



**MINUTES OF THE SPRINGDALE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING ON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 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, Rich Swanson, Kashif Bhatti, and Matt Fink from Zion National Park.

EXCUSED: Paul Zimmerman, Jennifer McCulloch, and Mellisa LaBorde.

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

Mr. Kenaston designated Kashif Bhatti as a voting member in the absence of the excused Commissioners.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion made by Terry Kruschke to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Rich Swanson.

Vote on Motion:

Kenaston: Aye

Kruschke: Aye

Bhatti: Aye

Swanson: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

General Announcements:

Mr. Connolly announced that the town will host an Emergency Preparedness Fair on Thursday, September 18, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The event will be held on the former ballfield behind the Canyon Community Center and will feature booths from emergency management professionals and others, along with a couple of food trucks. There is a limited number of food vouchers for attendees. He noted that this will be a valuable opportunity for residents to learn more about emergency preparedness.

He further announced that on Wednesday, September 24, at 9:00 a.m., the Community Development Department will host a "Two Cents" event. These sessions offer community members the opportunity to meet with staff and share their input on planning and zoning matters. The September 24 event will take the form of a walking tour beginning at Town Hall, with stops at the new town plaza, the irrigation ditch, the jail, the Pioneer Cemetery, and other historic sites. Community members are encouraged to participate and share their perspectives.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest: There were no declared conflicts of interest.

A. Action Items

1. **Public Hearing:** Ordinance Revisions to Chapter 10-24 of the Town Code to Adjust the Town's Regulation of Portable Signs, Including A Frame Signs. Staff Contact: Niall Connolly

Staff Presentation:

Mr. Connolly explained that over the past several months, the Commission has been working on revising ordinance language to update the regulations for portable or A-frame signs. The proposed revisions would allow A-frame and portable signs on commercial properties, where they are currently prohibited. The draft language includes the following provisions:

- One portable sign per property is allowed, with additional signs permitted for multiple businesses on the same property, provided each business has at least 1,000 square feet of floor area.
- Signs must use black, white, or other colors from the approved signage palette.
- Frames must be constructed of wood or metal.
- Signs may not be placed in the right-of-way or obstruct pedestrian flow, entries, or exits.
- Inflatables may not be attached to portable signs.

The Commission requested that a public hearing be scheduled on the proposed ordinance revision, after which a recommendation will be forwarded to the Town Council.

Questions from the Commission:

Mr. Kenaston asked whether A-frame signs could be used for campaign purposes.

- Mr. Connolly responded that sign content was not regulated, as that is protected under the First Amendment, and therefore, theoretically, that would be allowed.

Questions from the Public: There were no questions from the public.

Motion made by Terry Kruschke to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Rich Swanson.

Vote on Motion:

Kenaston: Aye

Kruschke: Aye

Bhatti: Aye

Swanson: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Stan Smith, owner of the Bumbleberry, began by thanking the Planning Commission, acknowledging that serving on the Commission can often feel like a thankless job. He said he had followed the work on the sign ordinance closely and was pleased to see it under consideration. Overall, he was supportive of the proposed changes and suggested some additional points for consideration. Ultimately, he stated that he wholeheartedly supported allowing A-frame signs for businesses.

He explained that the purpose of sign regulations should be to provide clear business identification, allow businesses to express their character through signage, and maintain the town's unique sense of place, while also preserving harmony, protecting property values, and supporting a healthy business environment. He believed this ordinance achieved those goals.

Mr. Smith noted that an earlier draft had limited each property to a single sign, which he felt was unfair. His property, for example, is 15 acres with four businesses, yet it would have been limited to one sign, while a much smaller property would have received the same allowance. He said the revised approach was much fairer and thanked the Commission for making that adjustment, emphasizing that he pays a business license for each of his businesses and should be entitled to equal rights.

He stressed one of his long-standing beliefs: if the town adopts ordinances, the town itself should also be required to follow them. He pointed out that the town had used A-frame signs in the past, which had frustrated him because, if the town found them necessary, businesses should be allowed to use them as well. He felt the proposed ordinance would finally level the playing field.

Mr. Smith raised a few concerns about materials. He questioned the exclusion of plastic signs, noting that wood deteriorates quickly in the sun and weather, while metal can become dangerously hot to the touch. Plastic, while sometimes criticized, is lightweight, easier to store, and not subject to the same weathering problems. He said plastic signs would likely need to be weighted down, but overall, he preferred them to wood or metal signs.

He suggested adding a requirement that A-frame signs only be displayed during business hours to reduce clutter when businesses are closed. He pointed out, however, that wood and metal signs are heavy and difficult to move, making plastic a more practical option if the ordinance required daily removal.

Additionally, he recommended that the ordinance include a requirement that signs be maintained in good condition. He cautioned that without such a standard, some businesses might allow their signs to fade, deteriorate, or appear unkempt, which would not reflect well on the town.

Mr. Smith also spoke about his Bumbleberry Theater, which has a grandfathered marquee sign. Despite its visibility, many guests and townspeople overlook it and instead ask why he doesn't have an A-frame sign to advertise shows. He believed that having an A-frame sign out front would be far more effective in drawing attention to events, especially for visitors walking through town.

He closed by reiterating his support for the ordinance, encouraging the Commission to recommend it to the Town Council, and thanking them again for the effort they had put into developing it.

Motion made by Terry Kruschke to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Rich Swanson.

Vote on Motion:

Kenaston: Aye

Kruschke: Aye

Bhatti: Aye

Swanson: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Commission Deliberation:

Mr. Swanson questioned whether the ordinance should reference business hours or simply prohibit signs from remaining out overnight, noting that some businesses operated 24 hours. He felt a "no overnight" rule would remove ambiguity.

Mr. Kenaston agreed, observing that businesses without set hours might otherwise leave signs out continuously. He asked whether dual criteria might be needed.

Mr. Kruschke preferred a simpler approach and suggested defining "overnight" as a specific timeframe, such as 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. He also asked whether existing ordinance language on sign maintenance would apply to these signs.

Mr. Connolly explained that Section 10-24-2, Prohibited Signs, already prohibits dilapidated signs and those not in compliance with adequate safety and maintenance standards, as well as those that are dangerous or defective. Additional language could be added to require portable signs to remain in good repair.

Mr. Bhatti supported requiring signs to be placed each morning and removed at closing. Mr. Connolly noted that sign illumination rules required lights to be turned off one hour after sunset or closing, whichever came later, and suggested similar language could apply to portable signs.

Mr. Kenaston asked about nighttime enforcement. Mr. Connolly said it could occur if problems arose, though code enforcement staff were not normally active at night.

Mr. Kenaston also asked whether plastic signs would need to be weighed down. Mr. Kruschke said some plastic signs had bases that could be filled with water, which was acceptable. Mr. Swanson clarified that the wood/metal requirement applied to frames, not bases or faces. Mr. Kruschke confirmed this and noted that

faces could be chalkboards or other materials. Mr. Kenaston observed that this would allow a variety of sign faces, including plastic or whiteboards.

Mr. Kruschke suggested allowing plastic if it complied with the town's color palette to avoid undesirable colors.

Mr. Kenaston emphasized that easing restrictions supported property rights and business partnerships. He cautioned against overly detailed regulations that could create enforcement problems, particularly with "temporary" use standards. He noted the ordinance could always be revisited if problems arose. Allowing signs, he added, could attract more customers to the central commercial, boosting business activity and tax revenue.

Mr. Kruschke summarized three key issues: allowing plastic, setting overnight standards, and requiring good repair.

Mr. Swanson suggested adding a requirement for sturdy construction to prevent flimsy signs and asked about banner-style signs with a single pole. The Commission agreed that those were not permitted.

Mr. Kenaston noted Ms. McCulloch's opposition to plastic, based on her experience with poorly maintained signs, but suggested that a maintenance standard could address that issue. Mr. Kruschke replied that "good repair" was a clear and sufficient term.

The Commission supported proceeding with the ordinance. Mr. Connolly said he would revise the draft based on their recommendations and prepare it for the Town Council's consideration.

Motion made by Terry Kruschke that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed changes to Chapter 10-24 of the Springdale Town Code regarding A Frames and other portable signs, as discussed in the Planning Commission meeting on September 17, 2025. This motion is based on the following findings:

- 1. The proposed changes to Chapter 10-24 balance the needs of a healthy business environment with the need for public safety and retaining the aesthetic qualities of Springdale's village character, natural beauty, and in the park feel.**

The motion includes the following conditions:

- 1. Add an allowance for plastic signs as long as they meet the color requirements.**
- 2. Signs must be put away overnight, as defined by some amount of time after sunset (as recited by the staff) or a business closing, and an amount of time before sunrise.**
- 3. The signs are to be maintained in good repair and sturdy condition.**

Second by Rich Swanson.

Discussion of the motion: There was no additional discussion.

Vote on Motion:

Kenaston: Aye

Kruschke: Aye

Bhatti: Aye

Swanson: Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Discussion / Non-Action Item

- Discussion Following Direction from the Town Council to Revise Chapter 10-21 of the Town Code, Relating to the Repair and Refurbishment of Noncomplying Buildings. Staff Contact: Niall Connolly

Staff Presentation:

Mr. Connolly explained that this item came at the direction of the Town Council following their September regular meeting. The Council had been asked to interpret sections of the code relating to non-compliant buildings, specifically when a building is considered removed and what constitutes ordinary maintenance and repair.

He summarized that non-compliant buildings are those that met code when originally built but no longer conform due to subsequent code changes. This most often involves setbacks, parking, or landscaping requirements. Such buildings may continue legally, but if a building is removed, any replacement must comply with the current code. Additions or alterations are allowed provided they do not expand the non-complying portion or create new nonconformities. Over time, the intent is for non-complying buildings to be phased out through redevelopment.

The Council's request for clarification arose from a development on Watchman Drive. They believed the code lacked clarity on what "removal" means, for example, whether it refers to walls, roof, or foundations, and on the definition of ordinary maintenance and repair. Although the code currently defines maintenance and repair, the Council felt the definition was inadequate. They also asked the Commission to consider whether allowances for rebuilding after catastrophic events (such as floods, fires, or earthquakes) should extend to other types of damage, like water intrusion.

Mr. Connolly added that this discussion might connect to another Commission priority: revitalizing town center properties. Many of the older town center buildings are non-complying, particularly regarding setbacks and landscaping. If redeveloped under current standards, the amount of commercial floor space would likely shrink, discouraging redevelopment. The Commission may want to consider whether the current approach to non-complying buildings in the town center best supports revitalization.

He noted this was the Commission's first discussion of the issue and expected it would continue over several meetings, but he welcomed any initial questions.

Commission Discussion:

Mr. Swanson asked whether a non-compliant building with a roof, no longer allowed under the current code, would need to meet current standards if replaced. He understood that setbacks and footprints must be addressed, but questioned whether this applied to all aspects of the code, such as roofing materials.

Mr. Connolly explained that electrical, plumbing, and similar work fall under the Building Code, which generally requires upgrades to meet current safety standards. In terms of land use, the "ordinary maintenance and repair" section was intended to allow improvements without requiring full compliance unless the building was substantially altered or removed. If a non-compliant roof were entirely replaced, he believed a compliant material would likely be required.

Mr. Dansie noted that this highlighted the code's ambiguity. The key question for the Commission was how much of a building must be removed before it is considered "removed" and required to meet current standards.

Mr. Kruschke believed that simply replacing a roof would not trigger compliance under the current ordinance, though the language was vague. He suggested adding a definition stating that the removal of more than 50% of the building constitutes removal. If more than 50% of the property is removed due to safety, sanitary, or structural issues, it could still be considered maintenance and repair under Section 10-21-7.

Mr. Kenaston asked how "50%" would be measured. Mr. Kruschke suggested either square footage or material, though the percentage could be adjusted.

Mr. Kenaston referenced a Florida case where a 50% demolition rule was challenged after a hurricane, and the court ultimately based its decision on the property's economic value rather than the percentage of construction material remaining.

Mr. Swanson questioned whether a strict percentage was practical. He suggested focusing instead on prohibiting changes to a structure's foundation or footprint. His concern with the 50% rule was that it might

prevent cohesive rebuilds and result in piecemeal improvements. In his view, as long as the footprint and setbacks were not altered, a new structure should be permitted, provided it complies with relevant building permits, such as color and other applicable requirements. He felt this approach would allow structures to be refreshed and keep the town looking renewed, particularly for businesses.

Mr. Kruschke cautioned that tying the rule to the foundation might allow complete rebuilds on non-conforming setbacks, locking in non-compliance for decades. He also noted that basements and crawl spaces complicate the definition of “half” a building. He preferred a simple threshold that preserved some incentive to bring properties into compliance.

Mr. Kenaston agreed, especially for commercial properties along SR-9, where the town hopes for refreshed structures without perpetuating non-conformities.

Mr. Kruschke suggested the possibility of trading partial improvements in compliance for permission to rebuild.

Mr. Kenaston asked for a definition of “building.” Mr. Connolly replied that it is any structure with a roof and walls or columns, used for shelter or enclosure of persons, animals, or property.

The Commission agreed on the importance of protecting vested rights while still encouraging eventual compliance. Staff was asked to research ways to define when a building is considered “removed” and explore language that would allow rebuilds while requiring some improvement toward compliance. Mr. Connolly said staff would return with options at the next meeting.

2. Update to the Planning Commission on the Progress Being Made by the Virgin River Management Plan Implementation Subcommittee. Staff Contact: Niall Connolly

Staff Presentation:

Mr. Connolly provided an update on the Virgin River Management Plan Implementation Project. The subcommittee, consisting of Commissioners Kruschke and Bhatti, held its first meeting and conducted a field trip to the river. They reviewed the Virgin River Management Plan, familiarized themselves with the river’s current conditions in Springdale, and discussed principles of good river corridor management.

The subcommittee met with Steve Meismer of the Virgin River Program and Ryan Gubler from the Town’s Parks and Recreation Department to explore potential sites for revegetation, including the planting of willows and other riparian vegetation. The field trip also included consideration of invasive species and the moisture content of vegetation adjacent to the river.

Commissioners discussed potential strategies for defining a corridor overlay zone, establishing landscaping requirements near the river, and coordinating with the Wildland Urban Interface. They also noted the need for additional expertise, including a physical scientist, to determine appropriate buffer distances along different portions of the river.

Mr. Kruschke emphasized that the project is in the initial stages and there are various options to consider for defining zones and regulations. Mr. Connolly and the Commissioners noted the importance of linking with outside experts and ensuring coordination with the town’s ongoing revegetation efforts. No action was required as the update was provided for informational purposes.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes from August 6th, and August 20th, 2025.

Motion made by Terry Kruschke to approve the Consent Agenda for the Minutes from August 6th and August 20th, 2025. The motion was seconded by Rich Swanson.
Vote on Motion:

Kenaston: Aye
Kruschke: Aye
Bhatti: Aye
Swanson: Aye
The motion passed unanimously.

D. Adjourn

Motion made by Rich Swanson to Adjourn at 06:10 p.m. The motion was seconded by Terry Kruschke.
Vote on Motion:
Kenaston: Aye
Kruschke: Aye
Bhatti: Aye
Swanson: Aye
The motion passed unanimously.

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. For more information, please call 435-772-3434 or email springdale@springdale.utah.gov.