



Nephi City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes October 8, 2025

Attendance:

Staff: Shauna Talbot, City Planner

Commissioners: Chairman Cory Thomson, Commissioners: Heather Robertson, Fran Petersen, Meadow Perides, Jim Nelson.

City Council Representative: Shari Cowan

Excused: Commissioner John Ford, Alexandra Painter, Scribe.

Scribe: Alexandra Painter

Public: Donald W. Ball

1. **Welcome to the Planning Commission Meeting - Introduction of Commissioners**
 - a. **Prayer: Chairman Cory Thomson**
 - b. **Pledge: Commissioner Jim Nelson**

2. **Public Hearing – Accept Public Comment on changes to Title 10 & 11 to:**
 1. **Create a new Industrial Zone in Title 10 the: “Industrial 4 (ID4) Zone with uses primarily pertaining to large Data Centers, and their support structures.**
 2. **Modify Title 11 to only require prescribed landscaping buffering of industrial use from other adjoining uses in certain circumstances.**
 3. **Modify Title 10 & 11 to allow for xeriscape landscaping, and a certain percentage of native landscaping if well maintained.**
 4. **Modify Title 11 to require certain “dark sky” lighting requirements in the ID4 zone.**
 5. **Modify other areas to Title 10 & 11 as they concern data center uses, including the definition section of Title 10.**

a. **Staff Presentation**

Mrs. Shauna Talbot presented to the commission on Title 10 & 11 zoning changes that are coming forward due to the interest in the Nephi City area for Data Centers.

Items for the October meeting that need to be addressed are the definition of Accessory Buildings that may be support structures (i.e. guard stations); Fencing ordinance; Sound Ordinances; Lot size Ordinance; Frontage, Setbacks, and Height Ordinances; Waste Ordinance; Lighting Ordinance; General Lighting Ordinance; Landscape Ordinance; Dark Sky Ordinance; Public Works Definition section of the ordinance; Signage Ordinance; and miscellaneous items.

Diving into the presentation, Mrs. Shauna Talbot presented that after discussing with the DRC the following has been recommended for consideration in Title 10 & 11:

1. Accessory Buildings will include locations for a guard tower station, backup generator housing, and buildings that are not considered part of the main data center site.
2. Security Fence will be adjusted to provide additional security measures, including height adjustments, razor wire, and similar measures.
3. Sound Pollution will follow a set of ordinances that include setback adjustments, sound-level checks, and consideration of backup generator use.
4. Lot size and area will require at least 20 acres; they can be on one side of the parcel with many structures.
5. Frontage, Setback, and height ordinances to be adjusted for this commercial zone will be as follows:
 - a. Frontage 140' minimum
 - b. Setbacks of 50.'
 - c. Setbacks for accessory structures to be determined.
 - d. The height ordinance will set the maximum building height at 100'.
 - e. Accessory building height maximum of 35'.
6. The Waste Ordinance will require that waste be disposed of outside Nephi City.
7. General Lighting must be followed by Title 11, with the exception of the Dark Sky Ordinance.
8. The Landscaping Ordinance for ID4 will be specific to this zoning area. Frontage will require landscaping, visible from the street, will also apply here; however adjustment will be made to exclude rear landscaping.
 - a. Frontage and Side Landscaping will require 25% to be completed, and can be used with xeriscape or nativescape. This will additionally require an ordinance to remain maintained, and watered for plants to remain living.
9. Dark Sky ordinance will need continued research on lighting requirements, consideration with the FAA for beacons of lights. It has been proposed that it will not follow the subdivision standard ordinance, but will follow commercial. The Dark Sky ordinance will be brought forward in a future planning commission meeting.
10. Public Works will use Title 37 of the state code for all public works definitions for the proposed changes to the ordinance.
11. The signage ordinance will also be addressed and limited to all ID4 in Section 10.18.4.
12. Miscellaneous items and adjustments to Titles 10 & 11 also included the need for a redundant Natural Gas Subline, ordinances that may be needed, and Back-up Generator requirements.

b. Public Hearing

TIME: 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Donald W. Ball commented to the building height and the proposed fence ordinance change. He wondered if it would matter if the height of the building was 100', and what fence size changes would need to be made. Mr. Ball then also commented on the Dark Sky Ordinance and the use of emergency lights, and that it would seem pertinent that, in an emergency, the Data Centers have them. Mrs. Shauna Talbot clarified that security was important and that as for the emergency lighting, that was correct and a valid concern that would be addressed in the ordinance.

c. Commission Discussion

Chairman Cory Thomson inquired about the site and road improvements. Mrs. Talbot responded that some items still need attention. One concern is that if the Data Centers are allowed to do interior roads that aren't up to city standards, and they leave the area, how will that work for the city in the future? It will need to be addressed.

Commissioner Fran Petersen asked what the answer was to the Public Works items that were not listed and how they would be serviced. Mrs. Talbot reiterated that there isn't an answer on that yet, but it does need to be addressed, hence the need for the ordinance changes and why Title 10 & 11 are being adjusted.

Commissioner Jim Nelson asked for clarification on the Public Works ordinance portion. The city will supply their normal use needs, but what about the entire system when it is completed? Will the Public Works be able to support that need? Mrs. Talbot responded that it depends on their needs, in addition to what agreement is placed between Nephi City and whoever comes in. City Administrator, Seth Atkinson also added that at the time Public Works has been heavily involved and their current needs are being addressed and looked into for future use.

Commissioner Meadow Perides raised a concern and question about the private water line and wells in that area, and what that will mean for those users in the future. Would it be possible to give those users? Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that there is only one well in Nephi City that is in the canyon, as far as the utilities go that will be up to what happens when services adjust for their needs.

Commissioner Meadow Perides raised concerns about the water use. It was discussed that the Data Centers would not have a great need for water, and that it is coming back up and that they have a greater need. She emphasized that the city put in place a limit to the amount of commercial use due to the water concerns.

Commissioner Fran Petersen stated that recently an article had come out that Data Centers and the substations that are needed, transfer cost to all users. Is that correct? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that the entire DRC and staff are already looking to the future. Upgrades to the substations have not been done quickly, and Rust Finlinson planned ahead for future need when cost was low. Costs up to this point have not been transferred. Additional utilities that will be needed to operate the data centers will be part of agreements, and upgrade costs directed at those businesses.

Commissioner Fran Petersen commented that by limiting and doing phases is that there is some control of how many can come in at a time, and that all utilities and roads are accounted for. Mrs. Talbot stated that was correct, currently an example of this was the Messersmith property.

Commissioner Heather Robertson, voiced concern about the acreage being developed at a time, 40 acres is a lot for one project. Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that the utilities are a huge benefit to the community, and the property tax value is significant. Where these are located, according to the zoning, this area was already earmarked for industrial.

Commissioner Fran Petersen would prefer at this time to not see the ID4 zone put in the General Plan. She felt that this will give the city to have the opportunity to say yes or no to projects, and will not be held to a General Plan outline. Mrs. Shauna Talbot agreed and stated that by putting areas in a holding zone, that gives opportunity to have a say in what happens. Currently, the state of Utah is being pressured to have cities uphold the General Plans that they have set down, and that is causing issues in communities. She agrees that the ID4 would be better suited for a holding zone on a concept map for the time being.

Chairman Cory Thomson reiterated that this goes against everything that the Planning Commission has set forward for the General Plan and keeping Nephi City feeling like a rural community, and that his concern was because the city wants to make some money. Mrs. Shari Cowan commented that regardless of what the city wants, they are coming, and do we want the county to have control of it or the city?

Commissioner Meadow Perides raised concern to the commission that there didn't seem to be enough information about this project, and planning ahead for this didn't seem advisable. Mrs. Shauna Talbot and Mrs. Shari Cowan agreed that the information has been minimal due to agreements. Mrs. Shauna Talbot did state that the company that has come forward, is essentially a broker for the Data Centers that are used, by companies such as google, amazon, and the like.

Commissioner Fran Petersen stated it would be nice to talk to a community that already has a Data Center and to learn what they have seen and experienced. Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that the Nephi City administration has an appointment with a city, and will be discussing the ins and outs, as well as what they would do differently now that they have been in the game for a while.

Commissioner Heather Robertson inquired about water rights, and how that would work if that property is annexed into the county and not the city? Was it true that they would not have the capability to drill for water? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated she wasn't sure, but there are water rights for sale. It has always been the understanding when someone wants to build, the water must be available for that build. If infrastructure was needed then the builder would need to come with funds to be able to support it.

Commissioner Fran Petersen raised a question on the affect the construction would have in that area? Especially the utilities, if one pays for it then what happens if additional businesses come in and want to use what they paid for? Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that there is an example of what can happen with the Kory Wright property for the BarW on the south end of town. If anyone builds out there, then the developer will be paid back for the upsizing of the utilities, which is typically done by agreement.

Commissioner Meadow Perides informed the commission that the water is still of great concern, and that there is a very limited supply of Aquaphor out there on the west end. She gave the example of her mother, who has a well, and at certain times of the year she can't do all of the things that use water at the same time; there just isn't enough pressure or resources to accomplish that.

Chairman Cory Thomson inquired about the e-waste portion of the ordinances and why it doesn't address e-waste outside our community. Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that we don't have jurisdiction over anywhere but Nephi City, and therefore, we can't dictate that it is outside of Juab County.

Commissioner Jim Nelson asked about the security lighting, if Nephi City is imposing lighting ordinances, and how that will work. Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that it would be considered a hazard or safety light; the ordinance will allow for that kind of lighting on a minimal use basis.

d. Motion

- a. **Motion: Chairman Cory Thomson moved to continue the Public Hearing on November 12, 2025. Commissioner Fran Petersen motioned to continue the Public Hearing next month.**
- b. **Second: Commissioner Meadow Perides seconded the motion.**
- c. **Outcome: Motion was unanimously passed.**
- d. **TIME: 8:42 p.m.**

3. Discussion Regarding “Modular Data Centers.”

a. Staff Presentation

Mrs. Shauna Talbot presented that Mike Alland had shown interest in the Messersmith property for a Modular Data Center, which will use a lot of power but would use a smaller piece of property. They are good for cloud computing and smaller data centers for hospitals and the like.

One of the upsides to this approach would be the latent use of utilities, utilities that are already sitting there and could be used. In addition, they are not required to be manned, though the manager may live close by to monitor them.

b. Commission Comment

Commissioner Heather Robertson inquired about the use and safety of storing for local businesses, and if that would be a use that the hospital would have for a site like this? Mrs. Shauna Talbot clarified that yes, that would be the perfect opportunity for a Modular Data Center.

Commissioner Fran Petersen questioned that the site Mr. Alland is talking about is actually the size of a house? Mrs. Shauna Talbot said that yes, that would be correct because of the setbacks for an accessory building.

Commissioner Fran Petersen asked why this wouldn't be considered an accessory dwelling/building? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that, due to the main use of the site, it cannot be considered an accessory dwelling. It is a 15,000 sq ft area, stated Mr. Alland.

Chairman Cory Thomson asked about the size of the actual unit. Did Mr. Alland say 15,000 sq ft? Mrs. Shauna Talbot said the square footage was correct.

Commissioner Fran Petersen asked about the setbacks where this was not an accessory dwelling, and what that would look like. Mrs. Shauna Talbot covered what the setbacks would be, and that it would be needed for the protection of others' property.

Commissioner Fran Petersen stated that her issue with this is spacing, putting these around town, and the sound issue. Mrs. Shauna

Talbot stated that the maximum decibels are 70, and that they are relatively quiet.

Commissioner Heather Robertson asked if modular data centers needed or could be on-site at businesses, or could they be out in the fields. Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that no, they do not need to be onsite, but it would require fiber optics to be run. There are some businesses that have them onsite and in fact, that there have been many that actually place them on top of the business roof itself.

Commissioner Fran Petersen inquired as to the ordinances and sound ordinance of these sites. Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that they will place a sound maximum decibel ordinance, and that some of that would be covered by the nuisance ordinance already.

Commissioner Jim Nelson asked whether the sound ordinance would apply only to the main site or also to the backup generators? Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that it would be for all uses associated with the main use.

Commissioner Heather Robertson asked if this is a preview of something coming or preventative measures for the future? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that, yes, this is just a preview of what is coming.

Chairman Cory Thomson asked Mrs. Shauna Talbot to clarify what the minimum or maximum requirements of the modular data center would be? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that it could not exceed 4 acres. In addition, it cannot exceed 20 megawatts, and currently with the loss of Owens Corning power use this would be a great use of the latent power.

Chairman Cory Thomson asked if this required the property to be ready and not have a need for improvements. Mrs. Shauna Talbot said that no, not really, they could be in unimproved areas that have access to power.

Chairman Cory Thomson asked about the zoning areas and whether these areas would need to be rezoned. Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated that it would need to be zoned ID-1, and rezoning would be dependant on interest and location.

Commissioner Jim Nelson asked if they are easier to set up and take away? Mrs. Shauna Talbot responded that yes, they can be moved, which is what makes them modular.

Chairman Cory Thomson asked if these areas and locations would need foundations and improvements? Mrs. Shauna Talbot stated they

would need power, and that would be underground, and they are often put on foundations or slab on grade.

4. **Approval of Minutes for Planning Commission September 10, 2025.**
 - a. **Motion: Chairman Cory Thomson recommended that the comment for item 3, Section “c” of the minutes on the comment of Commissioner Heather Robertson be modified to say “not”. The Chairman motioned to make the change and approve the minutes contingent on the change.**
 - b. **Second: Commissioner Fran Petersen seconded the motion.**
 - c. **Outcome: Motion approved with changes.**
 - d. **TIME: 8:50 p.m.**

5. **Adjourn**
 - a. **Motion: Chairman Cory Thomson motioned that the meeting be adjourned.**
 - b. **Second: Commissioner Fran Petersen seconded the motion.**
 - c. **Outcome: Motion passes unanimously.**
 - d. **TIME: 8:48 p.m.**