

Boulder Town, Utah Minutes

Planning Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

7:00 PM at Boulder Town Community Center

Boulder Community Center, 351 North 100 East, Boulder, UT 84716 Phone: 435-335-7300

Call to Order and Roll Call

Planning Commission Chair Nancy Tosta called the regular meeting of the Boulder Town Planning Commission for September 16th to order at 7:02 PM. During roll call, Commissioner Tina Karlsson, Commissioner Elena Hughes, Alternate Commissioner Nick Vincent, Commissioner Colleen Thompson, and Commissioner Darrell Fuller were all present, establishing a quorum for the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Nancy Tosta noted that agenda item number 7, the Town Council Liaison Report, would need to be deleted since Council Member John Veranth was not present to give the report.

Motion: Commissioner Tina Karlsson made a motion to approve the agenda without the Town Council Liaison Report, as Council Member Veranth was not present. Commissioner Colleen Thompson seconded the motion. Following the discussion, the motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Chair Nancy Tosta asked if any commissioners had conflicts of interest on any agenda items. No conflicts were declared.

Meeting Minutes Approval: July 17 Regular Meeting and July 30 Special Meeting

The commission reviewed the minutes from the July 17th regular meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Tina Karlsson made a motion to approve the July 17th minutes, which Commissioner Colleen Thompson seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

For the July 30th special meeting minutes, which documented the general plan forum.

Motion: Commissioner Tina Karlsson made a motion to approve the July 30th minutes for the Planning Commission special meeting. Commissioner Colleen Thompson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (5-0).

Public Comments on Agenda Items - 3 Minutes Per Person

Jen Bach addressed the commission regarding the general plan survey distribution. She shared feedback from community members who questioned why the survey wasn't distributed in post office boxes, suggesting this may have limited responses and created a different set of statistics based on who was able to receive it. She acknowledged the commission's efforts but wanted to pass along this concern about potentially limited reach.

Mark Nelson reflected on the 4.5-hour training session from earlier that day and suggested it might have been beneficial to submit the survey results to the trainer, Rob, for review. He noted that Tom Hoyt was listed as the only person signed up for an agriculture work group, which seemed unusual since Hoyt isn't involved in agriculture. Nelson emphasized that the survey should facilitate areas for discussion rather than serve as a vote, noting that survey results over the years have been remarkably similar. However, some challenges have become more acute.

Staff Reports

Chair Nancy Tosta reported that Zoning Administrator Erin Smith had a conflict on Tuesday nights due to a class. Elizabeth Julian provided an update on the GIS mapping project in collaboration with the Five County Association of Governments. She mentioned that the town is currently awaiting a response from them. Elizabeth Julian also noted that she had forwarded all relevant information to the commission. Chair Nancy Tosta encouraged commissioners to read the comprehensive staff reports included in the Town Council meeting materials, suggesting that these could be linked or copied to Planning Commission materials for easier access.

Discussion on General Plan Survey and Forum Results

The commission engaged in extensive discussion about the survey and forum results. Chair Nancy Tosta recounted the efforts to distribute the survey, noting she was unsure about putting materials in mailboxes and that 138 responses represented good participation for a town of Boulder's size. Chair Nancy Tosta pointed out that only 10 responses were in hard copy format that had to be manually entered. Distribution efforts included placing surveys at the town hall, the library, the church, and community events like the July 4th celebration at the lodge.

Commissioner Darrell Fuller shared observations from the forum results, noting he was pleasantly surprised by community sentiment against heavy-handed enforcement, interpreting this as residents not wanting Boulder to function like an HOA. Commissioner Elena Hughes highlighted unexpected support for both increased taxes for EMT and fire services and for having an annexation plan, with many comments emphasizing having a plan available, whether or not it's used.

The discussion turned to community values, with clean air and water, natural beauty, and open space ranking as top priorities across all respondents. Different demographic groups showed varying value priorities. Chair Nancy Tosta suggested incorporating a statement of community values into the general plan to help drive goals that align with what residents value.

Commissioner Colleen Thompson noted that nothing in the survey results surprised her, given her long residence in Boulder, finding the results consistent with previous surveys. Mark Nelson's earlier comment about surveys over the years showing similar results was acknowledged as accurate.

Discussion on Next Steps on the General Plan

Chair Nancy Tosta presented a draft reformatted general plan template, emphasizing that the changes were primarily about format rather than content. The draft included pictures and aimed to be more user-friendly and less complicated than the current plan. However, this sparked significant discussion about the scope of their work.

Commissioner Colleen Thompson expressed concern about expanding beyond the four specific items the Town Council had originally directed them to address, questioning whether the Council wanted a complete general plan overhaul. She emphasized needing clear direction from the Town Council

before undertaking extensive work, particularly given recent experiences with rejected proposals.

The commission identified eight areas for potential change, expanding the initial four:

1. Rethinking vision and goals
2. Commercial uses
3. Moderate-income housing
4. Capital project investments
5. Use of land north of town hall
6. Overall data update
7. More user-friendly format
8. Managing change with incremental focus

Discussion continued as Chair Nancy Tosta shared various documents, including the draft general plan, Torrey's general plan, and survey data.

- *Motion: Commissioner Tina Karlsson made a motion to send this draft idea to the Town Council and work on the four issues that we were given now, and let the Town Council actually decide whether they want us to go forward on this format. Commissioner Colleen Thompson seconded the motion to open the discussion.*

Further discussion and debate took place regarding the assignment's scope, essential elements, and the commissioners' preferences for the process and next steps.

Chair Nancy Tosta restated the motion on the table as to pass a draft document to the Town Council for approval, I guess, and if we're abiding by the process we agreed to, the Town Council would draft a memo to us and say this is what we want you to do.

The discussion among the commissioners continued as they shared their differing opinions on the general plan. Some expressed comfort with leaving the plan essentially unchanged, suggesting only minor adjustments. In contrast, others argued that if any changes were to be made, a complete revision would be more effective.

The commission acknowledged that the current draft might not be ready for submission, as it has not undergone a thorough review by the planning commission. Furthermore, they emphasized the need for a more comprehensive examination of the Torrey general plan, particularly regarding its use as a template for Boulder.

The commissioners agreed on the importance of receiving explicit instructions from the town council.

The commissioners discussed the need for clarification on the differences among action items, goals, policies, and other terms to be included in the general plan. These clarifications provide flexibility and define the role of the general plan in dictating local laws.

Elizabeth Julian reminded the commission that Five Counties has professional resources and experts available to help draft a revised general plan.

Commissioner Elena Hughes suggested sending just the table of contents and eight topics rather than the full draft document. The discussion revealed mixed opinions: some commissioners were comfortable with the current plan needing only minor updates, while others supported a more comprehensive rewrite for clarity and usability.

Chair Nancy Tosta restated the motion on the table to pass this roughdraft, to the Town Council and ask if they are on board and would give us clear direction that this is the way they want us to go.

The motion was unanimously rejected (0-5).

Motion: Commissioner Elena Hughes made a motion to pass along the table of contents from this and the [eight] topics we listed, along with the Torrey General plan, to get some direction from the Town Council. Commissioner Darrell Fuller seconded the motion.

Commissioner Tina Karlsson suggested providing the reasoning for changing the format, if that was the intention, along with the rationale for the eight points. She emphasized the importance of explaining the "why" to the town council.

Chair Nancy Tosta restated the motion on the table as to send the Torrey general plan, the table of contents, and the eight points that are things we think we need to change and package it in a transmittal letter that says that this is what we've been talking about and if you are in agreement please send us a memo that states your interests.

During the vote, Commissioner Darrell Fuller questioned how Colleen's early inquiries and concerns about expanding the assignment's scope from the town council to the planning commission regarding general plan changes were articulated, particularly in the absence of background information.

Chair Nancy Tosta decided to hold the vote to address this question, explaining that these issues had been discussed in forums and in her conversations with individual council members, as well as by the public. In sharing her thoughts, she realized that some of it might be her own interpretation, rather than an explicit assignment from the town council. Nevertheless, she felt this was the direction the council wanted to take now, rather than six months ago, especially after Council Member Ellis indicated that they would need to rewrite the zoning chapter, which necessitated updating the general plan. She pointed out that the current general plan is not very clear regarding priorities and its readability, which complicates the zoning ordinance rewrite.

Commissioner Colleen Thompson responded by stating that they needed to hear from the entire council officially. She mentioned that some of her thoughts were influenced by the training from that morning. Emphasizing her concern, she expressed that she did not want to add anything further without a memo from the town council and questioned why a motion was necessary.

The motion passed (3-2), with Commissioners Tina Karlsson, Elena Hughes, and Darrell Fuller voting aye, and Commissioners Colleen Thompson and Nancy Tosta voting nay. Commissioner Nick Vincent abstained from voting as he is an alternate commissioner.

Following the vote, Chair Nancy Tosta asked the commissioners for their perspectives on keeping the General Plan as is, with only the four requested changes.

Commissioner Colleen Thompson expressed confusion about the scope of work, noting they were originally directed to make four specific changes but now appeared to be considering a complete rewrite. She emphasized the need for clear direction from the town council before proceeding.

Commissioner Darrell Fuller agreed, expressing concern about "eating the elephant" - taking on extensive work without clear direction. He noted that if annexation is the main concern, it's already mentioned in the current plan and may not require a complete rewrite.

Commissioner Elena Hughes stated she was fine with the current plan but would support a rewrite if that's what the town council wants. However, she expressed reluctance to take on multi-month projects, given past experiences with the town council rejecting planning commission recommendations.

Commissioner Tina Karlsson acknowledged that the current plan has been an "add-on" document since the 1990s and is challenging to navigate, supporting the idea of simplification while recognizing the need for town council direction.

Alternate Commissioner Nick Vincent, who read the entire general plan before joining the commission, described it as "very dense" and hard to navigate, supporting efforts to make it more user-friendly.

Chair Nancy Tosta reemphasized her desire for a comprehensive rewrite of the general plan.

Town Attorney Michael Winn clarified that any changes to the general plan must comply with state requirements under Section 10-9a-403 which includes provisions for moderate-income housing. He further stated that they were discussing the difference between amending the general plan versus [drafting] a comprehensive general plan.

Commissioner Tina Karlsson emphasized that professional resources are available to assist in preparing the revised general plan. Elizabeth Julian mentioned that Five Counties could provide support beyond just formatting and finalizing the document. This support could include facilitating a joint work meeting with the Town Council and Planning Commission to help guide the next steps.

Elizabeth Julian also reminded the commissioners that during the joint work meeting in May between the Town Council and the Planning Commission, they established a workflow process. This process will enable the Town Council to follow the established workflow, guiding the next steps.

The commission discussed whether annexation language in the current plan might provide a sufficient basis to avoid a complete rewrite if annexation protection was the primary concern expressed by Commissioner Darrell Fuller.

Chair Nancy Tosta tasked herself with drafting a memorandum to forward the table of contents, eight identified topics, and the Torrey general plan to the town council. This will capture the Planning

Commission's viewpoints and solicit explicit instructions from the Town Council prior to further action.

Discussion on TC Direction to Reconsider Commercial in the Table of Uses

The commission discussed the Town Council's request to reconsider commercial uses in the table of uses. The original short-term directive was to remove "commercial use" from the table to prevent large-scale commercial development. However, at the last Town Council meeting, Council Member Veranth raised concerns that this would make existing businesses nonconforming uses, potentially preventing them from expanding.

Chair Nancy Tosta explained that Council Member Veranth had proposed adding various modifications beyond the original request, which Council Member Josh Ellis stated exceeded the scope of the original assignment. The commission discussed whether to add a "P" (permitted) in the commercial column for commercial uses or stand by their original recommendation.

Commissioner Tina Karlsson argued that businesses in commercial zones shouldn't be considered nonconforming, as they are, by definition, in commercial zones.

Town Attorney Michael Winn clarified that if commercial use is removed from the table, existing businesses would become nonconforming, but the town could draft an ordinance allowing the expansion of nonconforming commercial structures.

Motion: Commissioner Darrell Fuller moved that the Planning Commission tell the Town Council they recommend deleting the commercial use from the table of uses, and that's it. Chair Nancy Tosta seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously (5-0), with the commission agreeing to stand by its original recommendation and suggest that the Town Council consider an ordinance allowing modifications to nonconforming structures if needed.

Discussion on Attendance at the 2025 Utah League of Cities and Towns Annual Meeting (October 1-2, Salt Lake City)

Chair Nancy Tosta indicated she would attend the second day of the conference due to a doctor's appointment on the first day. She requested reimbursement for one night's hotel and tuition.

Motion: Commissioner Tina Karlsson made a motion to approve Planning Commission Chair Nancy Tosta attending the ULCT conference on the second, with a room on the first. Commissioner Elena Hughes seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Commissioner Darrell Fuller expressed potential interest in attending.

Motion: Planning Commission Chair Nancy Tosta made a motion that if Commissioner Darrell Fuller wishes to attend the conference for two days, he should be reimbursed for tuition, travel, and food. Commissioner Tina Karlsson seconded the motion.

Commissioner Elena Hughes offered an amendment to the motion to incorporate travel reimbursement for Chair Nancy Tosta in addition.

The motion with the amendment passed unanimously (5-0).

Summary of Meeting Decisions

Chair Nancy Tosta summarized the meeting decisions:

- The commission will forward to the town council the Torrey general plan as an example, the draft table of contents, and the 8 points needing change, with a transmittal memo explaining divided opinions on whether to do a comprehensive rewrite or just make minor changes
- The commission stands by its recommendation to remove the commercial use line from the table of uses
- The commission approved ULCT conference attendance for Chair Nancy Tosta and Commissioner Darrell Fuller with approved reimbursements.

Chair Nancy Tosta discussed the town's 250-year service initiative, encouraging members to track and submit their volunteer hours with a goal of collecting 250 hours per month for the year.

Potential Business at Tuesday, October 21, 2025 Meeting

Chair Nancy Tosta indicated that the agenda for the next meeting would depend on the Town Council's response to their requests for direction. She encouraged commissioners to review the general plan and the four specific items identified initially for change, preparing ideas for potential modifications.

Final Public Comments - 3 Minutes Per Person

Mark Nelson suggested the commission use "refine" rather than "change" when discussing the general plan, as language matters. He clarified that an annexation plan is not required unless the town actually pursues annexation. He noted that the presenter that morning mentioned annexation isn't always beneficial for small towns due to service obligations and suggested agreements with the county might be a better approach. He emphasized that property owners in potential annexation areas should be consulted rather than compelled.

Jen Bach recalled serving on general plan committees. She noted the original intent was to either affirm the current plan or determine if community feedback warranted changes, which prompted the survey. She supported the idea that revising doesn't necessarily mean overhauling, but could mean clarifying. She clarified that having an annexation plan doesn't mean intending to annex, but instead having tools available if needed.

Adjourn

Commissioner Colleen Thompson made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Tina Karlsson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously (5-0), and the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM.

Minutes Approved: December 16, 2025

/s/[specific_clerk]

Boulder Town Clerk