storing our stuff. The problem is it doesn't leave any room for guests or -- to guests park when they come to visit and with 20 or 21 residences numerous people, it is an issue related to that and directly to the R-15 zoning to which I object. Increased congestion. Generally noise level in the neighborhood will be higher. We have animals. Other people have animals. Start adding together a circus of animals from different buildings. It just adds up. The overall volume level becomes kind of intolerable -- intolerable and distracting. Increased traffic load on North Adkins Avenue and there is a decreased privacy inherent with number of structures. So, if we were to continue with an R-4 zoning and appropriate development that way that would -- all those things would be under control. That's basically what I had to cover. The other thing I just want to be sure of -- the one story structures be

limited in height to appropriate in matching the neighborhood and I haven't measured those -- were 16 six. I think some of the neighbors are 18 feet at center line. That's something to consider. And also for the people on the west border where they are one stories, external structures, place -- they have -- they really must be enforced in HOA, keep those at legally set distances from the fence and height restrictions on those storage buildings and things. People will tend to build them and they do take up space and people tend to jam up against them. So, those considerations are the main ones. I do appreciate the effort and expertise of the developer in revising plans based on our suggestions and requests last time. Very noteworthy and it obviously is -- they put a lot of work into it. But my objection is the R-15 itself. Thank you.

Lorcher: Thank you. Madam Clerk.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, the next person is Stephanie John.

Lorcher: Hi. If you can state your name and address for the record that would be great.

John: Sure. My name is Stephanie John. I live at 1111 North Adkins Avenue. I will first say I appreciate the developer and his changes. He is, obviously, willing to play and listen. That is great. We appreciate it. A lot of stress has been taken off. I do agree with the plan they have presented. The only thing I am going to ask for is doing that development agreement modification that we cap the building sizes. I went around and collected the heights of all the surrounding homes that immediately are affected by this build and found their sizes. They are smaller homes. They were built a long time ago. 2001. Things like that. So, I understand that. I would like to see the single homes be capped from ground to highest peak at 20 feet and the two stories capped at 26 feet. I do feel like that is generous. They are still taller than the homes around them, but they are new builds and, like I said, I really appreciate the modifications they have made. I think we will hear testimony about parking, which will be an issue, and I do think that there are some heights. I think capping them would help eliminate some of the other concerns that the residents may have. I also collected signatures from people in the area that surround the field that they were going for single family -- or single story homes throughout the whole thing. You have to give and take. I understand that. They have clearly listened and they are giving and taking and, thus, that's why if they do get two -- those two story homes in the middle I'm just asking for a cap that would include not just the homes, but also any sheds or any extra things that they might want to put on the houses and things like that. So, if we can consider that, like I said, single stories to the 20 feet, double stories to the 26 feet to the highest peak, so ground highest peak, trying to keep it compatible going around, but also understanding it's a new build. That's all I really have to say.

Lorcher: Okay. Thank you very much.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, the next person is Jack Harp.

Harp: Jack Harp. 1038 North Adkins in Meridian. Appreciate the developer redoing this, but my major concern is you are about to stick about 80 plus people in that small area. You take that 80 people plus most generally two automobiles. Now you have got about 80 automobiles in there. Then you have people who come and visit, come and stay. Infrastructure just won't handle that. And I haven't seen any plans for garages, speed bumps. I see one way -- basically one way in and one way out. Pine Street, they are already having more wrecks than they can handle at Locust Grove and Pine. You put all this in there it's just going to -- it will be a nightmare. But I believe that's on Ada county. That isn't on Meridian. I get that. But like she said, my concern is is the height. I have been there for a little over 22 years now. Been pretty much used to looking at the geese and the view and everything. To put two story apartments in there or call them houses, whatever, but it could be kind of a cultural shock. But like she said, if you can keep the height down and not build them like those ones that are this close together right along the canal there on Pine Street, that's -- that's a travesty. My gosh, you can hand your neighbor a cup of sugar and never leave the house. That's -- they do all my life that's a poor way to live. A poor way to live. All you folks on this board -- bear with me. How many of you own your own house? Raise your hands, please.

Lorcher: We all live in Meridian.

Harp: Okay. You know what blood, sweat and tears to owning your own home. Most of these will end up being rentals, because no one can afford to buy houses anymore. So, with that being said, a rental, they don't care if the grass is green or if it's brown. They make a call, they complain to whoever is going to be running this outfit. They don't care. And what it's going to do it's just going to move our property value and basically our way of life across the street. So, yes, I'm complaining a little bit -- actually a whole lot, but you got to understand people live across the street. We will be looking at this less than 50 yards away. Plus all the construction, the dirt and everything that goes with all this. We will not be compensated for now, but -- that must be my bell. But, anyway, folks, yeah, thanks for your time.

Lorcher: All right. Thanks for coming tonight.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, the next person signed up is Rick Salladay.

Salladay: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Rick Salladay. I live at 992 North Stonehenge, Meridian, Idaho. This is directly behind the proposed development. I brought in a couple pictures of my backyard and all my decorations on my fence. You guys can enjoy. But this shows the elevation difference from my backyard to that field. That is the retaining wall I put in shortly after I moved in to stop the drainage ditch from pouring into my yard. They used to irrigate that field at one time. You will go to the next -- next shot there, please. This is a -- kind of a shot of the trailers that are parked behind my house. I don't have an objection to that. That's their property. They can put whatever they want to on that property. I have always had a good relationship with the Brocks. I just barely put that fence up three years ago, in fact. So, I have always enjoyed an open fence to that field. The next photo. That just shows that -- the height

difference there. That's -- that's sitting again showing the difference there. That is approximately eight to ten feet off my back fence. So, that is approximately what I'm thinking these new houses will be. But a lot higher. So, there again, that just shows you the height difference from my house to their field. Here again this shows -- again the fence to people on Adkins Lane. Without my fence you see the rooftops right there across that fence. That's Adkins Lane. Before that I had a clear view of the mountains. So, speaking of view is being destroyed. But that's all right. That is development. I'm good with that and I again will go with everybody else. I appreciate what the developer has done to adjust his plans to address our issues. I don't know if I had another photo or not. This is the Brocks' home. I don't know if you have ever seen the Brocks' home. It's not a home. It's a -- it's a huge house. But that just shows -- that's probably 50 yards from my backyard and, then, in the summertime they did put some trees there to block the view, because they did add a pool recently. Unfortunately they built the elevation of that right there where you see those trees, that is where they build an elevation. So, when we walk around I can see that it's basically their fence and they are walking around here. So, that's -- I can see over there. But, anyhow, again, elevation issues. I think that's the last of my -- my pictures there show my complaint of elevation, but with the new changes they made -- I noticed that they moved the open space that was behind my house. It would have kind of eliminated the buildings behind my house. They have now moved all over my house -- or my side. It looks like they put the biggest lot right behind me and I'm kind of concerned about the elevation of that house, because I think it might -- it looks like the biggest lot on their plan. So, anyway, that's all I have to say. I would like somebody to look at the -- you can't tell by just looking at lot sizes how big the houses are going to be, how the parking is going to be addressed. So, that's some issues that are also brought up. Parking. Traffic. That's nothing. So, anyhow, thank you, people. Appreciate all your time.

Lorcher: All right. Thank you very much.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, the next person signed up is Todd Lakey.

Lorcher: Okay.

Lomeli: The next person is Maralee Turner.

Turner: Hello. My name is Maralee Turner. I reside at 1345 East Shellbrook Drive, Meridian, Idaho. 83642. My home borders the proposed subdivision of Farrington Heights. The developers have restructured their plans over the course of several months in order to find solutions that would be beneficial and respectful to us as long standing property owners. We have lived in our home over 20 years. As a development of such proportions will impact many families for decades, including existing homeowners, I truly appreciate the accommodations the developers have made to incorporate their plans and the neighbors' concerns into the existing space. I'm very grateful that a proposed compromise currently has the potential to be reached. If we go forward with the plans a green space will buffer -- will -- a green space buffer will now separate our homes -- my home from the planned house bordering our property, which

will allow us to continue using our garden space. A portion of the road will also provide a small amount of separation between our property and the planned lots. The larger lot sizes will now accommodate single story homes along the proposed boundary, which we have been very concerned about in past hearings. I continue to be concerned about the insufficient intersection at Pine and Locust Grove and that that will continue to be a safety concern and that concern will expand with time. Also I would still express hesitation if garages are allowed on the single story homes, which would put that -- the garage level or a bonus room at a proposed height difference that would impact our privacy and the use of our yard. If indeed the building lots on the outskirts -- outskirts bordering the existing homes are limited to a single story and single level height restrictions are put in place that concern would be alleviated. This plan has, indeed, addressed multiple concerns in a respectful way and I am very appreciative and supportive of most aspects of the plan.

Lorcher: Thank you.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, the next person is Brian Turner.

Lorcher: Good evening.

B.Turner: Good evening. Brian Turner. 1345 East Shellbrook Drive. And I really want to express my appreciation to the applicant and that team and hearing feedback and working with us. I wish that was done more often than it -- than it feels like it is. I currently think the proposed plan is a good one and I'm in support of it. It would be made great in my eyes if the west side, those homes there is some of the ambiguity about whether they are two story or what height they are, was removed. It would become a great plan. And -- or the use of the clear story or highlight windows in appropriate places and that's it.

Lorcher: Okay. Thank you very much.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, we have Bob Flaten, Senior.

Flaten: It's junior. My apologies. Hello. My name is Bob Flaten, Jr. I live at 1111 Adkins Avenue. You guys have heard us speak many times. Me in particular I guess. With that being said I want to start by saying Mr. Etheridge and his team are a lot more likable and realistically they listen a lot better than I would have anticipated at the beginning of this process. With that being said I mean our interaction with him has improved. I can't say for anybody else, because I'm not them. Anyways, diving right into this. A lot of the absolutely earth shattering things that we were concerned about in our household have been addressed and I am extremely thankful for that. With that being said I made a point a long time ago of saying that it wasn't just about us, but it was about all of our neighbors and I do still hold true to that. So, to give you my God's honest take on it, where we are, I think everything they have done is very beneficial to us and to a lot of the other neighbors. Not all of them. There are still concerns of -- primarily I'm hearing with just congestion and all. You know, the rezoning and how

many people can get into that space. Personally I agree with that part of it and also the fact that not all could be single story. And, again, realistically, we don't have the crystal ball that makes everything work great for everybody. I wish we did. I would love to make everyone happy. But to reiterate, I think they have done a really good job of helping me, my family and some of the other families. Ideally I would love for that to be even across the board. If there was any way that all the neighbors could be pleased and we could keep it in -- to where it's basically fair for all of them that would be my ideal take. But, anyways, thank you very much for listening. I appreciate it immensely.

Lorcher: Thank you.

Lomeli: Madam Chair, no one else has signed up.

Lorcher: Is there anybody on Zoom tonight?

Lomeli: Madam Chair, no one is on Zoom.

Lorcher: Is there anybody else in Chambers that would like to speak before we ask the applicant? Would you like to come up? If you can state your name and address for the record.

Bradley: Yeah. My name is Rick Bradley. I'm at 1321 East Shellbrook Drive here in Meridian.

Lorcher: Okay.

Bradley: I just want to start to say -- reiterating the building team did a fantastic job in listening to our concerns. Last time we were here with this meeting we made ten times more progress talking to them out in the lobby than we did anywhere here in the Chambers. So, I really appreciate the willingness to sit and talk to us. The two things that are really consistent here is maybe the height and the traffic. Last time I was here I asked you guys if you ever been to Adkins and Pine intersection and nobody had been. Has that changed? You guys aware of how that -- small that intersection is? And we are adding all this extra traffic to it.

Lorcher: We are aware of the intersection. It's -- typically in a public meeting situation to go to the site is -- is inappropriate for the commission, so --

Bradley: Yeah. I just thinking off hours; right.

Lorcher: Right. But as community members of Meridian I think we are all familiar with the area.

Bradley: Okay. Great. So, obviously, that is concern -- should probably concern you guys a little bit as well. As far as the heights going, I know that they can put into the CC&Rs and ACC stuff about restricting two story, restricting height, restricting with roof

and I think they were willing to add that into that. But when the plan checkers check the plans they are going to have to be pretty thorough about that to make sure that they are actually following all the guidelines for the ACCs and I think if it was implemented it would be public notice and we will be able to see as residents that they are withholding to what the developer said, because the builders are going to do their own thing. They don't really have control over how the sticks go up. But if it's put it into the rules I think that could solve a lot of the issues most likely and so I guess that was pretty much my main point is it can be controlled. These -- the concerns of all the residents around can be relieved if we take steps in that direction.

Lorcher: Okay.

Bradley: That's kind of what I wanted to say. Thank you.

Lorcher: Thank you very much. Anybody else in Chambers before we ask the applicant to come back up? Would you like to come back up to -- oh, Todd, you are going to follow up.

Lakey: Madam Chair, Commissioners, good evening. My name is Todd Lakey. Lakey Villegas Law, 141 East Carlton Avenue here in Meridian and appreciate the opportunity. I will -- I will be brief. If you have some more technical questions on some of the plat design we have some of our other team members here. Start out always by thanking staff for their work and their recommendation of approval. Commissioners, as you know, these are often an effort to achieve balance and has -- as has been described, my clients really have gone the extra mile in this case. I think it started with about 32 lots and, you know, they -- they removed 12 lots. They are relocating things on the property. They are -- they are getting rid of the two stories that they could have done on the edge in accordance with code. They moved the road, so there is a road to the north along with that green space that goes between 15 and 25 feet. So, there is no houses immediately on that boundary to the north. You have got Adkins to the east that they are bringing up to code, widening it, including the sidewalk and, then, again, Commissioners, they are tucking those two stories back into the middle of the project. Your future land use map calls for five to eight dwelling units per acre and we are at 5.12, so we are well within that range that's provided for in -- in the Comprehensive Plan. So, Commissioners, with the changes we are -- we not only meet code, but we are doing better than code and that's, again, part of the balance, some give and take, but the R-15 -- there were comments about the R-15 zoning. Yes, we are doing R-15 zoning on a portion of the property, but our density is not R-15. We have 3,000 to 7,000 square foot lots and in R-15 you can get two. So, it's really not R-15, other than it allows us to utilize different setbacks and lot sizes and, then, with the development agreement that limits us to what we can do. That's -- that's really consistent with that R-8 that you have in the area. As was stated, my clients met with the neighbors multiple times. Last time they met with them it was as described by several of them here. Thank you so much for the changes. We are good. And my clients went forward. The -- we do have a concern with the new building height restrictions that are proposed. Commissioners, we are surrounded by R-8 and we have R-4 and R-15 on this property.

There isn't really a nexus. We are complying with code. We are willing to say, okay, we will do the R-15 height restrictions -- excuse me -- take the R-15 height restrictions and take those R-4 height restrictions and spread it across the whole property. So, we will be subject to R-4 height restrictions on the whole thing and we got -- we are surrounded again by R-8. Commissioners, we also meet the ACHD requirements. There were no issues there. There was some traffic concerns and questions, but, as you know, that's their jurisdiction, their expertise and we are meeting their requirements. So, Commissioners, as I said we have gone the extra mile. We are going above and beyond code. We ask that the height restrictions be simply the R-4 height restrictions across the property and we ask that you approve our revised plan that does help provide that balance with the neighbors. With that I would ask for your approval. Happy to answer questions myself or if you have some technical ones for other experts that are here.

Lorcher: Commissioners, do we have questions for Todd? One of the residents asked about will there be an HOA for this community. Yes --

Lahey: I'm sure -- I get a thumbs up. Yes.

Lorcher: Okay.

Lahey: There will be an HOA.

Lorcher: And so will there be language in there that addresses out buildings, like if somebody wanted to build a shed? Yes. I'm hearing --

Lahey: So, yes, Madam Chair, for the record.

Lorcher: So, it will be respectful as far as height and so it won't -- oh. Okay. And then -- that's all I had. Commissioners, do you have questions?

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: Just for clarity, so you indicate you would be comfortable with, you know, R-4, R-8, that height limitation. Is that already in the staff recommendation or staff report or do we need to amend that?

Napoli: Madam Chair, Commissioner Smith, so Lots 2 through -- here, let me pull it up so we can show you. So, on that west boundary Lots 2 through 8 are restricted to single story. So, R-15 allows for structures up to 40 feet measured from the property line. So, we actually are changing that. We are measuring -- measure from the property line to the peak of the roof. R-4 would have it -- 35 feet would be the maximum height. So, that would be something that would be definitely your guys' purview and I

would recommend you include that in your motion tonight if that is a way that you guys want to go. That is correct.

Lakey: Thank you, Commissioner.

Lorcher: Any questions?

Stoll: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Stoll.

Stoll: So, I'm not sure if this is a question for Mr. Lakey or for Nick. Was -- did the applicant propose on the west -- the homes on the western side would be one story or was that --

Lakey: Madam Chair and Commissioner Stoll, we are willing to have that restriction, yes. Those Lots 2 through 8 would be limited to single story.

Stoll: Okay.

Lorcher: What do you anticipate the average square foot of the homes that you are proposing?

Lakey: Madam Chair, I might have to ask my client for that.

Lorcher: Okay.

Lakey: If you could give me just a moment.

Lorcher: Can you come up briefly? Hi. If you could just state your name and address for the record.

Ethridge: My name is Brandon Ethridge and it's 5175 South Missoula Way, Boise, Idaho.

Lorcher: Thanks.

Ethridge: And to answer your question, Madam Chair, for the average square feet we are -- we want it to be around 1,500, maybe higher to 2,000 square feet if we can get it in there -- if we can fit those in the lots.

Lorcher: Now you are looking at typically two car garages on these?

Ethridge: We are -- we have two car garages with the driveway that can support another two cars.

Lorcher: Okay. So, four cars in all. And, then, your HOA would either limit or allow like a shed in the backyard for lawnmowers and that type of thing?

Ethridge: Absolutely. And we are willing to do a height restriction on that as well.

Lorcher: Okay. And one final question and it doesn't have to be exact. What kind of price point are you looking at for these homes?

Ethridge: We want to be -- our price points -- we want to be in the five hundred thousands and maybe creep it up if we can. We just know that that helps retain the value in the area as well if we can maintain those price points.

Lorcher: Okay. Any other questions for the developer?

Perreault: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Perreault.

Perreault: So, on the single stories what is -- what is the height estimate that you expect? I mean we know what the maximum is, but --

Ethridge: I think the -- on those single stories we can be in the 20s, you know, depends on the pitch of the roof, but we are going to be respectful of that to plan it for the lots, because we understand. We had a meeting with the neighbors last week and it was all about height and we -- we would make -- we would limit that as much as we can, but it needs to be a nice looking product as well so it maintains its value, so --

Lorcher: Okay. Thank you very much.

Ethridge: Appreciate it.

Lorcher: Appreciate it.

Lakey: Any other questions Madam Chair?

Lorcher: I think we are good.

Lakey: All right. Thank you very much.

Lorcher: Thank you, Todd. May I get a motion to close the public hearing?

Smith: So moved.

Rust: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and second to close the public hearing on Farrington Heights Subdivision. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Rust: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Rust.

Rust: Appreciate the rework that's gone into this. I don't know in my time as a Commissioner that I have heard this much positive testimony. So, appreciate the engagement of the community and coming out and sharing your opinion. After reconvening with the developer we often get a lot of negative and not a lot of positive. So, it was great to see that tonight. I'm in full support of this plan. I really like what they did. If I remember right at the December 4th meeting we were trying to haggle over some height restrictions on specific lots and I think what we have come to here is a really good development. It is going to lead to some increased density. That's the nature of in-fill. We talk about this with every single in-fill project. I appreciate the applicant working with the community, with the Commission, with City Council. I think we have got to a really good product here. I'm in full support.

Perreault: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Perreault.

Perreault: We already closed the public hearing, didn't we? I was hoping the applicant can come back up and address the issues that were presented. Was -- is that not something we were planning on doing?

Lorcher: We closed the public hearing.

Perreault: Right.

Lorcher: So, did you want me to reopen it or --

Perreault: Well, typically the applicant comes back up and my one concern would be whether or not we should hear more about -- well, let me put it this way. Should we hear more about street parking or parking in general or does the Commission feel like that that's been addressed?

Lorcher: Todd was representing the applicant on the second part of it. So, if you really wanted to hear from Sabrina we can reopen the public hearing for her to address it.

Perreault: No. That's okay.

Lorcher: Okay. Any other comments?

Sandoval: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Yes.

Sandoval: As far as the parking I think with the two car garage and the driveway that supports an additional two, I think it's appropriate, so I don't think we need to discuss it more. Open to conversation, obviously, but I think it's adequate.

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: Well, there is some times a year where parking, you know, in -- in my neighborhood there is some -- you know, there is some two, some three car garages and there is still parking issues every once in a while when we have Super Bowl Sunday or, you know, during the holiday sometimes that happens, but I think broadly speaking on a day-to-day standpoint I'm not overly concerned with the parking. I think to a larger issue -- or to a larger kind of discussion I think these are -- is a really good project. I think the only thing that I would probably add to the staff report -- and I was mulling this over, but since the applicant kind of suggested it, maybe to give some peace of mind is restricting the height to be consistent with R-4 on all the properties. I know some applicant -- or some of the public were hoping for a 20 foot height restriction or things like that. I think that's a bit too -- too restrictive, a bit arbitrary. I think I was seeing some numbers on -- on some of the documents of 22 foot, 24 foot. I think I saw a 29 foot. So, I don't know that that's the right way to go, but I think as a show of goodwill and something that the developer seems content with doing is restricting it to R-4. Yeah. I think these are going to be great properties.

Lorcher: Yeah. I agree as well. They are taking on the responsibility of improving Adkins Way and they are putting in the street that will be, you know, a U-shape. So, they are listening. Is it perfect? No. But a homeowner has a right to sell their property and a developer has a right to develop those properties within the zone and I will say of my six years on this I haven't seen many developers listen to the community as much as they have listened to you. They have a right to build and a homeowner has a right to sell. So, is it perfect? No. But I think when this goes to Council -- and it will -- they will engage more with height -- height restrictions and the development, you know, design that they will present to Council. Anybody want to give me a motion?

Rust: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Rust.

Rust: After considering all staff, applicant and public testimony, I move to recommend approval to the City Council File No. H-2025-0016 as presented in the staff report for the hearing date of January 15th, 2026, with one modification to -- in addition to the

single story lot height restrict -- or single story restriction on the west boundary, to restrict the entire parcel to R-4 heights as outlined by the applicant.

Stoll: Second.

Napoli: Madam Chair, if I may chime in.

Lorcher: Yes.

Napoli: Can we put that at 35 feet, instead of R-4, just so it's clear on the record. Would that be okay?

Rust: Yes. Works for me.

Lorcher: Okay. Do I have a second?

Stoll: Yep. I second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to approve file 2025-0016, Farrington Hills. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries. Thank you very much.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

4. Public Hearing for Building Height and Drive-through Text Amendment (ZOA-2025-0003) by City of Meridian Planning Division

- A. Request: UDC Text Amendment to define residential building height measurements, clarify building height standards in the Residential and Traditional neighborhood districts and update the approval process for tiered drive-throughs.

Lorcher: The next item on the agenda is ZOA-2025-0003 for building height and drive-through text amendments from the City of Meridian Planning Division. Bill had some handouts. Hopefully everybody got one to follow along for his presentation.

Parsons: It looks like the room is clearing out. Good evening, Madam Chair, Members of the Commission. Thank you for your patience as I transition to the next item on the agenda this evening. So, I am here tonight to talk about some code changes with you. One -- two topics in particular. One being building heights and the other being drive-through processes. If the Commission recalls I was in front of you in June presenting some revised drive-through standards that we wanted to take forward. The goal at that time was to get more express drive-through establishment standards, so that we could approve drive-throughs administratively and try to eliminate the need for the applicant to come before this body to do that conditional use process. We felt like we had it nailed down pretty well. Went through a round of changes with the UDC focus group. Ultimately we got to City Council and Council said, well, we wanted to expand the

process on how we want to look at drive-throughs. So, that's kind of step one of tonight's code changes and the other is discussion of building heights, which you kind of touched on this evening, is how do we apply -- or measure building heights. So, currently the way the code is structured anytime -- when we measure a building height -- and in the zoning code there are maximum height limits for each zoning district. It's pretty typical throughout the nation. In our code most of the R zones are 35 feet. You saw tonight R-15 is 40 feet. Even R-40 goes up to 65 feet. So, some of those zones they do allow taller buildings, but where we have some flexibility in the code are things like elevator shafts or chimneys. Those can project even taller than the maximum height limitations and so recently Council -- staff -- city staff went before City Council and had a discussion with them and decided how would we change -- or how did the Council want us to measure residential heights moving forward. Currently the way it's structured it defers to the building code and these lists of exceptions that we currently have in code and Council said, no, we want to be very -- we want to be more restrictive than the residential code and come up with our own standards. So, the zoning code can be more restrictive than a building code. So, in this particular instance on the screen this evening you can see that first item is how we are getting to that point. We are defining how we are going to measure residential structures moving forward. So, technically anyone comes into the City of Meridian, applies for a residential building permit, Planning will verify kind of that they are from their property line to the top of the building they will have to demonstrate that the home does not exceed the maximum height limit of that residential district. So, again, if it's an R-2, R-4, R-8 you are looking at maximum height for 35 feet. So, anything under that -- any of those projections or taller roofs will not be allowed to go forward. It's going to be measured to the peak and -- and that's been historically different than what the building code does currently. So, it's going to be pretty expressed standards moving forward. The next item on this -- and kind of sticking with that theme of definitions, as -- as you recall we changed our definitions for drive-throughs. We came up with that tiered approach where we had tier one, tier two and tier three and, basically, that referenced the intensity of drive-through uses. So, we have that in our specific use standards, but we never married that up to the definitions in our code. So, that's what the next item does as well and, then, touching back on building heights again -- I know it's a little disjointed. When I put these tables together I tried to stick them in order of how they fall in the code. So, going back to our maximum building heights here, again, this goes back and reinforces that definition that I just shared with you. So, had changed some items in chapter two of the code. So, basically, it's very explicit. Number one there says how we are going to measure it based on that measurement that I just described to you and, then, items -- the exceptions that are currently in code, we have made that more explicit to say those only apply to nonresidential structures and mixed use buildings. So, again, residential, you are from the front of the property line to the very top of the roof -- the peak of the roof, the flat point of the roof, whatever it may be. If it's a flat roof it's to the parapet. If it's a peaked roof it's going right to the peak of the roof. Again for nonresidential or mixed use structures there is some latitude there. And, then, going back to -- bouncing back to our drive-through standards, as you are aware currently the way it worked in code all drive-throughs are -- come to you as a body and so in order to follow through on what the Council's directive was I had to go and amend some of the tables in our

code. So, I had to go back to our commercial zones, remove the term drive-through now, because now that we have a term -- drive-through tiered approach we went ahead and added tier one, tier two and tier three based on the definitions that I shared with you. Based on the direction from City Council they were comfortable with tiered one drive-throughs being approved administratively. Tier two they wanted the Planning and Zoning Commission to continue to review all of those regardless if there was a residential district or not next to it and, then, Council also wanted tier threes to bypass the Planning and Zoning Commission and go directly to them. So, that's why in these -- these tables that I have created here you can see where -- where you see an A or C -- so conceivably a tiered one drive-through can be approved by the director. However, if a tiered one is next -- within 300 feet of a residential use or district it's coming before this body still. So, that was not changed by City Council. Tier two. Again, all tier twos will come to you. And, then, tier threes currently as drafted will go to City Council. And, again, these tables are married up to do just that based on the Council's direction. I also mentioned to you -- I don't know if the Council wants to take -- or provide comment to City Council or not, but some staff members and some certain council members also were concerned about allowing drive-through uses in Old Town. They felt in downtown it should be more walkable and not more garage -- or auto oriented. We do have one drive-through in Old Town currently and that is the Human Bean on Fairview and -- or Cherry, however you look at it. Cherry and Meridian Road. And, believe it or not, that's the reason why we changed the code back in 2015 to allow drive-throughs in Old Town because of that one business. So, I don't anticipate us getting a lot of tier two or tier three drive-throughs in downtown, but that -- the potential is there, so that's certainly -- I think I anticipate some conversation with City Council as we transition there, but certainly if the Commission wants to weigh in on that topic as well I'm happy to share those comments with Council as I -- as I present to them. So, again, based on some of the commentary that I have given you here this last code change here on -- in front of you is basically the table that we use to enforce how we process applications or what bodies act on applications. So, you can see here we have added the tier one where, again, it may be the director, maybe -- like we don't need anybody, but director, no recommending body, because the director can act on it or he may become the recommending body, because they are next to a residential use and, then, same thing with tier two. We are -- the director is the recommended body. You guys are the decision-making body and, of course, tier three -- director is, again, the recommending body and City Council will become the decision-making body. I know certainly how -- as you -- as the Commission is aware certain applications, for example, like annexations and preliminary plats, typically you guys are a recommending body on those site types of application, then, you forward on a recommendation to City Council. Certainly if that's the prerogative of the Planning and Zoning Commission tonight, if you feel like you also want to act on or review tier three drive-throughs that's certainly within your purview this evening to say, you know, maybe Planning and Zoning can be a recommending body to the City Council on tier three drive-throughs as well and that's, again, something that I'm more than happy to take before City Council as this transitions to them. Looking at the public record I did not see any testimony on this item and I will go ahead and conclude my presentation, open it up to you for questions.

Lorcher: Quick question. Do we have any active banks still downtown?

Parsons: I know a few of them have. I don't know if this one is still active --

Lorcher: Is First Interstate there? Is there --

Parsons: -- this one might be -- this one across -- north of us may be active still, but I know the one on Idaho has -- has vacated.

Lorcher: Right. So, that has a drive-through.

Parsons: Yeah. Different process. That was approved under a different code. I'm not sure what the -- how -- what the requirements were at that time.

Lorcher: I think there is another coffee shop next to Paul's, too. Is that considered Old Town? Franklin and King -- Main Street and King?

Parsons: Main Street and King --

Lorcher: Right there by --

Parsons: Oh. Yes. That's, again, another grandfathered drive-through. That's -- that's part of an old process. Correct.

Lorcher: Got you. Okay. Do we have anybody signed up -- nobody's here to sign up. So, did you have -- were you going to comment tonight? Okay. Does anybody else have questions for Bill?

Sandoval: Madam Chair.

Lorcher: Commissioner Sandoval.

Sandoval: How are you defining property line? Are you saying the front of the structure by the foundation? Are you saying the actual property line? So, if you are on a hill and you have a 20 foot house, but it's 35 feet -- or it's 36 feet, you can't build it to that height?

Parsons: So, Commissioner Sandoval, if I can get to your question here. So, basically, what I would hope is -- like any plan that we get in -- Meridian doesn't have a grading ordinance, so we don't require grading -- grading plans or a grading permit. So, basically, when someone submits a site plan to us they -- they depict their -- their property lines. If there is topography like you said -- a lot of times -- sometimes in -- I think in south Meridian -- I haven't seen where the property -- the front property line is taller than the -- it's usually taller than the rear, because it kind of slopes a little -- away, but sometimes it could be the reverse. But in this case, again, if -- if there was a -- an instance where the front property was higher than the back of the property we would still

measure the height from -- from that. So, the developer or the home builder would have to provide us that and, then, demonstrate -- give us a side profile of how that would work, so we could verify that. So, technically -- conceivably the back of the house could be taller than the front of the house, because we are measuring from the front rather than the back.

Sandoval: Thanks for clarifying. I was curious. Thank you.

Parsons: Yeah. We did talk about that quite a bit with the UDC focus group and everyone kind of -- you know, typically your road is your baseline for kind of the elevation of your subdivision. So, we felt if we just had a standard requirement from just one property line, but there are instances where conceivably you could take the average of the entire property and determine that height. But I didn't want to over complicate the code, because we don't really have a lot of topography at Meridian. There are certain pockets of it, but generally it's -- it's pretty flat here.

Lorcher: Any other questions before we close the public hearing?

Stoll: Madam Chair, questions for Bill.

Lorcher: Commissioner Stoll.

Stoll: Folks that know me know that I'm big on processes when I'm kind of trying to figure it out. So, in tier one director makes decision. Tier two the director makes a recommendation to the Commission. All of the processes we have the Commission makes a recommendation to City Council, but in this case you are talking about the director makes the recommendation to the City Council. What's the reason for the difference?

Parsons: Madam Chair, Members of the Commission, that was the direction that when I presented the changes to City Council they said they wanted to act on all tier three drive-throughs, so -- and they didn't want to slow down the process. So, in our UDC there is certain -- the code is -- the way it's structured is that the Council has given the Commission the authority to act on conditional use permits. That's within your purview. That's why you -- you see the director to the Planning from us -- as a recommended body to you for -- currently all conditional use permits. But during my discussions with City Council they wanted to be mindful of the time it takes to get applications to them. So, again, it would be no different than a development agreement modification. Technically if someone -- there is certain applications that you don't even see, because they go directly to City Council. So, that was the rationale by the City Council. They said, well, we have other applications that don't require recommendation from Planning and Zoning Commission, so let's make tier threes come to us just like any -- a short plat or a development agreement modification. That's at least -- I don't think they wanted to cut you out of the process, they were just thinking of it that way. We have other things that -- that don't do it, so is there a way we can do that.

Stoll: But there are other applications that --

Parsons: Yeah. Yeah. There are other applications and processes that do it. Correct.

Lorcher: So, when it came to In-N-Out we were supposed to decide on the conditional use permit; right?

Parsons: And you did.

Lorcher: And we did. And they appealed it, which is why it went to City Council. So, what the Council is suggesting is that anything with a two -- two lanes, an escape lane, would go directly to Council. That's what they are -- that's what he is proposing.

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: Are we still in public testimony?

Lorcher: We are still in public testimony. Are we ready to close the public testimony? Any other questions for Bill? Bill? May I get a motion to close the public hearing?

Smith: So moved.

Rust: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to close the public hearing for ZOA-2025-0003. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Lorcher: My thoughts on this. We talked about this in our prep meeting a little bit. I -- I am not in favor of conditional use permits tier three to go directly to Council. I think they should still come to Planning and Zoning as -- to be vetted. If I am a chain that's going to be -- or whoever is going to open double drive-throughs with an escape lane, coming to Planning and Zoning gives them a chance to be able to work out some of the details of their application before they go to City Council, because when they go to City Council it's either yes or no. When they come to Planning and Zoning it's yes or no, but, then, they can appeal it and it still goes to City Council. So, I think it just -- there is not a developer here to say yes or no on it, but I just think it's not in their best interest, because it probably limits their -- it takes some time -- maybe take a week or two off their time, but it may change the whole outcome of their presentation, because there is many times where we will make recommendations saying before you go to Council, you know, do this. Or if you are going to appeal, you know, do this before you walk into Council and if they go straight to Council, then, that wouldn't do it and I hear time and time again from the Mayor and also Council Members is that they appreciate our

feedback and so maybe still having Council be the deciding factor, but us being the recommending body for tier three would still be helpful. Tier two stays with us, which is one lane, one drive through and, then, anything that is close to proximity to residential will still come through us as well, including tier one if it abuts residential. But, otherwise, if it's a pharmacy that's a stand-alone or a bank that's a stand-alone that doesn't really affect those things, then, it could be administrative at tier one. Does that make sense? So, those are my thoughts. You know, I would like to see tier three still come through Planning and Zoning. We would be a recommending body to Council. Any other thoughts on this?

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: Yeah. I agree with you and, like you said, we talked about this in our prep meeting. I think the only instances where I could imagine there being significant delays for us having heard a tier three seems like it might be one where it's warranted where there is a continuance because of some issue or things like that. I guess, you know, if there is a lack of quorum or something, you know, there is -- there is -- I get the desire to speed things up and I'm not a developer, so I -- you know, I -- I'm not -- I don't have insight into the time value of money in their specific industry, but I don't know that this -- in my -- in my opinion slows things down and not like too much to justify it. At the end of the day if Council wants to just take it head on, you know, I trust our City Council. I think we have a really good Council, so I'm not losing sleep over it, but I think that's something that I think -- we -- we are here to help them and do some fact finding for them and some analysis for them -- and I think that's, frankly, DA mods I know it's more of a negotiation with -- with the city, so there is some more kind of executive function there, but, heck, I would like to look at DA mods, too, you know. But that's a different conversation. Yeah. I think I'm in support of that. And, then, I also -- again, just to give my personal thoughts, I don't know if we want to open this can of worms, but with Old Town restricting drive-throughs I would be okay with that. Yeah. The whole point is to have a walkable space. I -- you know, again, it's not something that I particularly will lose sleep for, because I can't think of too many areas where someone's going to go slap in a big drive through, but you never know, so I think that I'm generally in favor of that, specifically just because it's Old Town, it's a unique district.

Rust: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Rust.

Rust: I don't have a strong opinion on this, but I would actually take the other side. If you think back to the In-N-Out application how many people did In-N-Out have here? That was a pretty big application and they are going to bring all those people back to Council and so I think there is a time element, but there is also a cost element for developers and these tier threes are going to generate a lot of public testimony. They are generally going to be more controversial. They are probably always going to end up

at Council and I think the developers would generally rather get one shot, but know that it's an up or down, then, the uncertainty of having to bring all those experts to multiple meetings. They are going to have to do that if they -- if we bring tier threes in front of us and I think that that more than anything both adds cost and time. So, again, I'm not getting too worked up either way, but I -- I can see where Council is coming from and I actually agree with their take on it.

Lorcher: Yeah. I mean those applications are far and few between, although I did read today --

Rust: Dunkin Donuts.

Lorcher: -- Duncan's bringing 20 into the Treasure Valley. So, a lot -- my limited experience with Duncan it's just typically not two plus an escape. It's one and done.

Rust: But they are going to have a lot of fun.

Lorcher: Yeah. Well, I don't drink coffee, so you can bring as many as you want in there. But, yeah, I understand your point as well. But right now conditional use permits come before us anyway, so that procedure doesn't change too much. Commissioner Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you. I agree with Commissioner Rust. You know, when -- when Council has needed more information from an applicant on a drive-through they end up continuing it any way. So, you know, at some point you are doing three hearings and -- and so if Council -- typically when they can -- when Council continues that applicant is brought back faster than if we -- if they were to come to the Commission and, then, go to Council. So, if we are talking about time frames, if Council needs more information they will continue it. It will be back in four weeks. It will still make for a faster process. So, I'm in agreement that -- I would be satisfied if it went direct -- directly to Council. It ends up there most of the time anyway.

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: I think after hearing that I think -- and chewing on it some more, I think I guess I'm a little bit on the fence now, because now I'm thinking about it --

Lorcher: That's okay. That's why we are talking about it.

Smith: You know, we are essentially saying, City Council, let us do the extra work for you and they are saying, hey, we are okay doing the extra work. In my mind part of it was like, well, we could take some of that load off of their -- off of their plate, but if they are content to, you know, take that on themselves that, then, I'm okay with -- look, it's -- I'm not, again, losing sleep over it and I wasn't in the first place, but maybe I'm seeing

more and more of that kind of opposite view. So, realistically, I would be content either way. I think it's dealer's choice for me now.

Lorcher: Okay. That's fine. That's why we are talking about it.

Stoll: Madam Chair, if I may.

Lorcher: Commissioner Stoll.

Stoll: So, I wasn't -- I will play the newbie card still. I wasn't here for the In-N-One, so I don't know the process. Is there an aspect of the application that we are still going to get and have to review, so it's -- we are not going to see the application at all.

Lorcher: What should have happened with In-N-Out, it should have ended here. Right here. Because we approve conditional use permits. The only reason it went to Council is because we denied it and they appealed it. Right? Because, otherwise, conditional use permits, regardless of the number of drive-throughs, escape lanes, Raising Cane's, Chick-fil-A, the whole nine yards ends in Planning and Zoning. What the commit -- the Council is suggesting is that if it's a really big thing, then, maybe the one stop shop isn't Planning and Zoning, it's Council. Because if we end up denying it for whatever reason that's when it goes to Council because they will appeal it.

Stoll: So -- but -- but the trigger is it's got a drive-through with it. That's -- in this case that we are talking about. If it's a drive-through --

Lorcher: Yes.

Stoll: -- then it's going strict -- directly to the Council.

Lorcher: Right. We are looking at, you know, high volume, congestion, you know, in a -- in an area that's -- not contested, because -- I mean it could be a -- so, let's take Ten Mile Crossing, the new Ahlquist part on the west side. I forget what it's called. They are going to be developing -- say they decide to put an In-N-Out over there; right? So, what they are suggesting is that instead of presenting to Planning and Zoning it's -- even though it's just bare land right now they are going to have two lanes plus an escape lane that would automatically skip Planning and Zoning and just go to Council for their -- their presentation, because most likely there is going to be businesses 300 feet on either side of them. Does that makes sense?

Stoll: Yeah, it makes -- well, yes and no. So, not sure how I -- where I fall on that one. In terms of drive-throughs in Old Town, I lean towards not having them. If we can just to promote the walkability of the downtown area.

Lorcher: Yeah.

Sandoval: Madam Chair?

Sandoval: Commissioner Sandoval.

Sandoval: Yeah. I -- thinking about the community, everyone is going to give up some, some people are going to get some. I don't see any reasonable argument to not have something go through two small bodies with diverse populations to make a good decision for the community in the long run. So, my opinion is, yes, it should absolutely come here, let's talk about it, let's vet it, let's kick it up the line or deny it. If they want to appeal that's their decision. Not every single application is going to appeal; right? Yes, some highly contested ones maybe. We have been there. But I don't see any reasonable argument to say why wouldn't it be better for the community to have two groups to look at something from different perspectives, even if it may mean a two or three week delay for one stakeholder. It doesn't make sense to me. So, that's why I'm in favor of what you spoke to.

Lorcher: Right. And we are only talking about conditional use permits. I mean annexations, preliminary plats, you know, development agreements, all those still go to Council anyway. We are really talking about just businesses that are going to have a drive-through, double stacked, escape lane, within 300 feet. That's the only thing we are talking about. Correct; Bill?

Parsons: Yeah. Madam Chair, Members of the Commission, I also just want to reiterate that, you know, you could get a tier two and deny it or approve it and someone could still appeal that and go to City Council.

Lorcher: Right.

Parsons: That process is not changing. It's -- it's still in the code. So, it's just -- like I said, it's -- it's -- like you -- like I just said, it -- it's just going right to City Council. It's just like another application. But, again, it's certainly within your purview to -- to modify that or change that. On the Old Town topic certainly if -- if the Commission feels comfortable with tier one you can certainly say we are good with tier one and maybe strike tier two or tier three from being an Old Town. So, I think -- everything's on the table tonight, but I agree with you, I don't see a tier three happening in downtown. I could see a tier one. I mean we have some up on the street -- they are not -- they are not Old Town, but they are commercial, but their land use designation is Old Town, so conceivably someone could rezone it to something else in the future. But, again, it's -- it's full gamut. I mean ultimately the -- the City Council will weigh in on your comments and I will share that with them as I go and transition and present to them. But, certainly, I don't profess to have one size fits all here tonight. I do appreciate everyone's position on it. It's just how you look at things and I do -- I like the discussion tonight. I like -- I like the perspective of Commissioner Rust, because I didn't think of it from that angle, but it's very logical and, then, I see Commissioner Sandoval's take on it, too. So, it's like -- it's -- it's all whatever we want it to be for the community. I think that's the key here is what is the best thing we want to do for the community and I -- I truly believe this body and the City Council has that -- we all do. We want to make sure we get it right. It -- it's citywide. It's code changes. It's important.

Lorcher: Right.

Parsons: But I do appreciate the discussion.

Lorcher: So, just to clarify Old Town is Fairview to Franklin, from Meridian to, what, 3rd or 2 ½? How far -- how far east does Old Town go? Just --

Parsons: Yeah.

Lorcher: But I mean it's --

Parsons: It goes to Franklin, 3rd and -- I don't know how far it -- it zig-zags. It's an odd designation.

Lorcher: Okay.

Parsons: It's a weird configuration. It's not just a perfect rectangle.

Lorcher: Got you.

Parsons: It jogs throughout downtown. But it's pretty substantial.

Lorcher: Right.

Parsons: Larger than what you think it is.

Rust: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Rust.

Rust: I apologize, this was probably explained and I just missed it, but what function are we serving here with these proposals that are before us? Like are we voting on these?

Lorcher: We are recommending to --

Rust: -- we are recommending --

Lorcher: Yeah.

Rust: Yeah. Okay. So, we are not -- we are not able to do anything, we are just making recommendations.

Lorcher: Correct. So, we can accept the way -- we would have a motion the way Bill has it framed or based on the discussion tonight we can adjust it.

Rust: And so if we were to -- let's just say we said we want a say on tier threes and, then, City Council could say we actually are going to go with our original intent. They wouldn't have to come back to us, they just decide.

Lorcher: Correct.

Rust: Thank you.

Perreault: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Perreault.

Perreault: Just to clarify, Bill, the recommendation to limit drive-throughs in Old Town that came from Council or where did that come from?

Parsons: Madam Chair, Members of the Commission, not necessarily. I know some council members were -- so, when I had presented that had come up as a topic and I presented this tiered approach or we were discussing the changes to the specific use standards and some council members said they didn't want it, but they were outvoted. So, I left it in here knowing that it would become another topic of discussion when I get in front of them. So, I know there is some council members that want to talk on that topic. So, that's why I'm curious -- I'm sharing it with you, because I'm curious how the Commission feels about it.

Perreault: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Perreault.

Perreault: Personally I would like to still see that done on a case by case basis. I mean I understand the concern about drive-throughs in Old Town. There are a few areas of Old Town that still could accommodate them and I mean Old Town -- we have spent a lot of time sort of loosening restrictions on Old Town in terms of height and uses and so it seems funny to me to, then, create a restriction when there has been a lot of effort to expand the options in Old Town. So, that's just my thought on it. I mean it's not a hill I'm going to die on, but --

Lorcher: Yeah. I feel the same way. I mean what happens, you know, five years from now and Old Town is built out in a different way and, you know, we are in a life situation where people aren't dining in restaurants and they need to drive-through, you know, and, then, all of a sudden the businesses that have established themselves, you know, cannot have that opportunity or won't move into that area for that very reason. I think I agree with Commissioner Perreault is that we should evaluate those on a case-by-case basis, because there is some very skinny parts of Old Town, but there are some wider spots, too, that could accommodate them and to blanket it across -- you might be taking an applicant and turning them away from developing commercial opportunity downtown because of that restriction. I can't imagine what it would be at this point in time, but if -- I

would say no, but not having that crystal ball of what it looks like, you know, five years from now I hate to be in that position where we would have to say, no, you can't come here.

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: If I could make -- you know I, guess a pitch -- if I -- if I were trying to die on this hill and this is -- this is not my -- I'm not playing devil's advocate quite, but this is an exaggeration of where I'm at. Is, you know, you look at places that are intended to -- built to be -- built to be, you know, pedestrian primary usage. You think post-COVID Main Street in Boise, for example, how that's built out to be really in that downtown core, there is very limited download that I have seen a car drive down that since those barriers went up in 2020. So, I think there are some areas where you can limit and if you can steer the design toward something that -- if we are trying to create a very walkable location in Meridian, that's the goal that we have, I think there is some value in not doing it case-by-case, but trying to establish some bright line or some -- some bound -- and I think if you are already trying to make a pretty walkable thing I think there is a case for simultaneously loosening height restrictions due to a lot more density per -- you know, per square foot or per square mile while imposing greater controls on automotive traffic specifically. So, yeah, I think I guess -- I guess I see the appeal looking also again at the size of a tier one or something like that. But, again, if I -- if I could wave my wand -- if I had a crystal ball that one of the people come in earlier was talking about, I think I would probably limit it tier one. I think I would like that. Again that doesn't fully restrict automotive uses, but kind of tries to steer the development toward what we are trying to do. I know there has been cases of, you know, alternate compliance or things like that and I think it just -- there are methods to I think get around that if you will, but it seems like that puts the default into, you know, nothing -- you know, you could have a small drive-through, but don't get crazy. So, there is that. One other thing that I will say as for the -- the tier threes and that chain, on whether we see it as a recommending body, I find out the way -- but I really do want to actually comment. I do like that it is going to City Council by default. I think as the elected body if there is anything that's large enough and sufficient enough and impactful enough to serve -- to stir up that kind of a tendency that usually comes with tier threes, it should go to the elected body as the deciding vote, not some volunteers who have the honor of serving on a wonderful appointment, but there is -- there is an accountability structure there and I think sometimes I wonder if like on a CUP if we approve something that Council would have denied --

Lorcher: Right.

Smith: -- you know, especially something with the size of In-N-Out --

Lorcher: Yeah.

Smith: -- and maybe no one in the audience knows -- you know, thinks to try to appeal it from the other side, that kind of gives me some concern. So, I actually like that it is by default going to City Council. I will say that.

Lorcher: They can take the heat. That's fine. Anybody want to try a motion?

Rust: I will take a -- I will take a stab.

Lorcher: Yeah.

Rust: Yeah.

Lorcher: One more for the road.

Rust: One more -- two for the show.

Lorcher: Okay.

Rust: After hearing, staff and public testimony, I move that we recommend the changes to the -- is it the UDC? Is that what we are saying this is? I recommend that we approve -- recommend approval of the changes as laid out by the staff in this table with no modifications and no further comment on the potential drive-through modification to the downtown core.

Lorcher: Okay. Do have a second? Kurt, with no second that motion dies, is that what happens?

Starman: Madam Chair, since there was no second the motion dies. You can ask your fellow Commissioners for an alternate motion if you like.

Lorcher: Okay.

Stoll: So Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Stoll.

Stoll: After considering all staff, applicant, and public testimony, I move to recommend approval to the City Council of File No. Z0A-2025-0003 as presented in the staff report for the hearing date of January 15th, 2026, with the following modifications: Tier two applications for drive-throughs -- tier three. Sorry. Tier three applications for drive-throughs, recommending body would be the Planning and Zoning Commission. The deciding body would be the City Council and that's it.

Lorcher: Do I have a second?

Sandoval: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to approve File ZOA-2025-0003, with tier three going through Planning and Zoning for recommendation, with final decision going to City Council. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed?

Perreault: Nay.

Rust: Nay.

Lorcher: So, it's two to three and I will say aye as well. So, that's four and two. Motion passes.

MOTION CARRIED: FOUR AYES. TWO NAYS. ONE ABSENT.

Lorcher: Couple more things before we leave for this evening. Tonight is Commissioner Rust's last meeting and so we appreciate your time on the Commission. Thank you very much for your service. We will miss your south side perspective.

Rust: Thank you. I enjoyed serving with you all.

DISCUSSION [Action Item]

5. Planning and Zoning Commission Chair and Vice Chair Elections

Lorcher: Yes. Thank you. And Item 5 on the agenda is we are going to vote on a chair and a vice-chair for the 2026 calendar year.

Smith: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: I'm sorry, I apologize, bad time to grab a lifesaver. I do want to -- I know that the bylaws by default nominate the vice -- the sitting vice-chair as a candidate for chair. I would like to decline that default nomination and in place nominate you for re-election for chair.

Lorcher: For chair. And -- and you stay as vice-chair?

Smith: I will not make a nomination for vice-chair.

Lorcher: Ah. So --

Smith: I would love to serve, but I don't want to -- you know.

Lorcher: All right. So, then, I will nominate Commissioner Smith for vice-chair. Is there anybody on the floor that would like these positions? Kurt, do we vote?

Starman: Yes.

Lorcher: So, I would like a motion for Commissioner Smith to retain as vice-chair and myself Commissioner Lorcher as chair for the 2026 calendar year.

Stoll: Madam Chair, I move to retain the existing officers from the 2025 commission for the 2026 commission.

Lorcher: Do I have a second?

Rust: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded to keep Commissioner Smith as vice-chair and myself, Commissioner Lorcher, as chair. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Lorcher: I will take one more motion.

Rust: Madam Chair?

Lorcher: Commissioner Rust.

Rust: I move that we adjourn.

Stoll: Second.

Lorcher: It's been moved and seconded that we adjourn. All those in favor say aye. Any opposed? Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: SIX AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Lorcher: Thank you very much.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:28 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS.)
APPROVED

MARIA LORCHER - CHAIRMAN

_____|_____|_____
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK