

Bluff Planning and Zoning Work Session Minutes

Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 6:00 PM

6:01 pm Roll Call: Malia Collins (Chair), Marcia Hadenfeldt, Caitlin McLennan, Anne Brown
Excused Absence: Brian Whitney

1. Inquiry from Resident regarding Subdividing lot (Davila, All)

Jennifer Davila presented a pre-application for subdividing a lot located at 152 North 5th East. Collins had reviewed the town's subdivision ordinance requirements and noted Davila's request is a "minor subdivision," which is exempt from the plat requirements, but not the other application requirements. Davila confirmed that the septic design has been approved by Dennis Shumway and Quinn Palmer, and culinary water would be available through Bluff Water Works. The electricity connections are in progress.

The remainder of the discussion focused on setbacks, which Davila stated she was able to meet. Collins confirmed that the front yard does not have to face the entry street. Davila is proposing a twenty-five (25) foot setback from Mulberry (designated as front), with the driveway entrance on 5th Street side. The lot meets the half-acre requirements in the Residential zones, as well as the setback requirements of fifteen (15) feet side/back and twenty-five (25) feet from the front.

2. Discussion of WUI Code and Next Steps (Hadenfeldt, All)

State law required municipalities to have a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) ordinance with a map by January 26, 2026, but extensions were granted for small towns. Collins shared the state's *Risk Explorer* map on her screen. The explorer map indicates risk levels of 3 through 6 throughout Bluff. Utah requires that Levels 5 are to be designated as WUI areas. Levels 4 and lower must receive approval from state fire authorities to be designated as WUI, as outlined in House Bill 418. WUI requirements in the building code would only apply to new construction or major remodeling, and standards are based on conditions including access, hydrant proximity, and brush clearance and more.

There was discussion as to whether Bluff would want to include Level 4 areas adjacent to Level 5 areas. Collins proposed including residential and commercial zones as WUI-designated zones, regardless of risk level to ensure consistency. McLennan recommended using Highway 162 as boundary line. There was also a suggestion by Hadenfeldt NOT to include some of the Level 4 areas on the east side of town near developed residential areas.

In preparation for the next meeting, the group will prepare two options: one map with only Level 5+ areas and one map including adjacent Level 4 residential areas. McLennan will create visual maps with red lines showing both options. P&Z will need to submit their recommendation to Town Council for approval, and then the map will be submitted to the state.

3. Follow up on Redlined Bluff Zoning Code & Response from Town Attorney (All)

Collins shared the town attorney's response which noted that clear definitions are critical to code enforcement and commonly understood terms should be defined in the zoning code. Hadenfeldt interpreted that definitions should be borrowed from state law without citing specific code sections to avoid tracking changes. Collins also noted that the attorney recommended identifying submittals, fees, decision makers, and approval criteria for all processes.

Brown reported her research on similarly incorporated towns such as Torrey, Altamont, Boulder, and Huntsville. These municipalities use more simplistic zoning with only 2-5 zones. She also noted that at least two of the municipalities had "historical preservation" designations. McLennan raised concerns about preserving Bluff's downtown character and preventing large box retailers from taking over the local economy, referencing Carmel by the Sea's approach to prohibiting certain commercial uses. Hadenfeldt expressed that she would prefer a more simplified commercial zoning approach and cautioned about overly restrictive historical requirements.

P&Z will continue reviewing definitions against state code for consistency and further discuss historical preservation and commercial use restrictions. The group agreed that simplifying the zoning code remains a priority and will continue discussions regarding reducing the number of zones.

4. Items for Next Agenda

- Davila Subdivision Application
- WUI Map Finalization
- Discuss Zoning Code

5. Other

The group discussed administrative matters and training attendance protocols, as Hadenfeldt requested training on proper email communication methods within Planning and Zoning. She reported conversation with the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) director about noticing requirements when quorum attends training together. The director stated noticing is not required but consistency is key, so if town chooses to notice, then we always notice; if not, we never notice. Collins stated that Bluff has been noticing training attendance but agreed that the town should determine a consistent policy.

Brown inquired about rumors she heard about a subdivision on the west side of town. Collins stated Mr. Shumway came to Planning and Zoning in approximately 2024, asking about development but was informed of water and septic limitations and clarified that any subdivision would require Planning and Zoning approval with a formal application.

6. Adjourn

Hadenfeldt made the motion to adjourn, Brown seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.

Draft Minutes Published: May 7, 2026

Minutes Taker: Erin Nelson

Approved Minutes Published: May 14, 2026