

MINUTES of the Vernal City PLANNING COMMISSION

Vernal City Council Chambers - 374 East Main Street, Vernal, Utah

February 10, 2026

5:30 pm

Members Present: Stephen Lytle, Troy Allred, Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Ryan Balch, Samantha Chapoose, Aaron Bancroft

Members Excused:

Alternates Present:

Alternates Excused:

Staff Present: Braeden Christofferson, Assistant City Manager; Matthew Tate, Building Official, Gay Lee Jeffs, Administrative Secretary.

WELCOME AND DESIGNATION OF CHAIR AND MEMBERS: Chair Stephen Lytle welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM, January 13, 2026: Stephen Lytle Chair asked if there were any changes to the minutes from, January 13, 2026. The minutes were approved with there being no corrections, *Samantha Chapoose moved to approve the minutes of, January 13, 2026 as presented. Ryan Balch seconded the motion. The motion passed with Troy Allred, Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Ryan Balch, Samantha Chapoose, Aaron Bancroft voting in favor.*

RECOMMENDATION TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE JACOB FLEMING MINOR SUBDIVISION VACATION FOR PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 70 EAST 500 SOUTH, 76 EAST 500 SOUTH, 80 EAST 500 SOUTH, PARCEL #S: 050520125, 050520126, AND 050520127

Braeden Christofferson presented the application. He explained that the three (3) lots were originally created in 2023 by Jacob Fleming, who was the original owner of the subdivision and who rezoned the property to R-4 at that time. The current request is to dissolve and vacate the previously recorded subdivision.

Mr. Christofferson reported that notification letters were sent to all affected entities as required by Utah Code 10-2-208. Gordon Hofheins is the sole current owner of the subdivision, and no other property owners are involved. The City received no protests or objections from any affected entities.

Because no protests were filed, the subdivision vacation qualifies as an administrative process and may proceed as planned. No further action by the Planning Commission was required.

RECOMMENDATION TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE UINTAH HEIGHTS PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 70 EAST 500 SOUTH, 76 EAST 500 SOUTH, 80 EAST 500 SOUTH, PARCEL #S: 050520125, 050520126, AND 050520127

Braeden Christofferson explained the preliminary plat review for the Uintah Heights Subdivision, proposed by property owner Gordon Hofheins. The proposal consists of a 12-unit residential development comprised of three four-plex buildings. The property is located within a zoning district that permits the proposed density. Mr. Christofferson indicated that the density for the site has been reviewed and meets the requirements of the City Code.

Commissioners were provided a handout outlining the site layout, including setbacks and parking compliance. The development meets required setbacks, including a 10-foot rear setback, 5-foot side setbacks, and a 20-foot front setback. Mr. Christofferson confirmed that the site design accommodates all 12 units in compliance with zoning standards.

Commission member discussion included roadway access and fire safety requirements. The proposed access is a 24-foot-wide drive aisle with approximately one (1) foot of gutter space, totaling twenty-five (25) feet in width. Mr. Christofferson clarified that the access will function as a private drive rather than a public road, as the City does not designate such access ways as public roads under current code provisions. Due to the width limitations, on-street parking will not be permitted. All parking will be provided on-site, including garage spaces and designated parking stalls.

A hammerhead turnaround is included in the plans to meet fire code requirements. This design will allow emergency vehicles, including fire trucks, to enter the site and execute a three-point maneuver for safe exit. Matt Tate, Building Official, confirmed that the turnaround meets fire access standards, and he is available to provide further clarification if needed.

The Commission discussed parking requirements and visitor accommodations. City Code requires two and one-half (2.5) parking stalls per unit, equating to a minimum of thirty (30) parking stalls for the development. The proposal provides four (4) parking stalls per unit, exceeding the minimum requirement and adequately addressing resident and visitor parking needs.

Mr. Christofferson noted that concerns raised during the previous meeting have been addressed by the developer. The developer and project engineer were present to answer questions from the Commission.

Finding no further issues following the revisions, *Samantha Chapoose moved to approve the Uintah Heights Preliminary Plat for properties located at 70 East 500 South, 76 East 500 South, 80 East 500 South, parcel #s: 050520125, 050520126, and 050520127 subject to the completion of the subdivision vacation process, consolidation of parcels, and final engineering, utility, and agency approvals for the final plat. Troy Allred seconded the motion. The motion passed with*

Troy Allred, Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Ryan Balch, Samantha Chapoose, Aaron Bancroft voting in favor.

RECOMMENDATION TO CONSIDER APPROVAL TO REPEAL THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND ZONING CODE SECTION 16.20.308 – DWELLING, INTERNAL ADDITIONAL UNIT (IADU) AND ADD SECTION 16.20.100 - ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)- INTERNAL ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (IADU) – ORDINANCE NUMBER 2025-031

Braeden Christofferson stated that this is a continuation regarding proposed amendments to the City’s ordinance governing Attached Accessory Dwelling Units (AADUs), Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs), and Internal Accessory Dwelling Units (IADUs). The amendment is intended to address anticipated State requirements that may obligate cities to allow detached dwelling units on lots of 10,000 square feet where applicable. The Commission reviewed the item previously approved and subsequently remanded by the City Council due to concerns related primarily to short-term rental regulations.

Mr. Christofferson reported that Council’s concerns centered on the treatment of short-term rentals within accessory dwelling units. In response, Mr. Christofferson reviewed regulations from various municipalities throughout the region and State, noting that Cities regulate accessory dwelling units and short-term rentals differently. Some prohibit short-term rentals entirely, while others allow them with varying restrictions. Mr. Christofferson presented a proposal allowing the market to determine the viability of short-term rentals within Vernal City, thereby permitting property owners to utilize their dwelling units for either long-term or short-term rental purposes at their discretion, consistent with existing regulations.

Mr. Christofferson further clarified that concerns regarding building materials and aesthetics of additional dwelling units had been addressed. No new requirements were added. Existing code provisions requiring “like materials” or “like colors” remain unchanged, and no mandate for exact brick or material matching has been introduced.

Commission discussion focused primarily on the appropriateness of allowing short-term rentals within accessory dwelling units. Commission members discussed Section 16.02.020, outlining the purpose of the Planning and Zoning ordinance to promote health, safety, welfare, and orderly development, as well as Section 16.23.010 regulating short-term rentals to preserve neighborhood character and mitigate impacts such as noise, parking, traffic, and garbage. Concerns were expressed that permitting short-term rentals could negatively impact neighborhood stability, housing affordability, and residential character.

A Commission member expressed concern about restricting property owners’ rights to utilize their property the way the homeowner would like. Prior public comment before the City Council discussed a homeowners’ ability to supplement income or plan for retirement. It was noted that City Council had previously considered a 90-day minimum rental period to effectively prohibit short-term rentals but remanded the ordinance for further consideration.

During discussion, Mr. Christofferson reported that preliminary review indicates Uintah County does not currently allow short-term rentals in accessory dwelling units. Some Commissioners expressed interest in maintaining consistency between City and County regulations where feasible to promote uniformity for residents.

Ryan Balch moved to repeal the Vernal City Municipal Planning and Zoning Code Section 16.20.308 – Dwelling, Internal Additional Unit (IADU) and add Section 16.20.100 - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)- Internal Accessory Dwelling Unit (IADU) – Ordinance Number 2025-031 as written. Troy Allred seconded the motion..

A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- *Commissioner Bancroft — For*
- *Commissioner Todich — Against*
- *Commissioner Chapoose — For*
- *Commissioner Young — For*
- *Commissioner Allred – For*

The motion passed by majority vote.

RECOMMENDATION TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BLACKBURN STORAGE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 280 WEST MAIN, VERNAL, UTAH (PARCEL #05 023 0067) – 2026-005-CUP

Braeden Christofferson introduced a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) submitted for the Blackburn property, located at 280 West Main Street, commonly known as the former True Value Hardware building. The property consists of approximately 1.6 acres, with approximately 15,000 square feet of enclosed building space and the remaining area comprised of exterior dirt surface.

The applicant is requesting approval to allow internal boat storage within the existing building. Under Vernal City Code, boat storage requires a Conditional Use Permit. The request is limited to indoor storage only. Outdoor storage is not included in this application. Mr. Christofferson noted that outdoor storage would require additional access improvements, fencing, screening, and compliance with applicable code requirements.

The property is zoned CC-1 (Central Commercial), which supports a variety of commercial uses. Mr. Christofferson reported that the existing site includes adequate paved area for parking and vehicle circulation. Boat storage is considered a low-intensity use relative to other permitted commercial uses within the zone. Access to the site is provided from West Main Street. While vehicles towing boats may result in slower turning movements when entering and exiting the site, staff anticipates such movements would be intermittent and comparable to existing traffic in the area, including semi-truck traffic.

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Mr. Christofferson further explained that approval of the Conditional Use Permit would authorize the use only. The project would still be required to undergo Development Review Committee (DRC) review and approval of a Master Site Plan (MSP) to address site layout, vehicle circulation, and other applicable development standards.

Commission discussion included the following:

- Several Commissioners expressed appreciation that the request is limited to indoor storage and would not allow permanent exterior storage of boats along Main Street.
- Concerns were raised regarding the visibility and character of storage uses along a high-traffic corridor such as Main Street.
- It was noted that a previous Conditional Use Permit had been approved for a funeral home at this location; however, that approval has since expired and the applicant has changed the intended use.
- Mr. Christofferson reminded the Commission that decisions must be based on the standards outlined in the Code, including impacts on adjoining properties, public infrastructure, health, safety, and welfare, compliance with City regulations, and consistency with the Vernal City General Plan.
- Commissioners acknowledged that while personal preferences regarding storage uses may vary, the request appears to meet the criteria for approval under the applicable zoning regulations.
- It was also noted that the applicant was not present at the meeting, though proper notice had been provided.

Ryan Balch moved to approve the Blackburn Storage Conditional Use Permit for property located at 280 West Main, Vernal, Utah (parcel #05 023 0067) – 2026-005-CUP. Hailee Todich seconded the motion. The motion passed with Troy Allred, Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Ryan Balch, Samantha Chapoose, Aaron Bancroft .

ADJOURN: There being no further business, ***Samantha Chapoose moved to adjourn. Ryan Balch seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote, and the meeting was adjourned.***

Stephen Lytle , Planning Commission Chair