PLANNING & ZONING
September 10, 2025
5:30 PM
City Hall

CITY OF MILLS
EST. 1921

Chairman:
John Gudger
Vice Chairman:
Chris Volzke
Members:
John Bryson
Laura Miramontes
Robin Baye

MINUTES

SPECIAL MILLS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA ARE SUBJECT TO A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL FOR FINAL ACTION

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gudger called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman John Gudger
Vice-Chairman Chris Volzke
Member John Bryson
Member Laura Miramontes (over phone)

STAFF IN ATTENANCE:

Casey Coates, Interim City Planner
Sarah Osborn, City Clerk

Agenda Item

1. Mountain Meadows No. 2, Lot 2A – Zone Map Amendment

- Chairman Gudger noted that the project is also referred to as the *Ridgeway West Subdivision*. He opened the floor to **Casey Coates** to present the application.

2. Attendance Update

- Member **Laura Miramontes** joined the meeting via phone.
- Chairman Gudger again turned the floor over to **Casey Coates**, who provided a detailed explanation of the proposed project.

Applicant: City of Mills (Staff/Council Initiated)
Request: Rezoning of Mountain Meadows No. 2, Lot 2A
Location: Western edge of Robertson Road, north of Wyoming Classical Academy, bordered by county properties to the south and west.

Current Conditions

- **Zoning:** Urban Agriculture (UA)
- **Existing Use:** Vacant grassland

- **Adjacent Land Uses/Zoning:**
  - **North:** Urban Agriculture
  - **South/West:** County – Light Industrial
  - **East:** Robertson Hills & Robertson Heights (R-1 Residential)

Proposed Action

- Rezone Lot 2A from **Urban Agriculture (UA)** to **Residential (R-1)**.
- Supports development of a subdivision with approximately 80+ single-family homes.
- Provides **infill development** within city limits.

Infrastructure & Services

- **Utilities:** City water and sewer are available; sufficient capacity exists.
- **Public Services:** Police and Fire services are already extended to the area.
- No adverse impact on infrastructure loading is anticipated.

Planning Considerations

- Aligns zoning with adjacent R-1 subdivisions to the east, eliminating the narrow strip of agricultural zoning.
- Facilitates transition between residential neighborhoods (Robertson Hills/Heights, Wyoming Classical Academy) and nearby county properties.
- Promotes orderly growth consistent with **Title 17 – Zoning Regulations**, which encourage:
  - Appropriate land use,
  - Conservation of land and building value,
  - Efficient use of municipal services.
- Rezoning initiated under Title 17 provisions allowing Council/Staff to request zoning map amendments.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval** of the rezoning request for Mountain Meadows No. 2, Lot 2A. The proposed change is consistent with adjacent development patterns, available municipal infrastructure, and the City's long-term land use planning goals.

Chairman Gudger asked the board if there were any questions.
Member Chris Volzke commented that his remarks were consistent with those he had made at the prior meeting when the initial application was introduced. He noted that the long-term plan for this area had once contemplated potential UR – Urban Residential zoning with larger lot sizes. However, he agreed with Mr. Coates that the current proposal is consistent with Title 17 and represents a good use of the land.

He further stated that the rezoning aligns with surrounding development patterns: UR zoning to the north, the new charter school directly to the south, residential neighborhoods across Robertson Road to the east, and the adjacency to the Wyoming Classical Academy.

Member Volzke concluded by expressing his support for the rezoning, stating that it is an appropriate step for the growth of the City of Mills.

Mr. Coates confirmed that the request before the Commission was limited to the rezoning action. He explained that in order for the proposed plat to move forward, the property must first be rezoned. Under the current Urban Agriculture (UA) zoning, minimum lot sizes are too large to accommodate the developer's proposed subdivision of approximately 80+ lots. Rezoning to Residential One (R-1) would allow the smaller lot sizes necessary for the subdivision design.

Chairman Gudger then asked about issues raised at the prior meeting, noting that updates had been provided to the traffic study, as well as to drainage and access information. He requested clarification on whether those items would be reviewed in a separate site plan application or as part of the current request.

Mr. Coates responded that the traffic and drainage updates have been addressed and would be formally considered as part of the final plat review process, not within the rezoning request.

Chairman Gudger asked whether the final plat would be brought before the Commission at the next meeting. Mr. Coates indicated that timing would depend on the outcome of the rezoning decision, since a public notice period would follow.

Chairman Gudger acknowledged the developer's efforts to incorporate prior Commission comments into the updated materials. He expressed that, in his opinion, the application should not be unnecessarily delayed given that the applicant had made changes in good faith in response to concerns raised at the last meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT - Public comment is a time when citizens may bring forth items of interest or concern that are not on the agenda. Please note no formal action will be taken on these items during this time. However, they may be scheduled on a future posted agenda if action is required.

Chairman Gudger opened the floor for Public Comment

Mayor Juarez expressed appreciation to the Commission and acknowledged that the recent transition in City planning staff had created some challenges. She explained that the previous planner had not followed the correct procedural order, which required the City to "catch up" by submitting the rezoning application at this stage.

She emphasized that the City's intent was to support the developer and correct items that had fallen out of place. In preparation, Mayor Juarez personally reviewed the recording of the prior meeting, took down the Commission's comments, and compared them with the previous planner's notes. She then met with the developer twice in recent weeks to work through concerns.

Mayor Juarez stated that she felt confident the City, the developer, and the school had reached better solutions than what had previously been proposed. She encouraged Commission members, in their advisory role, to also engage with Council when the matter comes forward, noting that discussions could occur outside of formal meetings to avoid quorum issues.

She concluded by reiterating that she believed many of the concerns raised by both the Commission and the developer had been resolved, and that a middle ground had been achieved that satisfied all parties.

Chairman Gudger raised a procedural question, noting that the application had been tabled at a prior meeting. He asked whether the Commission would be required to formally "untable" the item before

taking action to forward it to Council, and whether that would necessitate it being placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting.

Mayor Juarez clarified that because this was a special session, the Commission could only act on the one item that had been noticed for the meeting. For proper housekeeping, the item would need to be formally untabled at a subsequent regular Planning & Zoning meeting. She also noted that, procedurally, the Planning & Zoning Commission acts in an advisory capacity. Therefore, Council can move forward with the application without delay, even if the Commission must later complete the housekeeping step of un-tabling the item at its October meeting.

Chairman Gudger confirmed that the action before the Commission that evening was simply to recommend approval or denial of the rezoning request as presented in the packet.

Mayor Juarez added that this process mirrored what would have occurred had the application been properly submitted initially, and she thanked the Commission for their time and effort in helping to resolve the matter.

Vice-Chairman Volzke made a motion to have a "due pass" approval for the rezone to R1, Member Bryson seconded the motion. Voting yea: Chairman Gudger, Vice-Chairman Volzke, Member Bryson, and Member Miramontes. Motion passes.

Member Comment: A Commissioner noted that this was the first special Planning & Zoning meeting held during their two years on the board. They requested clarification on the parameters for calling a special meeting, specifically:

What criteria or circumstances justify bringing an item forward in a special meeting versus waiting for a regular session; whether there is a consistent test or standard used to determine when a special meeting is necessary; and How the Commission can have clarity regarding which applications may be scheduled in this manner going forward.

Mayor Juarez explained that holding a special Planning & Zoning meeting is a rare occurrence under her term and not the preferred practice. She acknowledged that short notice is difficult for the public and emphasized the City's commitment to transparency.

She noted that in this case, the meeting was necessary because the prior contracted planner had not followed the traditional process, which left items incomplete. The City needed to act swiftly to correct the record and ensure the rezoning could proceed to Council so that the developer could move forward with home construction.

Mayor Juarez stressed that this was not being done to benefit a single individual but rather to advance a large subdivision project that would provide housing for the broader community.

She reiterated that special meetings will remain rare exceptions, but in certain cases may be required to resolve procedural issues in a timely manner. She added that staff may reach out to the Commission for clarification before future meetings, so that all official actions are completed properly.

Member Bryson observed that the public notice period for the special meeting felt very short. Mayor Juarez confirmed that Wyoming law requires a minimum of five (5) hours' notice for a special meeting. While this meets the legal threshold, it also limits the agenda strictly to the noticed item and prevents

other business from being added. Staff acknowledged that the short timeframe is challenging for transparency but is dictated by statute.

Member Bryson then asked about the process for advancing the rezoning ordinance at Council, specifically whether it would require multiple readings. Mr. Coates explained that ordinances typically go through the standard three-reading process. However, Wyoming statute allows a council to suspend the rules and adopt on first reading if it is a unanimous decision, though this is uncommon. The Commission was reassured that this procedural option lies solely with Council and not with the Planning & Zoning Commission, which acts in an advisory capacity.

Mayor Juarez added that while timelines are a concern for the developer, Council is expected to proceed with multiple readings in the normal process. She reiterated that this meeting was necessary only because of procedural issues left unresolved by prior staff, not to provide preferential treatment.

A Commissioner stated they appreciated the clarification, noting it was important to confirm the Commission's role was to address a procedural correction rather than grant any special favor.

Mr. Coates confirmed that a rezoning application had previously been filed but never advanced, and this had unfortunately "fallen through the cracks." The present meeting was intended to correct that and allow the project to move forward properly.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Gudger adjourned the meeting at 5:50pm.

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

NEXT MEETING - TBA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons who need accommodation in order to attend or participate in this meeting should contact City Hall at 307-234-6679 within 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to request such assistance.

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Chairman John Gudger

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City Clerk Sarah Osborn