



CITY OF ALBANY
Planning Commission

MINUTES

August 18, 2025

Council Chambers – 5:15 p.m.

Approved: September 15, 2025

Call to Order

5:15 p.m.

Chair JoAnn Miller called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Stacey Bartholomew, Tami Cockeram, Kenny Larson, Ron Green, Ted Bunch Jr., Paul Spilsbury, Skylar Bailey

Commissioners Absent: Karen Cardosa, JoAnn Miller (both excused)

Approval of the Minutes

5:16 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Larson moved to approve the minutes from the May 19, 2025, Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Public Comment

None.

Scheduled Business

- Public Hearing: Planning File PD-01-25 et all Type III - Quasi-Judicial Process

Applications for a planned development to construct 196 senior dwelling units on one lot with common indoor and outdoor recreational spaces at 5353 Columbus Street. Files PD-01-25; RL-04-25; SP-05-25; NR-01-25 and FP-01-25.

A concurrent application package for a plan development of an unassigned property as a senior housing community consisting of 98 duplex units with communal indoor and outdoor open space with a private road system. The proposal includes the consolidation of two properties into a 147.011-acre parcel. A Site Plan Review for the felling of 21 trees and a Natural Resource Review for the addition of impervious area and the removal of vegetation within the riparian corridor as well as grading and paving of land within the Special Flood Hazard Area.

Vice chair Bartholomew called the public hearing to order at 5:19 p.m.

Commission Declarations

No members declared a conflict of interest.

No members reported ex-parte contact. None reported a site visit.

No members abstained from participating in the proceeding.

There were no challenges to the participation of any commissioners or the right to determine this matter.

Reading of Hearing Procedures

Current Planning Manager, David Martineau, read the procedures.

Staff Report

5:21 p.m.

Project Planner, Jennifer Cepello presented the staff report sharing slides*.

Applicant Testimony

5:24 p.m.

Chief Executive Officer of Mennonite Village, Diane Hood, shared a description of the campus and community as a continuing care retirement community including independent living, skilled nursing and memory care support serving 560 residents. The objective is to add additional units. They currently have 125 people on their waiting list and 140 that have expressed interest in this project specifically. An approval enables them to continue to serve their mission in an increasingly senior population. She described the planned cottages and additional outdoor amenities and community center in future phases. She welcomed public testimony and comments.

Public Testimony

5:29 p.m.

Resident of Mennonite Village, Judy Li, testified against the application stating that she had submitted photos/map that she will be referring to. She began by sharing information on the small wetland in the SE corner of the proposed project. That wetland was part of a submission by the Mennonite Village for wetland delineation to the ODSL done in 2020, but the smaller adjacent area was left out of the delineation but clearly is subject to annual flooding. Because the landscape has changed since the 2020 delineation, she requested that the seasonal wetland be added to the current request for delineation which could redefine the Riparian Corridor and expand beyond the plan development maps.

Mennonite Village resident, Linda Kirk-Fox, asked that the Commission deny the tree removal permit for the trees in the riparian corridor. She asks for a condition that the applicant involves the Village residents in planning paths and trail connections for the project phases, concurrent with reviews by Parks & Recreation and Public Works before final submission.

Mennonite Village resident, Lois Malango, presented a written statement for the record*. She was concerned about safety as far as egress from the Village in the event of an emergency.

Mennonite Village resident, Peggy Yoder, wasn't in opposition to the development but requested that the Commission leave the record open to include more opportunity for the independent living Village residents to be involved and concerns addressed, and delay making a decision until their concerns are heard and addressed.

Applicant Rebuttal

5:46 p.m.

Steve Holtberg, Attorney representing Mennonite Village asked for a five-minute recess for them to discuss the rebuttal and possible continuance of the hearing.

Vice chair Bartholomew recessed meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 5:54 p.m.

Holtberg requested a continuance noting residents' concerns regarding placement of the trail and removal of the trees as well as the status of potential wetlands, so that the applicant can appropriately respond prior to the Commission decision. They offered another informal meeting at the Village on September 8, 2025, to ensure that residents have an opportunity to ask questions and express their concerns. He asked for any of the Commission's questions ahead of the next meeting so they can adequately prepare their answers.

Commission Questions

Commissioner Larson appreciated their willingness to be proactive in requesting the continuance and engagement with the residents. His main concerns are with that wetland and any tree removal is done in accordance with rule.

Commissioner Bunch, Jr. asked if there has been any direct communication between the applicant and the Department of State Lands (DSL). Holtberg reported that there hasn't been any direct communication in respect to what had been identified with DSL's prior delineation of the site. But he will put those concerns into consideration as part of due diligence.

Commissioner Spilsbury was confused about the Oregon Department of Forestry permit regarding felling. Cepello explained that the ODF permit was only required if selling the timber commercially and must have permits in place prior to the felling if the timber is sold.

Commissioner Cockeram asked whether there was any consideration in regard to the path and trees, possibly moving the path so trees don't have to be cut down.

Civil Engineer, Dan Watson, with K & D Engineering, stepped up to answer with respect to the path, the proposal has the pathway following the farm road and to get from the 5-foot path to the farm road requires going through the trees. Holtberg added that the location of the path is also dictated by City Planning documents rather than personal preferences and if there is no requirement to put a path there, they would be happy with that.

Commissioner Bailey shared it was refreshing and meaningful that the applicants are willing to address the concerns of the residents by asking for a continuance.

Commissioner Green expressed that a 14-foot travel lane for the roads in the plan seemed excessive and may encourage faster speeds. Watson responded that they are following the same typical section for the road as has been used for the Village.

Motion: Commissioner Bunch Jr. motioned to continue PD-01-25 et al public hearing to September 29, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. The record will be left open. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Business from the Commission

6:10 p.m.

Commissioner Cockeram shared that she had a conversation with a community member about the Housing Implementation Plan and found it interesting and somewhat puzzling that they commented that the city was finally building housing, as they seemed unaware that the city itself does not build housing.

Commissioner Bartholomew shared that she met the new city counselor and was pleased to find that the Planning Commission's viewpoints were in alignment with the Council.

Staff Updates

6:11 p.m.

David Martineau briefly discussed the upcoming Planning Commission meeting land use cases.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for September 15, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Vice-Chair Bartholomew adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

David Martineau
Current Planning Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@albanyoregon.gov.*