

Sanpete County Planning Commission Meeting

January 06, 2026 6:30 P.M.

Sanpete County Courthouse, 160 North Main, Room 101, Manti, Utah

Attendees: Planning Commission Co- Chairman Cody Harmer, Board Members: Claudia Jarrett, Gene Jacobson, Reed Hatch and Justin Atkinson. Sanpete County Zoning Administrator Heidi Sorensen Sanpete County Building Official Scott Olsen and Sanpete County Deputy Clerk Heather Pyper. Also in attendance is Sanpete County Commissioner Mike Bennett. Board Member Jo-Ann Riley. Chairman Curtis Ludvigson has been excused.

Planning Commission Co-Chair Cody Harmer calls meeting to order.

Approval of the Agenda

A motion is made by Reed Hatch to approve the agenda.

Claudia Jarrett seconds the motion. All in favor, none opposed and the motion passes. Vote by voice: Cody Harmer, aye; Gene Jacobson, aye; Claudia Jarrett, aye; Justin Atkinson aye; Jo-Ann Riley, aye.

Appointment of Planning Commission Chair and Commission Chair Pro-Tem.

A motion was made by Reed Hatch to appoint Cody Harmer as Planning Commission Chair. Ms. Jarrett asked Mr. Harmer if he accepted; he stated that he did.

Jo-Anne Riley seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Mr. Hatch stated that he would have recommended Ms. Riley; however, she has other obligations that take her away from meetings.

Ms. Riley nominated Claudia Jarrett as Planning Commission Chair Pro Tem.

Mr. Hatch seconded the nomination. All were in favor, none opposed, and the motion passed.

Open and Public Meetings Act training and required tests.

Due to technical difficulties, the training and tests were not completed. Ms. Pyper stated that she will send the link to the Board members so they can complete it on their own. She also wanted to address a few items pertaining to the training, including the length of meetings.

Ms. Pyper stated that when preparing minutes, it is difficult to understand what is being said

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when there are multiple side conversations or when multiple people are speaking at the same time. She also addressed that Sanpete County cannot require someone to do something if it is not included in the Sanpete County Ordinance. Mr. Atkinson asked for clarification. Ms. Pyper provided the example of a subdivision plat, stating that requirements cannot be imposed simply because they were heard or seen elsewhere and thought to be a good idea. Ms. Pyper reiterated that if it is not in the Sanpete County Ordinance, it cannot be required. Ms. Pyper addressed Mr. Harmer, requesting that if meetings begin to get out of hand due to people speaking over one another or disruptions from the public, he please address it so it can be stopped. Mr. Harmer suggested adding time limits to agenda items to help keep meetings on track. Mr. Hatch stated that attending meetings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. becomes tiresome. Mr. Jacobson asked if there is a limit on how many applications can be placed on the agenda. Ms. Pyper stated that there is not. Mr. Atkinson brought up public hearings and stated that, from his understanding, the Planning Commission is not supposed to make comments or engage in discussion. Mr. Harmer suggested that during a public hearing there should be discussion, but not necessarily a motion, and that the item could be handled the following month. Mr. Harmer stated that making a decision the same night sets a bad precedent, as it appears public comment was not taken into consideration. Mr. Harmer asked if there was any further discussion. Ms. Pyper stated that she appreciates the Planning Commission members and all that they do. Ms. Jarrett praised Ms. Pyper for her minute-taking. Mr. Harmer stated that he has gone back, listened to meeting recordings, and often has to use headphones and concentrate in order to understand what is being said. Mr. Harmer also praised Ms. Pyper for her minute-taking.

Discussion to include the following: Preliminary Survey and Final Survey

Requirements, Primitive Road Design Definition and ADT (average daily traffic), Service Ranch Definition, Rail Corridor, Private Landing Strip definition, Combine Small and Major Subdivision's to make one Subdivision Ordinance, and adding Planning Commission members to City Inspect portal; no motions will be made.

Mr. Harmer turns the time over to Ms. Sorensen. Ms. Sorensen states there are conflicting provisions in the ordinance regarding Preliminary and Final Survey requirements. She

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explains that on the Preliminary Plat, the County requires the location, protection zone, and power location for Major Subdivisions, but these requirements are not included on the Final Plat. Ms. Sorensen asks what the purpose of these requirements is if they are removed on the Final Plat. Mr. Jacobson states that the purpose is that the Preliminary Plat remains in the Zoning Administrator's office, while the Final Plat is recorded. He explains that the Preliminary Plat acts as a worksheet documenting everything that has occurred within the subdivision. Mr. Jacobson further states that everything required on the Preliminary Plat is necessary to protect the County. He adds that Source Protection information is needed so that if another person comes in, they know where a septic system may be placed. Ms. Sorensen states that she is simply trying to simplify the process for applicants. Discussion ensues regarding the review process. Ms. Sorensen states that in the Roadway Design and Construction Manual, a primitive road is defined as a single- or two-lane road providing direct access to grazing lands, undeveloped areas, and recreational and scenic areas. This type of road shall not be used to provide access to subdivided property. Design capacity for primitive roadways shall follow the figures outlined in Table 1. This classification is consistent with the County's sub-classification of "Class D Non-Maintained County Roads." Ms. Sorensen states that this would involve more than just a definition change. Mr. Jacobson asks whether this should result in a change in the classification of the road. Mr. Olsen states that he believes the primitive road definition should remain, noting that there is a primitive road diagram in the Roadway Design Manual. He also suggests changing the name from "Primitive Road" to "Low-Volume Gravel Road." Ms. Jarrett asks for a time frame on when the change will be made. Mr. Olsen states that there are quite a few items that need to be updated and that staff plans to address them all at once. Mr. Harmer states that this is one definition that should be updated sooner, as it directly pertains to the subdivision ordinance and currently does not allow a primitive road. Discussion moves to the Service Ranch definition. The ordinance definition of a Service Ranch is:

A privately owned site designed, designated, maintained, intended, or used for the purpose of providing temporary housing, recreation, and service opportunities. Facilities may include bunkhouses, clustered dorm facilities, and a central dining and meeting facility. A primary objective of the service ranch is to provide service opportunities and training in productive

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social behaviors by helping participants learn to value nature and hard work, think for themselves, overcome challenges, and build meaningful relationships, becoming engaged members of their communities. Mr. Harmer suggests removing the sentence stating, “Facilities may include bunkhouses, clustered dorm facilities, and a central dining and meeting facility.” Ms. Sorensen notes that “Boarding House” is already included in the County’s definitions, but that definition is extensive. Ms. Riley states that an Airbnb definition had previously been presented to the Planning Commission. Ms. Sorensen adds that multiple items in the ordinance and matrix need updates to definitions. Mr. Harmer states that the definition change should be added to a public hearing. Discussion moves to the Rail Corridor. Ms. Sorensen states this was proposed years ago and that Kevin Christensen was approached by an individual from Richfield who is looking into it again. Ms. Jarrett states that the proposal was originally presented by six counties (now R6) during her time as a commissioner and was intended to develop a rail line from Richfield to Juab. Ms. Jarrett adds that there has been development within the proposed corridor. Discussion moves to the Private Landing Strip definition. Ms. Sorensen states she received information from Mr. Merrithew. Mr. Hatch states that the FAA controls ordinances related to landing strips. Mr. Bennett states that the issue the County Commissioners have is that the landing strip is not solely on Mr. Merrithew’s property—it extends onto neighboring property and is within a subdivision. Mr. Olsen states that Mr. Merrithew’s proposed change requests an airstrip in the Agricultural zone, although Mr. Merrithew’s property is not zoned Agricultural. Mr. Olsen explains that a definition could specify which zones allow airstrips, size limitations, allowable aircraft size, and whether structures are permitted. Mr. Bennett states his position is that the airport should remain where it is and that airplanes landing in the middle of a subdivision is not acceptable. Mr. Jacobson asks if the County can deny the request and state that private landing strips are not allowed in the ordinance. Mr. Olsen responds that this would still require adding language to the ordinance. Mr. Harmer states that planes are going to land there regardless. Discussion ensues regarding the risks and benefits of private landing strips. Discussion moves to adding Planning Commission members to the City Inspect portal. Mr. Harmer asks for clarification, stating he was under the assumption that Planning Commission members already had access. Ms. Sorensen states that Board Members will be

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added and that the process will involve trial and error. Mr. Jacobson asks how changes to submitted documents would be handled. Ms. Sorensen states members will have view-only access and will not be able to comment or edit documents. Mr. Harmer states he believes email communication will still be necessary. Ms. Sorensen states she is maintaining the requirement that applications must be complete three weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Discussion moves to combining Small and Major Subdivisions into one Subdivision Ordinance. Mr. Harmer states he would like to see a single subdivision ordinance, as having multiple ordinances is confusing. Mr. Olsen states the main differences between Major and Small Subdivisions involve infrastructure requirements, subdivision location, and number of lots. He notes that, per the ordinance, roads do not determine whether a subdivision is Small or Major, as the Roadway Design and Construction Manual is based on Average Daily Traffic (ADT). Mr. Olsen states that for Small Subdivisions, applicants are not required to drill a well; however, a well is required in order to obtain a building permit. He further explains that Major Subdivisions require power to be provided to every lot, whereas Small Subdivisions only require a letter of feasibility for power availability. Mr. Hatch expresses concern regarding water and ensuring that water is tied to each lot (e.g., a well drilled). Mr. Hatch states that power is power regardless of the source and that applicants should be allowed to install solar if desired. Mr. Jacobson states that Sanpete County does not currently have a Major Subdivision defined in the ordinance. Ms. Sorensen confirms this. Discussion ensues regarding requirements for Small and Major Subdivisions. Mr. Hatch states that if all subdivisions are treated the same, power and water would be required for all. Mr. Jacobson notes that if a plat is not recorded, some subdivisions may still qualify for greenbelt status. Mr. Olsen raises the issue of solar power, asking whether applicants who propose solar would automatically be allowed. Mr. Hatch responds that solar systems would need to meet qualifying standards and that applicants would be required to submit specifications and designs for approval. Mr. Jacobson states he would like to retain the 1,000-foot separation requirement between subdivisions to prevent cluster development. Mr. Harmer asks about buffer zones. Mr. Olsen states that for buffer zone developments, municipalities should provide power. Mr. Harmer states buffer zones should also be allowed to use solar power. Discussion ensues regarding buffer zone requirements. Mr. Hatch asks whether a property

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owner may gate a road if it is a public road. Most members agree that gating should not be allowed. Mr. Olsen informs the Board that developments accessed by county roads that connect to highways will be reassessed due to ADT limits and future capacity. He notes that UDOT is becoming more restrictive. Mr. Bennett states the County needs to establish an allowable threshold and require traffic studies when necessary. Mr. Atkinson adds that traffic impact studies should not only identify limitations but also propose solutions to improve traffic flow. Mr. Hatch states that Mr. Seely needs to be more specific about what he is signing off on. Mr. Jacobson asks whether the subdivision ordinance specifies that construction cannot begin prior to Preliminary Plat approval. Mr. Olsen states that he and Ms. Sorensen have identified several areas in the ordinance where wording needs correction. Mr. Harmer suggests addressing a few of these items at each meeting under Other Business. Mr. Bennett asks about solar farms and whether ordinance language is needed to address them.

Approval of December Minutes

Motion is made by Claudia Jarrett to approve the Planning Commission minutes from December 10, 2025, with no corrections.

Jo-Anne Riley seconds the motion. All in favor, none oppose. The motion passes.

Other Business (if necessary)

Mr. Harmer states that he believes there should be some form of recognition as a thank you for members when they complete their service. Ms. Riley states that she attended a meeting with the State where it was discussed that individuals living in the WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface) will be required to make an appointment within the next two years to have their property surveyed and classified as either high, medium, or low risk. After the survey, property owners will be given a period of time to bring their property into the low-risk category. Ms. Riley further states that in January of this year, every private insurance company that provides fire protection coverage stopped insuring new properties due to the State's new mandate. She adds that there will also be a fee involved. Mr. Hatch states that

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property owners could choose to not insure. Mr. Harmer responds that this would not be an option for those without a mortgage. Mr. Bennett states that a large portion of the County will be impacted by this. He adds that the WUI requirements are already affecting the County, noting that it will require at least one Treasurer's Office employee to track all incoming funds, and that this is an unfunded mandate.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Planning Commission, a motion to adjourn is made by Reed Hatch.

Justin Atkinson seconds the motion. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion passes. The meeting is adjourned at 8:34 PM.