
Fwd: Follow-up, for the record

From Laurel Workman <laurelworkman@yahoo.com>
Date Wed 2026-02-25 5:41 PM
To Whit Allred <whit.allred@springcityutah.gov>

Apparently, this was sent to all the city council members, but written to the planning and zoning.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laurel Workman <laurelworkman@yahoo.com>
Date: February 25, 2026 at 1:30:40 PM MST
To: Susan Tullis <tullis327@startmail.com>
Cc: recorder@springcityutah.gov, mayor@springcityutah.gov, chris.anderson@springcityutah.gov, michael.broadbent@springcityutah.gov, symecd@gmail.com, citycouncil2@springcityutah.gov
Subject: Re: Follow-up, for the record

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 25, 2026, at 11:01 AM, Susan Tullis <tullis327@startmail.com> wrote:

I was unable to attend last night's public hearing. I watched from home. A member of P&Z suggested I submit my further thoughts FOR THE RECORD.

Dear (P&Z Member):

I'm not troubled that our town's history shows up in various land sizes and styles. This town is awesome!

I wouldn't be troubled if there were a measured sprouting of other half acres here and there in town either.

The problem is that if we pass a blanket half acre ordinance, or half acres outside a "protected historical zone," the outskirts of town will become highly vulnerable to all the developers who lie in wait to dive in. We open the door forever to increased high density/subsidized/multi-family housing, along with industry/businesses on the outskirts of town, and suddenly we're another Payson with a lovely historical downtown surrounded by everything else.

Someone told me our local, vocal water specialist said we won't recognize our town in five years. That's what I believe, and the moment I realized we were courting high density housing areas, I went on high alert. On my own. I come from the east, and I've seen what happens to towns.

The "compromise" ordinance is in no way a compromise from the perspective of my friends who worry, among other things, about the outskirts of town. I believe the "compromise" will do the following, for starts:

1. Create a museum of the historical district, replacing a true way of interdependent community life.
2. Shut down charming cottage industries sprinkled throughout town.
3. Divert traffic away from downtown businesses to the east outskirts of town (to reach areas poised for development). We already have a byway with Hwy 89.
4. Interfere with those families in town who want to have some animals for self-sufficiency and enjoyment.
5. Hurt so many who have given their all to be part of a rural, artistic, historical community. We have many livelihoods attached to this way of life.

I spoke personally with our 3 county commissioners and shared that I thought it would help the whole county if Spring City could remain a protected area, a place of attraction and refuge for visitors, a special way of life. Each one of them told me: "You fight."

I'm not good at fighting, but I find myself passionate about it all!

It's a stewardship.

I believe we're at a special crossroads of opportunity. We have such a unique group of people with enormous skills, wisdom, assets of varied sorts. I believe we could be rallied to find solutions if given a chance. More than 3 minute sound bytes. Can we access preservation entities who incentivize landowners to not sell to developers? Give the landowners a special place of honor at the table to let us work together to support their assets? Let the community have a chance to see if we can create or find services and funds to support those who struggle to maintain their acre lots?

Landowner rights vs community rights is a thing. I'm especially troubled by *how* the voice of the people (and P&Z!) has been sidelined when stakes are so high. This is not a business-as-usual situation, and I'd so love to have time for neighborhood cottage meetings to problem-solve, for town hall meetings where there's true back-and-forth sharing and learning together.

I worry that we do not have a properly informed electorate. We need more transparency, so people know just what they're really voting about. If, after that, the people choose half acres, I'd back away and support them. They haven't had a fair chance. I could explain that for hours.

I'm surrounded by good people who are truly troubled and threatened by the half acre blanket measures and by developers voting on matters that seem to be such a conflict of interest.

Blessings in your efforts. Thank you for taking time to read this.

Su

ALSO, Brad Van Dyke was right last night. Lowell Brown did some checking. Here's what Lowell sent me, giving permission to share around:

The Zion Plat

I was intrigued by the interesting idea, raised in last night's meeting (2-23-26) that Joseph Smith designed the City of Nauvoo with half acre residential lots. The suggestion was that 1/2 acre was the correct Latter-day Saint way to design a city. I wondered if Brigham Young thought the exact same plan was correct for the Intermountain West settlement. I made a quick inquiry to ChatGPT.

My question:

When Brigham Young and the latter-day Saint pioneers arrived in Utah, did Brigham design towns for settlement applying a 1 acre per home standard?

Answers:

Yes — that was very much the ideal.

When Brigham Young and the first Latter-day Saint pioneers entered the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, they implemented a town-planning model rooted in Joseph Smith's earlier "Plat of Zion" concept. While it was not always followed perfectly in practice, the standard design generally provided about one acre per city lot.

What the Design Looked Like

- Towns were laid out in a grid pattern.
- Blocks were typically 10 acres (660 feet square).
- Each block was divided into 8 lots, making each lot roughly 1.25 acres (a bit more than one acre).
- Streets were famously wide — often 132 feet — so teams of oxen could turn around without difficulty.

This meant that most families living inside the town plat had a large lot suitable for:

- A home
- A garden
- Fruit trees
- Small livestock (like chickens or perhaps a cow)

Farmland beyond what a family could manage at home was located outside the town, rather than having scattered farmsteads.

Why This Model?

Brigham Young strongly preferred:

- Concentrated settlements rather than isolated farms
- Community cohesion and mutual protection
- Efficient irrigation systems
- Proximity to church, school, and civic life

It was a deliberate contrast to the dispersed frontier pattern common elsewhere in the American West.

Was It Always Exactly One Acre?

Not always. In practice:

- Some lots were subdivided.
- Some towns deviated from the ideal.
- Population growth often required adjustment.

But yes — the one-acre (or slightly more) city lot was very much the standard planning principle in early Utah settlements.

Given your interest in Utah history you might enjoy how this planning legacy still shapes Salt Lake City's unusually wide streets today.

If you'd like, I can also walk through how closely Spring City follows that original Zion plat pattern.

Spring City and the Plat of Zion Pattern

Spring City was settled in the 1850s under the direction of Brigham Young, and it follows the classic Mormon village model remarkably closely.

1 The Grid

Spring City is laid out in a very clean rectangular grid:

- Streets run true north–south and east–west.
- Blocks are large and square.
- Streets are unusually wide (though not always the full 132 feet of Salt Lake City).

When you drive or walk it, you can still feel the intentional order.

2 Block and lot size

Like many early Utah settlements:

- Blocks were designed to be about 10 acres.
- Blocks were divided into 8 lots.
- Each lot was roughly 1–1.25 acres.

In Spring City especially, many original lots remained intact for decades, which is one reason the town still feels spacious and agrarian rather than cramped.

Some lots have since been subdivided — but you can often still see the original property lines reflected in fencing and house placement.

3 The Community Core

True to the Plat of Zion model:

- The town center was reserved for public buildings.
- Meetinghouse and school were central.
- Homes were clustered together.
- Agricultural fields were outside the town plat.

That clustering reflected Brigham Young's preference for:

- Defense
- Irrigation efficiency
- Religious cohesion
- Social unity

It also reflected something deeply theological — Zion as an ordered, covenant community rather than a scattering of isolated individuals.

4 Why Spring City Is Special

Spring City is one of Utah's best-preserved 19th-century Mormon towns. Unlike many places that modernized heavily:

- It retains many original stone homes.
- The grid remains intact.
- Lot sizes are still visibly large.

In fact, its historic district is on the National Register of Historic Places.

You're living in something close to a working artifact of early Latter-day Saint urban theology.

Lowell:

What this tells me is that Joseph had particular inspired approach for a settlement in Western Illinois, and another later prophet, Brigham Young, had a different inspired approach to settlement in the Mountain West. There's nothing surprising at all about that difference.