

MINUTES of the Vernal City PLANNING COMMISSION

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

August 11, 2026

5:30 pm

Members Present: Hailee Todich, Troy Allred, Aaron Bancroft, & Brittany Young

Members Excused: Stephen Lytle, Samantha Chapoose & Ryan Balch

Alternates Present:

Alternates Excused:

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

WELCOME AND DESIGNATION OF CHAIR AND MEMBERS: The meeting was called to order by Braeden Christofferson. It was noted that both the Planning Commission Chair and Vice Chair were absent due to personal reasons.

In accordance with Section 3(B) of the Planning Commission Bylaws, which provides that when neither the Chairperson nor Vice Chairperson is present, the Commission may elect a meeting chair from among the members present, Mr. Christofferson conducted the election.

Brittany Young nominated Troy Allred to serve as the meeting chair. Hailee Todich seconded the motion. The motion passed. Troy Allred was elected to serve as Chairperson for the meeting.

Mr. Christofferson then turned the meeting over to Chair Allred for the remainder of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM, July 14, 2026: Acting Chair, Troy Allred, asked if there were any changes to the minutes from, July 14, 2026. The minutes were approved with there being no corrections, ***Brittany Young moved to approve the minutes of, July 14, 2026 as presented. Hailee Todich seconded the motion. The motion passed with Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Aaron Bancroft and Troy Allred voting in favor.***

RECOMMENDATION TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE WILD MOUNTAIN INVESTMENTS, LLC (HEATHER SMITH) REZONE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 291 SOUTH VERNAL AVENUE, PARCEL #050320156 – 2026-025-REZ

Braeden Christofferson introduced to the Wild Mountain Investments LLC rezone application, located at 291 South Vernal Avenue, Parcel No. 050320156, requesting a change from R-3 Residential to C-2 Commercial. Mr. Christofferson explained that the property is currently surrounded by commercial zoning to the West and that the City's General Plan identifies the area along South Vernal Avenue for future commercial development. The proposed rezone would allow the property to be considered for commercial uses that are not permitted within the existing R-3 zoning.

Acting Chair, Troy Allred, opened the public hearing to receive public comment.

Written Public Comment – Collette Webb and Amadeus Guy

A written comment from Collette Webb and Amadeus Guy was presented by Braeden Christofferson to the Commission. The letter acknowledged the City's General Plan goal of transitioning the South Vernal Avenue corridor toward commercial development but requested that the property instead be designated for lower-intensity commercial use like a C-1 zone or that conditions be placed on a C-2 zone approval to protect the surrounding residential neighborhood.

The concerns expressed included increased traffic and noise, heavy truck deliveries, outdoor storage, possible industrial emissions, and the potential impacts of higher-intensity commercial uses on adjacent residential properties. The letter suggested that lower-intensity commercial development could provide a better transition between the commercial corridor and surrounding residential areas.

The letter also requested that, if C-2 zoning were approved, consideration be given to an eight (8)-foot solid privacy wall, restrictions on dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment near property boundaries, limitations on overnight deliveries and heavy truck idling, restrictions on exterior lighting, and a prohibition on noxious or toxic emissions.

Mr. Christofferson clarified that Vernal City does not have a C-1 zoning designation as described in the submitted public comment. The City has several commercial zoning classifications, including C-2, CC-1, CP-2, and CP-1, with similar permitted uses but differing requirements.

Kalene Gamble, 1621 West 2450 North, owner of property at 287 South Vernal Avenue, stated that she would support the property being zoned commercial but expressed concerns about the intensity of future uses. She specifically mentioned concerns regarding heavy trucks, nighttime activity, diesel trucks, and storage.

Ms. Gamble stated that she supports businesses having opportunities to grow but felt future development should be compatible with the established neighborhood. She also discussed pedestrian traffic in the area and concerns regarding the condition of sidewalks. She expressed a desire for future development to complement the surrounding residential properties and maintain an attractive streetscape.

Ms. Gamble expressed an additional concern regarding the long-term use of the property if it were sold in the future. She asked whether future property owners could bring in large trucks or change the nature of the use.

Mr. Christofferson explained that a Conditional Use Permit may establish conditions that must be followed by the property owner. Mr. Christofferson also explained that a future change in use may require additional review, and significant changes to traffic flow could require review through the Master Site Plan process. A future rezone or additional Conditional Use Permit, if required, would come before the appropriate approval body.

Mr. Christofferson further explained that the City's General Plan has identified the area along South Vernal Avenue for commercial development, with the commercial designation dating back to approximately 2010 and subsequent minor changes occurring in later years.

Cajun Laub, 9704 North 8500 East, Tridell, Utah, the proposed purchaser of the property, explained the intended use of the site. He stated that the proposal is for a family entertainment center with approximately 16,000 square feet of building space. He stated that the business would not involve heavy trucks or overnight deliveries and anticipated business hours primarily during the daytime Monday through Thursday, from 11 o'clock to 8 o'clock during the weekdays. Weekend business hours would be from 10 o'clock to 9 or 10 o'clock, depending on staff.

Mr. Laub explained that the location was selected because of its proximity to residential neighborhoods, the Recreation Center, downtown activities, and other commercial properties. He stated that the business would provide opportunities for families and children to walk to the facility and would offer activities and discounts associated with local events.

He further explained that the property would have a paved parking lot, privacy fencing, and improvements intended to make the site attractive. Access was proposed from both Vernal Avenue and 100 East, in part to provide emergency access and distribute traffic.

Mr. Laub stated that the proposed C-2 zoning was intended to be consistent with the surrounding commercial zoning. Mr. Christofferson clarified that the proposed amusement enterprise use would require a Conditional Use Permit regardless of which applicable commercial zoning designation was selected.

Amadeus Guy, 72 East 200 South, reiterated concerns included in their written letter. He stated that he would prefer development that incorporated landscaping and maintained a more neighborhood-oriented, boutique commercial character.

Mr. Guy expressed concerns regarding the proposed privacy fencing, the number of visitors and vehicle trips that could be generated by the proposed facility, building height, outdoor versus indoor activities, and exterior lighting. He also expressed interest in seeing development that would complement the City's downtown revitalization efforts and support smaller, neighborhood-oriented businesses.

Mr. Christofferson explained that the rezone itself would establish the zoning designation but would not approve the specific development proposal. If the rezone were approved, the proposed use would proceed through the Conditional Use Permit process and subsequently through the Master Site Plan process. Mr. Christofferson explained that the Master Site Plan would address items including landscaping, green space, buffers, fencing, building height, traffic, utilities, and other site-specific concerns.

Lyle Southam, 89 North 800 West, expressed concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed development on traffic, water, and sewer systems in the surrounding area. Mr. Southam stated that the area has historically been quieter and expressed concern about additional traffic entering and leaving the property, particularly near First East.

He also questioned whether the existing water and sewer infrastructure would be adequate to serve the proposed development. Mr. Southam stated that he supports progress but felt additional questions regarding traffic and infrastructure should be considered before moving forward.

Commissioner Hailee Todich explained that the property is currently zoned R-3, which could allow residential development at approximately 16 units per acre. Based on the approximately 1.67-acre property, residential development could potentially result in a greater number of residential units and associated water and sewer demand than the proposed commercial use. Mr. Christofferson stated that water and sewer concerns would be reviewed during the subsequent development process.

There being no further public comments, Acting Chair, Troy Allred closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Brittany Young acknowledged that the traffic, water, and sewer capacity were legitimate concerns but noted that many of the issues would be addressed during subsequent stages of development, including the Conditional Use Permit and Master Site Plan processes.

Mr. Christofferson stated that the Public Works Director would work with the applicant to address traffic and utility concerns and that the City could require additional review or a traffic study if warranted. The Commission also discussed the potential traffic and utility impacts of residential development under the existing R-3 zoning compared with the proposed commercial use.

A further question was raised regarding the anticipated number of daily users and vehicle trips associated with the proposed family entertainment center. Mr. Christofferson explained that those details were not available at the rezone stage and could be evaluated through subsequent development review if a traffic study were determined to be necessary.

Brittany Young moved to forward a positive recommendation to the City Council to consider approval of the Wild Mountain Investments, LLC (Heather Smith) Rezone for property located at 291 South Vernal Avenue, parcel #050320156 – 2026-025-REZ. Hailee Todich seconded the motion. The motion passed with Brittany Young, Hailee Todich, Aaron Bancroft and Troy Allred voting in favor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, ***Brittany Young moved to adjourn. Hailee Todich seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote, and the meeting was adjourned.***

Troy Allred Planning Commission Acting Chair