



PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Palmer Lake Town Hall – 28 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake, Colorado

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll Call

Meeting Called to order at 5:00pm.

Present: Bill Fisher, Matt Stephen, Charlie Ihlenfeld, Richard Kuehster

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes from November 19, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes for the November 19, 2025 Meeting. (Kuehster, Stephen) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Minutes from December 3, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes for the December 3, 2025 meeting. (Fisher, Kuehster) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Business Items

Motion to amend the agenda to have item eight to be heard first. (Ihlenfeld, Fisher) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Sign Permit Application

The Planning Commission recommended approving a new sign for the business complex, as it meets all size and height requirements. The approval is specifically tied to a condition that town staff must first verify the sign is placed at least five feet back from the property line to ensure it doesn't block the line of vision near the driveway. The applicant agreed to stake out the proposed spot this week so that the Town Administrator and staff can confirm the location is safe and follows local rules before installation begins.

Motion to recommend approval with verification that the sign meets the five foot setback requirement and all other requirements. (Fisher, Ihlenfeld) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion/Update Town of Palmer Lake Updated Zoning Map

The Planning Commission reviewed an updated zoning map for the Town of Palmer Lake, prepared by GMS and CMI. Presented for informational purposes only, the map required no official action.

Town Staff indicated that this map would be presented to the Board of Trustees during the April regular meeting.

Public Comment

Amy Hudson – Noted that many historic Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) lack proper county filings and documentation. She explained that the updated map transitions these areas to the current "PD" (Planned Development) standard, and that the Planning Commission will need to designate appropriate land-use zones as these properties are reviewed individually in the future.

Shana Ball – Discussed the Three-Mile Plan, clarifying that while entities may seek exclusion from the Master Plan, state statute requires the town to maintain a three-mile planning boundary around its entire border. She noted that the town must still designate potential zoning for these areas to comply with land-use laws, even if specific property owners opt out of future-use considerations.

Susan Miner – Commented on the Elephant Rock property, noting it was bypassed during the Master Plan process to be handled separately. She explained that the property currently lacks formal zoning because the board focused on specific site details rather than broad designations. She recommended the Planning Commission revisit this and other large properties to correct these historical zoning gaps.

Reid Wiecks – Noted that the Elephant Rock park project is stalled pending formal PD zoning and identified several map errors. Specifically, he pointed out that Columbine Park is not designated as a park, and town-owned land near the Glen trailhead and the Star Lighting area is incorrectly marked as residential. He also noted that Old Carriage Road was omitted from the draft and urged the Commission to correct these discrepancies to protect public lands.

5. Discussion/Update on ADU's in Palmer Lake

The Planning Commission discussed implementing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), noting that while state law is in effect, legal counsel is required to resolve local code contradictions. Key issues include utility requirements, where state law allows shared connections despite town rules requiring separate taps, as well as sewer capacity and the prohibition of short-term rentals in ADUs. The Commission emphasized that the zoning code must remain a flexible living document to address these infrastructure and regulatory gaps once legal guidance is available.

6. Discussion/Update on Public Street and Paper Platted ROW

The Planning Commission discussed rights-of-way, emphasizing that developers must improve or build the road infrastructure necessary to access their properties. Members noted that many buyers discover platted roads are non-existent or abandoned, and argued these should be developed for access rather than vacated. While the town previously reviewed right-of-way vacations, it remains unclear how the new code handles these requests since none have been filed in the last eight months.

7. Discussion/Update on Illumination Point

The Planning Commission received an update on the Illumination Point project, noting that while some progress has been made with fencing and landscaping, the site remains out of compliance. The project has outlived its special use permit and faces ongoing drainage and MS4 issues. Once a new town attorney is hired, the town intends to issue formal notices of violation to the involved property owners to enforce the requirements outlined in recent staff memos.

8. Discussion/Review and Possible Recommendation – Planning Commission Applications

Motion to recommend Shana Ball for acceptance to the Planning Commission. (Fisher, Kuehster) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to recommend Kent Hudson for acceptance to the Planning Commission. (Fisher, Kuehster) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to recommend Susan Miner for acceptance to the Planning Commission. (Ihlenfeld, Stephen) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Discussion/Update on Application for Replat/Resubdivision of Eco Spa

The Planning Commission reviewed the Eco Spa replat and subdivision, noting that MS4 permitting is underway. While the property has historically faced leak and infrastructure issues, staff are currently waiting for Prism to address questions on their preliminary plan. Once these responses are finalized, the comprehensive property plan will move forward.

10. Discussion/Update on Rezoning & Re-Subivision of Highbrook

The Highbrook subdivision is moving forward now that the new town attorney, Wyatt Hamilton, is reviewing easements related to water tank access and town property. Although the Planning Commission previously recommended approval, the project was delayed pending legal counsel and the completion of a specific condition that is now fulfilled. The final presentation to the Board of Trustees will include a required geohazard study, which is a standard necessity for this hillside development.

11. Discussion/Update Community Institute Matters - Planning Consultants

The Town is initiating an RFP process to secure a new planning consultant following the resignation of Community Matters Institute (CMI). This transition occurs as the Board of Trustees officially approved the contract for the new town attorney this afternoon, providing the necessary legal framework to move forward with the search and other pending municipal projects.

Public Comment - *This time is reserved for the public to speak to items not on the agenda.*

Next Meeting and Future Items

- Commissioner Stephen – Requested an update on the enforcement on HACO as a future agenda item.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. (Kuehster, Stephens) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously. 6:38PM

DRAFT