



**MINUTES OF THE SPRINGDALE PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING ON  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025, AT 5:00 PM  
AT THE CANYON COMMUNITY CENTER,  
126 LION BOULEVARD, SPRINGDALE, UT 84767**

**The meeting convened at 05:00 PM.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Tom Kenaston, Commissioners Terry Kruschke, Paul Zimmerman, Kashif Bhatti, and Matt Fink from Zion National Park.

**EXCUSED:** Jennifer McCulloch, Rich Swanson, and Mellisa LaBorde.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Community Development Tom Dansie, Principal Planner Niall Connolly, and Deputy Town Clerk Robin Romero, recording. See the attached sheet for attendees.

Mr. Kenaston designated Kashif Bhatti as a voting member in Ms. McCulloch's absence.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion made by Terry Kruschke to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Paul Zimmerman.**

**Kenaston: Aye**

**Kruschke: Aye**

**Zimmerman: Aye**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**General Announcements:**

There were no general announcements.

**Oath of Office - New Commissioner Kashif Bhatti:**

Deputy Town Clerk Robin Romero administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Bhatti.

**Declaration of Conflicts of Interest:**

There were no declared conflicts of interest.

**A. Discussion / Non-Action items**

1. Discussion on Potentially Removing the Restriction on Parking Spaces Being Located in the Special Flood Hazard Area and also Protecting the River Corridor from the Potential Negative Impacts of Parking Lots. Staff Contact: Niall Connolly

**Staff Presentation:**

Mr. Connolly explained that the agenda item continued the discussion about parking in the floodplain. At the previous work meeting, the Commission had instructed staff to draft ordinance language addressing concerns about parking in the Riparian Zone. The draft language removed the restriction on parking spaces in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) for residential properties, but retained it for commercial properties. For residential properties, a maximum of three spaces per property was allowed within the SFHA. The draft also required parking spaces in the SFHA to incorporate low-impact design features,

drainage techniques that mimic natural drainage rather than relying on pipes or concrete culverts. It provided a menu of low-impact design options for developers to choose the most suitable for their site.

Mr. Connolly noted that the staff report referenced a broader project that would assess the river corridor as a whole. Later in the meeting, the Commission planned to discuss prioritization for that project, and staff recommended forming a subcommittee as the first step.

#### **Commission Questions and Discussion:**

Mr. Kenaston inquired about the potential cost of implementing low-impact strategies and whether it would result in a significant increase.

- Mr. Connolly replied that he had no specific figures but believed many techniques, such as swales requiring minor earthwork and native vegetation, could be implemented at low cost. Costs would vary depending on the chosen method, and he agreed this warranted further consideration.
- Mr. Dansie added that these features, being nature-based, were generally inexpensive. However, things like permeable paving would be more costly than traditional asphalt or concrete, whereas bioswales or natural retention ponds would be low-cost options. Costs would depend on the chosen measure.

Mr. Kenaston noted that soil conditions, such as high clay content, might necessitate excavation and fill to make permeable pavers effective.

- Mr. Connolly agreed, noting that permeable paving worked well in certain circumstances but not where native soils lacked permeability or where water tables were high. The best solution would depend on the specific site.

Mr. Kenaston asked whether engineering certification should be required to ensure drainage strategies met standards, such as accommodating a 100-year flood event.

- Mr. Connolly explained that commercial projects already required drainage strategies as part of the building permit process, designed to accommodate specific storm volumes. When drafting the ordinance, he had focused on water quality rather than volumetric storage, but acknowledged that other approaches could be considered.
- Mr. Dansie confirmed that existing construction standards required stormwater treatment for specific volumes. The change in the ordinance would simply allow low-impact design to meet these requirements, rather than traditional systems. No modification to the standards themselves was necessary.

Mr. Kruschke raised concerns about overlay zones, such as workforce housing, where higher density could necessitate more than three parking spaces. He suggested amending the draft to allow the greater of three spaces or the minimum required for the overlay zone, with individual review during the overlay approval process.

The group discussed whether additional spaces in overlay zones should trigger stricter mitigation standards. Mr. Zimmerman cautioned against equating higher-density residential parking with commercial parking, while Mr. Kruschke emphasized the need to handle overlay zones carefully without defaulting to commercial standards.

The Commission debated how garage parking should be factored into the parking space count, ultimately agreeing that it should be counted toward the maximum. They also discussed whether additional parking required by overlay zones should be located outside the SFHA, and considered requiring additional mitigation.

Mr. Kruschke suggested that limiting extra parking to areas outside the SFHA could be an acceptable approach, though he acknowledged that some properties entirely within the SFHA would be restricted.

- Mr. Connolly clarified that the draft limited three spaces within the SFHA, not on the entire property.

The group discussed the visual and hydrological impacts of elevating parking spaces above the base flood elevation. Mr. Kruschke noted the trade-off between minimizing flood-related pollution and preserving viewsheds. Mr. Kenaston expressed concern that elevated parking in commercial areas could impact flood dynamics.

- Mr. Connolly pointed out that elevating parking by several feet would create significant visual and physical impacts in areas near the river.

They debated whether to apply setback requirements from the floodway, concluding that it was best to address this comprehensively as part of the broader Virgin River Management project, including buildings and parking. They noted the need to involve experts, such as those from Zion National Park, for recommendations.

The group also discussed the existing code's allowance for subfloor parking in flood-prone areas. Mr. Kruschke recommended striking the language allowing parking beneath the lowest floor, as it conflicted with the Commission's goal of preventing vehicle-related pollution during floods.

Mr. Zimmerman pointed out that this change would need to be carefully worded to avoid unintended consequences.

Mr. Connolly agreed to review the chapter and propose language to achieve the intent without creating inconsistencies.

Regarding recreational vehicles, Mr. Kruschke suggested clarifying that RVs parked under the permitted conditions must occupy a legal parking space, rather than being parked anywhere on the property. However, the Commission ultimately decided not to pursue additional RV regulations at this time.

In summary, the Commission agreed to:

- Retain the maximum of three parking spaces in the SFHA, including garage spaces in the count.
  - Remove allowance for parking under the lowest floor in flood-prone areas.
  - Address other concerns, including setbacks and overlay zone impacts, as part of the Virgin River Management project.
2. Review and Possible Reprioritization of Future Planning Commission Work Meeting Agenda Items. Staff Contact: Thomas Dansie.

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Mr. Dansie explained that at the beginning of each year, the Commission conducted an exercise to prioritize work meeting items for the upcoming year. This process helped outline what they aimed to accomplish, identify top priorities, and ensure work meetings remained efficient and focused on the most pressing issues. He noted that the Commission had been highly efficient and effective during the first five months of the year, having accomplished fantastic work.

The Commission had worked through most of the high-priority items identified at the start of the year. Additionally, they had identified new items that were not on their radar in January. Staff wanted to revisit the priority list to confirm that existing priorities still aligned with current needs and to consider incorporating these additional items. Mr. Dansie referenced the staff report, which reproduced the January list where items were categorized as priority one, two, three, or low priority. Nearly all priority one items had been accomplished, and the updated table reflected that progress. He invited the Commission to discuss which priority two items they wished to begin next, whether to elevate any priority three items, or to prioritize new topics that had emerged. This would allow staff to program future work meeting agendas efficiently. He offered to provide additional clarification or status updates beyond what was in the staff report or simply enable the Commission to begin its discussion.

#### **Commission Questions and Discussion:**

Mr. Kruschke inquired about the Wildland Urban Interface Wildfire Protection item, asking whether it was a result of new state legislation.

- Mr. Dansie explained that the Wildland Urban Interface standards had existed for a long time. The new element was that the state now required communities in wildfire-prone areas to adopt and enforce these standards.

Mr. Kruschke noted that a large portion of Springdale was likely within this zone.

- Mr. Dansie confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Kruschke asked if a specific timeline had been established.

- Mr. Dansie stated that the new state law required the local fire district, in this case, the Hurricane Valley Fire Protection District, to conduct an assessment and determine which communities were fire-prone. Once identified, those communities would be required to adopt the standards. While the timeline was unclear, he anticipated this would happen sooner rather than later.

Mr. Zimmerman shared his positive experience working with the Hurricane Valley Fire Protection District, noting their professionalism and willingness to assist. He suggested the Commission engage with them as a helpful starting point.

Mr. Kruschke and the Commission agreed to move this item to the top of the priority list.

The Commission then discussed priority two items. Regarding parking ordinance revisions, Mr. Kenaston noted that the consultant's study appeared nearly complete and suggested that reviewing the consultant's recommendations should be a top priority. Mr. Dansie added that Mayor Bruno had requested that this item be elevated on the priority list.

Mr. Kenaston also highlighted the need for enhanced buffering between commercial and residential properties, citing recent developments where the town lacked sufficient tools to mitigate impacts between adjacent uses.

Mr. Zimmerman expressed concern that existing agreements limited what could be required in the short term, though he agreed that adopting new regulations would benefit future development.

Mr. Kruschke reflected on the Virgin River Management Plan, debating whether it warranted priority one status given its scope. He noted that, although large, it could be the right time for the current Commission to address it. He suggested keeping the buffering item as the first priority two if the Virgin River plan was elevated.

Mr. Kenaston noted that the existing plan could be strengthened with input from Zion National Park staff.

Mr. Dansie clarified that the plan served as a guiding document without regulatory authority. This work item was intended to develop ordinances to implement the plan's recommendations.

Mr. Zimmerman raised concerns about street performers increasingly impacting local businesses. He suggested that the town explore ordinances, as other cities had done, to strike a balance between supporting performers and protecting businesses and public safety. The Commission agreed to add this to the priority list, likely as a priority two or three item.

Mr. Kruschke mentioned the Foothill Residential and Valley Residential size and height bonus. The Commission agreed to leave this as a priority two item for future review, particularly in response to the Town Council's concerns about the size of the bonus.

Mr. Kenaston highlighted the issue of nonconforming properties in the Central Commercial Zone, suggesting that the town explore ways to incentivize redevelopment without requiring full compliance, which often discouraged investment. The Commission agreed this was a complex but worthwhile topic and listed it as a priority two.

The Commission discussed balancing large, complex priorities with smaller, achievable ones. They considered whether to combine related items, such as retaining wall standards and deep excavations, but decided to keep them separate for now.

Mr. Zimmerman suggested low-impact parking design could merit its own priority, but agreed with Mr. Dansie that this could be addressed under the parking ordinance or as part of the Virgin River Management Plan implementation.

Mr. Dansie reviewed the updated priorities discussed:

Priority One:

- Wildland Urban Interface
- Parking Ordinance
- Virgin River Management Plan Implementation
- Parking in the Flood Hazard Area

Priority Two:

- Foothill/Valley Residential Height and Size Bonus
- Deep Excavations
- Nonconforming Buildings
- Enhanced Buffering between Residential and Commercial

Priority Three:

- Water Conservation Strategies
- Retaining Walls
- Other newly listed items

He noted that staff would bring a revised list to the next meeting reflecting these changes.

## **B. Adjourn**

**Motion made by Terry Kruschke to Adjourn at 06:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by Paul Zimmerman.**

**Kenaston: Aye**

**Kruschke: Aye**

**Zimmerman: Aye**

**Bhatti: Aye**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

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Robin Romero, Deputy Town Clerk

**APPROVAL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

A recording of the public meeting is available on the Town's YouTube Channel at [youtube.com/@SpringdaleTownPublicMeetings](https://www.youtube.com/@SpringdaleTownPublicMeetings). For more information, please call 435-772-3434 or email [springdale@springdale.utah.gov](mailto:springdale@springdale.utah.gov).

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