

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
FRUIT HEIGHTS CITY
910 South Mountain Road
April 29, 2025

WELCOME: Chairman, Kevin Paulsen called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

PLEDGE & OPENING CEREMONY: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Heidi Murdock with Chairman, Kevin Paulsen offering a word of prayer.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Kevin Paulsen Commissioners, Shelley Bodily, Justin Wright and Heidi Murdock. Commissioner Clark Moss was excused. Council Member Mark Cottrell

CITY STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Darren Frandsen, City Planner Jeff Oyler, Public Works Director Layne Leonard, and Deputy Recorder Hailee Ballingham.

VISITORS: None

PRESENTATION: None

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

January 28, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Heidi Murdock made a motion to approve January 28, 2025 Minutes. With the recommended change Commissioner Shelley Bodily seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission (0:04).

PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

5.1 Discussion on R-1-3 Zoning

At the previous meeting, the Planning Commissioners discussed identifying parts of the city that could be rezoned for higher density housing, specifically revisiting the R-1-3 zone. The City Planner has since worked on an ordinance with updates to the R-1-3 zone. Previously, R-1-3 allowed up to 25 units per acre with 8,000 square foot lots, which caused concern. The new proposal sets 4,000 square feet as a reference lot size. Under the new proposal base density would be capped at 7 units per acre.

The Commissioners continued their discussion on revising the R-1-3 zoning ordinance to accommodate higher residential density while addressing concerns raised at previous meetings. **Lot Size & Density:** The updated R-1-3 proposal introduces a base lot size of 4,000 square feet, with a maximum base density of 7 units per acre. A density bonus (e.g., through a Planned Unit Development) could raise this to 9 units per acre. While 4,000 sq ft lots could theoretically yield 10–11 units per acre, the capped density limits would ensure larger average lot sizes in practice. **Lot Dimensions:** Average lot width is proposed at 50 feet, with a minimum of 45 feet. The typical building pad would be about 34 ft wide by 45 ft deep after setbacks, allowing for homes around 1,500 square feet. **Visual Example:** The Planned Commissioner reviewed a project in Farmington with similar dimensions. Homes there ranged from 1,300–1,500 sq ft and sat on 4,000 sq ft lots. Each home had 8 ft side yard setbacks, resulting in 16 ft spacing between structures. Though legal, the tight spacing was visually noticeable. **Street Layout and Parking:**

The project featured narrow streets with small front yards and 20 ft driveways—enough for standard passenger cars but not larger vehicles like trucks or SUVs. Rolled curbs allowed some on-street parking, but when both sides of the street were occupied, only one-way traffic was possible. This design limits accessibility and may pose concerns for emergency or service vehicles. The dialogue on updating the city's R-1-3 zoning ordinance to allow for moderate residential density increases while maintaining community character and responding to affordability concerns. The Need for Higher Density the city is evaluating where it can reasonably allow higher-density housing to meet future demand, accommodate younger families, and fulfill commitments made in its affordable housing plan. Its balancing Act: While higher density is often unpopular with residents, the Planning Commissioners acknowledged the critical housing shortage, especially for first-time buyers in Davis County—and stressed the importance of offering a variety of housing types. Commissioner Bodily expressed openness to allowing true multifamily zones—perhaps not as dense as developments like Orchard Farms (15+ units/acre), but still more flexible. The Planning Commissioners talked about specific areas like the triangle near Cherry Heights or the area surrounding the mobile home park were identified as potential candidates for higher density or multifamily development. **General Plan Education:** A need was highlighted to better educate residents about projected growth trends in Utah and how those will influence housing needs over the next 20–30 years. Rezoning areas for higher density doesn't force development—it simply provides the legal framework. Property owners retain full discretion over whether to sell or develop.

Commissioner Wright asked about parallel approach to new high-density development: allowing infill housing on existing large residential lots. This would provide affordable housing options while preserving neighborhood character and reducing opposition from residents. **New Construction vs. Infill:** The revised R-1-3 ordinance focuses on new construction developments, often commercial in scale. He suggested that allowing homeowners to add additional units to their own lots—such as accessory dwellings or small homes—might be more palatable to the community and more practical in certain neighborhoods. Many parts of the city, especially in areas zoned R-1-12 or larger, have half-acre or bigger lots. These could accommodate one or more additional housing units without requiring major new infrastructure or altering neighborhood streets. This approach would require separate ordinance adjustments to address setbacks, access (ingress/egress), fire code compliance, and utility considerations. Commissioner Wright acknowledged it may be complex, but potentially more effective and less controversial than larger-scale projects Commissioner Bodily talked about that “density” isn't just about unit count—it's about form, scale, and livability. She distinguished between: High-rise apartments with no green space (unpopular) Townhomes or small stacked flats with better layout and open space (more acceptable). Strong concern that denser developments often lack greenery, leading to heat island effects and reduced quality of life. A more structured solution: require denser developments to be part of a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which mandates 40% open space, allowing clustering of units while protecting greenery and setbacks. The city staff talked about Sewer Capacity and Utility Constraints.

A major constraint discussed was the *Central Davis* Sewer District capacity limits, particularly in the central and northern parts of the city. The district reportedly told the city that more than 3 units/acre in some areas would exceed system limits. This raises questions about how much new density the city can realistically approve without major utility upgrades. The Planning Commissioner questioned whether this was a firm limit or a negotiating stance but agreed it must be clarified before proceeding with zoning changes.

City Planner Oyler will draft a revised ordinance with a “twist” — one that narrows development possibilities while still allowing for thoughtful, compact housing. He will present this revised draft to the Planning Commission for further review and discussion. At a later date.

CALENDAR: May 27, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Justin Wright made a motion to Adjourn. Commissioner Shelley Bodily Seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 8:05 p.m.

Not approved until signed.

/s/ Hailee Ballingham _____

Hailee Ballingham, City Deputy Recorder

Date approved by City Planning Commission: **August 26, 2025**