



Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 6:00 PM

9103 E Frederick Ave.

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1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

The Planning Commission Special Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Ankney at 6:00pm. A quorum was present.

PRESENT

Commissioner Mike Ankney
Commissioner Bobbie Beese - Arrived 6:02pm
Commissioner Jay Molitor
Commissioner Bill Rickard

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Rickard, Seconded by Commissioner Molitor to approve the meeting agenda.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ankney, Commissioner Beese, Commissioner Molitor, Commissioner Rickard

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Motion to approve meeting minutes as presented or with any modifications.

Commissioner Molitor complimented Ms. Gill on her thorough minutes.

Commissioner Beese requested modification of pg.3, three paragraphs up from bottom to change from "1,1200 sq ft" to "1,200 sq ft".

Motion made by Commissioner Molitor, Seconded by Commissioner Rickard to approve the February 25, 2026 minutes with modification.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ankney, Commissioner Beese, Commissioner Molitor, Commissioner Rickard

4. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Periodic Update - Review Existing vs. Proposed Review Processes Presentation

Ms. Tainio presented the Existing vs. Proposed Review Processes Presentation.

Ms. Tainio discussed permit approval authority and appeals, explaining that local governments establish the approval authority for each type of permit in which they designate whether the application goes through an administrative review and approval process or a quasi-judicial process, which is typically led by a hearing examiner.

Commissioner Molitor requested definition on quasi-judicial.

Ms. Tainio defined quasi-judicial as acting as a judge, giving an example of: variances go before hearing examiner, the hearing examiner acts as a judge in rendering his findings, conclusions, and decisions.

Ms. Tainio discussed State legislature has been considering (has not adopted yet but has been considering) mandatory use of a hearing examiner. Ms. Tainio discussed reasoning being hearing examiners can make objective decisions reducing a city's liability and avoid ex parte communications, allowing councilors and commissioners to have open conversations with neighbors when matters are administrative/legislative.

Ms. Tainio discussed comp plan amendments (one cycle per year), and development regulation amendments (anytime) recommending aligning cycles to improve consistency. Ms. Tainio explained the categories of permit types each having a specific review process and approval authorities.

Commissioner Beese discussed the value of having the flexibility of reviewing development regulation amendments at any time vs turning away an application due to a fixed review date. The commission discussed keeping development regulation amendments where they can be done multiple times a year.

Commissioner Beese expressed concerns about using a hearing examiner, highlighting unpredictability regarding their qualifications and knowledge of local context, stressing the importance of keeping the decision-making process close to the community to ensure residents have a say in developments.

b. Periodic Update - Review Ch. 17.06, Table of Permitted Uses (3/23/26)

Ms. Tainio outlined updates to the Table of Permitted Uses that were requested at the last meeting.

Commissioner Molitor requested clarification on going from "conditions apply" to just using "CS" to then changing to "specific use regulations apply".

Ms. Tainio explained replacing confusing "C" markers with "S" (specific-use regulations) to avoid implying conditional-use permit requirements; right column now points to exact use-regulation references for clarity.

Commissioner Molitor requested clarification on permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, emergency housing and emergency shelter being permitted in C1 but not in C2, asking clarity on consistency. Ms. Tainio explained due to C2 zone being mixed use, she did not believe that was one of the uses wanted to be encourage.

Ms. Tainio discussed Neighborhood Commercial in UR2/UR3 being introduced as a conditional use permit only, to pilot the new concept, with specific regulations. Ms. Tainio discussed business would be small scale neighborhood serving businesses that serve the daily needs of nearby residents, pedestrian oriented design, footprint limited to 4,000 sq ft, no drive-throughs, hours limited to 8:00am to 9:00pm, and seasonal outdoor seating is encouraged.

Commissioner Beese expressed concerns about the feasibility of this concept withing the specific context of Millwood, particularly regarding the impact on existing business districts and character of residential neighborhoods.

Chairman Ankney expressed concerns the concept may not be sustainable, recommending pulling Neighborhood Commercial from the agenda.

The commission asked for public remark from citizen LaDonna DeMent, 10306 East Empire. Ms. DeMent commented on issues currently with speeding and traffic in neighborhoods, emphasizing she does not want a business next to where she lives, stating she could see introducing the concept in the future when resident's homes start being bought out and people start selling for commercial.

The commission discussed and came to a consensus to pull Neighborhood commercial sections to allow further refinement and future discussion.

Ms. Tainio discussed housing explaining ADUs align with state law and cannot be more restrictive than single-family standards and duplexes can be a part of mixed-use developments depending on the zone.

Ms. Tainio discussed Beekeeping being added to UR2 and UR3, noting it is allowed unless it constitutes a public nuisance; enforcement is complaint-driven through code enforcement.

Ms. Tainio discussed building heights and accessory building consistency, having to maintain consistent measurements and cross references to RCW to avoid restricting ADU conversions. Ms. Tainio explained accessory buildings (including garages) taller than 24ft at highest point are subject to building code setbacks and additional requirements, therefore accessory/garage rules were separated from ADU rules to avoid conflicts. Commissioner Beese raised concerns on potential oversized garages overshadowing smaller residential homes. Ms. Tainio discussed looking at if Millwood can have lower heights for pole buildings and stricter design standards for the commission to review.

Chairman Ankney commented on reaching the hour and a half meeting time agreement, suggesting a special meeting to get back on schedule and complete remaining chapters.

Motion made by Chairman Ankney, Seconded by Commissioner Molitor to schedule a second meeting as needed to get caught up with action items remaining.

- c. Periodic Update - Review Ch. 17.08 to 17.18, Residential Zones (3/23/26)
- d. Periodic Update - Review Ch. 17.20 to 17.36, Commercial Industrial Public Zones (3/23/26)
- e. Periodic Update - Review Ch. 17.38, General Provisions (2/19/26)
- f. Periodic Update - Review Title 17 Appendix A, Definitions (2/19/26)
- g. Periodic Update - Review Ch. 17.42, Wireless Communication Facilities (3/23/26) (added due to Table of Permitted Uses update for C-2 antennas)

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Public Remarks are an opportunity for citizens to address the Planning Commission either in-person or by submitting their remarks to remarks@millwoodwa.us. We ask that in-person speakers limit themselves to two minutes and follow the Citizen Participation Guidelines Policy as posted on the City of Millwood website www.millwoodwa.us/government#CityCouncil or available at City Hall prior to this meeting.

Mayor Beese, 3610 North Sargent, commented on the commission reviewing potentially going to an administrative hearing, giving historical context as part of the council at the time post the Magnolia decision, explaining this was brought forward to council previously and robust discussion was had. Mayor Beese emphasized there was a lot of community comments about keeping neighbors making decisions for neighbors, giving the caveat it may be brought to council and public comments might be received to provide historical context. Mayor Beese thanked the commission for all their work.

LaDonna DeMent, 10306 East Empire, commented her experiences with Beekeeping detailing most honeybees are not usually aggressive unless you are messing with their hive. Ms. DeMent provided research on beekeeping noting honeybees forage widely up to 3 miles for their honey, they may go into someone else's yard if they need water however if beekeepers provide water for hives that shouldn't be an issue.

6. CITY PLANNER REPORT

- a. City Planning Report for February 2026

Ms. Tainio presented her February 2026 planning report.

7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Beese commented on the property across from City Hall on Argonne being renovated, questioning if the project is meeting the design standards of C2.

Ms. Tainio discussed a call was received by said property, noting only repainting and refacing is being done, and if interior work is needed it would be a cleanup only. Ms. Tainio discussed if an actual remodel is done a permit would be needed through the City of Spokane Valley.

Commissioner Molitor made no comment.

Commissioner Rickard made no comment.

Chairman Ankney thanked Ms. Gill and Ms. Tainio on their hard work, thanking the public on attendance. Chairman Ankney commented on attending a committee meeting with Mayor Beese, Council Member Sander and Council Member Stravens, and provided a reminder for "Coffee with the Mayor" held on April 15, 2026, at 10:30am.

8. SET NEXT MEETING - April 29, 2026 at 6:00pm

Special Meeting April 22, 2026 at 6:00pm

Regular Meeting April 29, 2026 at 6:00pm

a. Anticipated Agenda Items:

Periodic Update -review Draft Development Regulations Updates

Ms. Tainio discussed anticipated agenda items will be the remaining action items (d. through g.) from March 31, 2026, packet. Meetings will use the same primary packet, but the April 29th agenda may include additional items as needed.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Molitor, Seconded by Commissioner Beese to adjourn the Planning Commission Special Meeting at 7:42 pm.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ankney, Commissioner Molitor, Commissioner Rickard