

LA VERKIN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, September 9, 2026, 6:00 pm.

City Council Chambers, 111 South Main Street

La Verkin, Utah 84745

Present: Chair: Allen Bice; Commissioners: Kyson Spendlove, Matt Juluson, Christian Harrison, Richard Howard, Amanda Pectol; Staff: Derek Imlay, Brad Robbins, and Nancy Cline; Public: Carl Beagley, Jillian Ballard, Debra Howard, Karen Dick, T.J. Dick, Hugh Howard, Shawn Tollefsen, Todd O'Brain, Jeffery Smith, Corren Gubler, Daniel McKeehan Brandy Johnson, Stephan Haddaway, Aaron Gubler, Monique Ruesch.

A. Call to Order: Allen Bice called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given by Christian Harrison.

B. Approval of Agenda:

The motion was made by Commissioner Juluson to approve the agenda, second by Commissioner Spendlove. Richard Howard-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Spendlove-yes, Harrison-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes: August 26, 2026, regular meeting

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve the minutes for August 26, 2026, second by Commissioner Richard Howard. Richard Howard-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Spendlove-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Public Hearing

1. An Ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from General Commercial (COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Derek reviewed the proposed rezoning map and identified the areas that would remain unchanged. One parcel is already zoned R-3-6, while another is proposed for rezoning from R-1-10 to R-3-6. He noted that R-1-10 already allows some multifamily housing. Because major transmission lines cross much of the triangular commercial parcel below Silver Acres, its development potential is limited; extending the adjacent R-3-6 zone into the parcel therefore appeared practical. Derek explained that R-3-6 permits attached, side-by-side units rather than vertically stacked apartments. Buildings are limited to 35 feet, the same maximum height as a standard single-family home. A four-plex requires 18,000 square feet: 6,000 square feet for the first unit and 4,000 square feet for each additional unit, up to four units. He clarified that high-rise housing would not be permitted and that the proposed zoning would adjoin existing R-3-6 areas, including a nearby phase he believed was Phase 4.

Public Hearing opened at 6:08 p.m.

Carl Beagley: He stated that he, his wife, and two neighbors were concerned about the proposed building heights. The neighbors were unable to attend because they could not leave their homes without assistance. He said he understood the buildings would be no taller than standard homes, but a code provision he reviewed appeared to set a minimum height of 22 feet without specifying a maximum. Because the property is near power lines, he was concerned that a large apartment complex could be built rather than smaller multifamily units. He attended to seek clarification and place these concerns on record.

Public Hearing closed at 6:10 p.m.

2. An ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone La Verkin from Retail Commercial (R-COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-

159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Public Hearing opened at 6:11 p.m.

Debra Howard: She was concerned about changing the commercial zone in that area. Why are we getting rid of a commercial zone when La Verkin wanted to have commercial property? There're other areas in La Verkin that they're wanting to change to commercial. Why take that one?

Public Hearing closed at 6:12 p.m.

3. An ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone La Verkin from One and Two Family Residential (R-1-10) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Public Hearing opened at 6:13 p.m.

Shawn Tollefsen: He stated that part of the reason he purchased a home in the community was its character as a neighborhood of single-family homes. At the time of purchase, he understood that the subdivision would remain single-family residential. He expressed concern about what the proposed rezoning could allow and whether it would benefit the community, noting that neighbors had voiced similar concerns. He said rezoning could increase traffic and diminish the area's tranquility. Having moved from Alaska, he had seen the effects of poor zoning decisions and asked that the property remain in a residential zone.

Carl Beagley: He stated that when he moved to the area, the land was considered unbuildable. He said fill material was later excavated from the upper property, moved downhill, and used to support home construction. Having attended most of the public meetings on the development, he felt the subsequent rezoning proposal amounted to a "bait and switch." He said he and his neighbors did not want to move farther into the county and were concerned about increased traffic and whether the water system had sufficient capacity. He noted that residents are frequently asked to conserve water and remove grass while additional development continues.

Jillian Ballard: She said the proposals reflected a broader pattern of converting available land to high-density residential use. She valued La Verkin's small-town character, limited growth, and close-knit community and was concerned that additional townhomes or similar development could increase short-term rentals, transient occupancy, traffic, water use, and long-term property-maintenance problems. She noted that residents are repeatedly asked to conserve water and urged the city to consider limiting growth rather than approving every requested zoning change. She said the Commission was not obligated to rezone property for a developer and should preserve the community's residential character and retain commercial land for businesses. She asked the Commission to consider the many residents who want La Verkin to remain an established, invested community rather than one dominated by transient occupancy.

Coreen Gubler: She directed her comments to the Chair and Commissioner Harrison, stating that it is generally inappropriate—and may violate ethical or procedural standards—for an appointed committee member to approach audience members before a meeting in an effort to influence them. Although public officials retain their First Amendment rights, she said appointed committee members are subject to strict procedural, transparency, and ethical requirements. Because the Commission was considering a specific application, such as a zoning variance or design review, members were required to act impartially and base their decisions solely on evidence presented during the official public hearing. She said attempting to influence attendees beforehand could demonstrate bias or predetermination and potentially invalidate the Commission's decision. She added that appointed officials should listen objectively to public feedback rather than try to create a particular consensus. Such conduct could suggest a hidden agenda, compromise the board's integrity, and create a power imbalance that might make residents feel intimidated, uncomfortable, or uncertain whether the member was speaking personally or on behalf of the city. She stated that a member who wished to advocate as a private citizen should first recuse themselves from the matter, step down from the Commission, sit with the public, and speak only during the designated public-comment period. She raised the issue as a point of order for the Chair's consideration.

Debra Howard: She supported retaining the R-1-10 zoning for this area, echoing concerns raised by an earlier speaker. She said multifamily development would diminish the neighborhood's family-oriented character and asked the Commission to consider the burdens residents have already experienced. While acknowledging that change is inevitable, she urged the City to preserve the community's integrity.

Jeffrey Smith: He said he had spoken with most neighbors in the area above the green section and that their primary concerns were light pollution, building height and appearance, and parking. He noted that residents of nearby multifamily developments often use garages for storage and park vehicles and work trucks in driveways, on streets, or along feeder roads when adequate on-site parking is unavailable. Although he supported growth, he wanted these impacts carefully addressed. He wanted the development completed as soon as possible and accepted the construction impacts because he had purchased early and understood those risks. He said the daily gravel-truck traffic represented progress, but he opposed changing the neighborhood through overcrowding and inadequate parking. He suggested requiring parking permits on existing residential streets while withholding those permits from residents of the new development, who should use parking provided on-site. He was also concerned that no traffic plan showed whether vehicles would enter from Main Street or State Street, raising the possibility that substantial traffic would pass through his neighborhood twice each day. Recognizing that the project was still in an early phase, he asked the developer and City to communicate the plan as soon as it became available so residents could make informed decisions. He added that if development near his home significantly changed and affected his property value, he might consider selling before construction began.
Public Hearing closed at 6:20 p.m.

4. An ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone La Verkin from Residential Agriculture (R-A-1) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-3-1-13-3420, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Public Hearing opened at 6:27 p.m.

Shawn Tollefsen: He said that when he moved to Southern Utah, he chose La Verkin because of its small-town character and had enjoyed living there. When he purchased his home, a representative of Interstate Homes told him that the agriculturally zoned land, along with nearby residential property to the south, would not be developed but would instead become a natural park. That assurance was an important factor in his and his wife's decision to buy. Learning that the agricultural property might be rezoned for multifamily housing made him feel the situation was a "bait and switch." He asked the Commission to reject the proposed rezoning.

Todd O'Bray: He said when he moved here, he received the same information. He was told that we would never have development; that would be a park. He moved here knowing that the gravel trucks were there. He also moved here because there was going to be a school across from my house as well. There's going to be more traffic for kids as well, if that ever does develop for the school as well. He assumed multi family would help the school eventually to be built. He understood there would be low-income units and a lot of different families moving in. He planned to stay here for the rest of his life. But if it becomes developed, he may move. The reason is he built a pool into my home, so that I could enjoy the view with an iron fence. Then all of a sudden, they built a trail behind it, so he lived with that. The fence was raised up. Now I'm going to have possible development back there. After he was told that would never ever be developed. He lives right on the corner so privacy hasn't been great but with multi-family housing it would be worse.

Commissioner Bice read an email from Gary Johnson. "We moved from Springdale to La Verkin in July of 2023. We retired and always loved Laverkin. And like a lot, I bought a lot in Cottonwood Subdivision, owned by Interstate Rock. When they sat down with Interstate Rock, we explained to them that we retired and picked this lot, but we were concerned about our view on our backyard patio. Our backyard faces 740 North, and we asked them if they were building houses on the other side of 740 that would take our view away. They said no they're putting in a park with walking trails. So, before we signed papers, we asked several times. Interstate

Rock assured us they are not going to put any home across from us at 740. So now we received a letter from La Verkin City stating that Interstate Rock wants to rezone 740 to multifamily residential parcel right across from us. We put our trust and our retirement funds in our new home. I talked to our realtor, and they told us this would affect the value of our new home in a negative way. Not good, I guess. I was brought up in a different way and was taught always to be honest in what you say and truthful. I did not see that in Interstate Rock. I was told they were an outstanding and trustworthy company I guess we could not see through their lies. I'm sorry for the handwritten letter. I do not own a computer and might make it nice. One other thing, because of the nice view, we went with a wrought iron fence instead of a block wall. So, if they build, we will not have any privacy. To put a block wall in would be out of our budget. I hope you consider our concerns and our neighbors. Thank you."

Commissioner Juluson read an email from Gary McPherson, "Councilman, I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed zoning change allowing multi-family housing in our neighborhood. La Verkin has been my home my entire life, and when it came time to choose where I wanted to put down roots, I could have chosen anywhere in Washington County, but I chose to come back to La Verkin. A huge reason for that was the character of the neighborhood, the quiet, the space, the small town feel and pride. People take care of their homes. We've invested heavily in our home with the hope of being here long term. One of my biggest concerns and one I've heard from several neighbors is the potential impact higher density housing could have on our property values and the overall desirability of the neighborhood. I'm not against multi-family housing in general. There is a new Multifamily community being developed roughly a mile away in Toquerville that allows multi-family housing, and I think that makes sense. Being planned that way from the beginning and doesn't change the character of existing neighborhood. But La Verkin is different. We're a small town with limited space to build, and I believe that is part of what makes it desirable. Once we change the character of these neighborhoods, we can't easily get it back. There are families, retirees, and long-term residents here who choose this area for the same peace and quality of life. This matters enough to our family that we would genuinely consider moving if the character changes substantially. I understand that growth is necessary. I just hope we can grow thoughtfully in the right places while protecting what has made La Verkin such a special place to call home. I respectfully ask you to keep the existing zone in place. Thank you for listening to those who call the La Verkin home."

Public Hearing closed at 6:38 p.m.

E. Business:

1. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from General Commercial (COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID# LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Commissioner Richard Howard thanked the public for attending and showing concern for La Verkin's future. He noted that communities everywhere must make difficult long-term planning decisions. Referring to Mrs. Ballard's comments, he said La Verkin's limited boundaries require careful use of its land, much as constrained cities must plan for greater density. Earlier planning commissioners created a general zoning plan intended to accommodate growth while preserving the town's character, but they could not have anticipated changes over the past decade or those still to come. He supported rezoning the pink parcel to match the adjacent gray area. However, he was concerned about giving up one of the city's few commercial properties. Although the corner's configuration, block walls, and separation from the highway may limit commercial access, he questioned converting highway-frontage land to residential use. He shared the public's concerns about the lime-green parcel and asked what needs justified by changing an area that already adjoins multifamily zoning and altering the neighborhood's character. He believed the narrow "fingernail" parcel was likely an easement unsuitable for multifamily development. In his view, some commercial land could remain while the other parcel could reasonably align with the nearby multifamily properties.

Commissioner Juluson apologized if they ever told someone that R-A-1 cannot be developable. It is developable land. It's 1-acre parcels. You can have animals and barns and houses and everything else on it. And it is next to the R-3-6. It's kind of a weird parcel.

Commissioner Spendlove disclosed a conflict of interest. He questioned the value of retaining the existing commercial zoning because the property has difficult access from across SR-17 and is not well suited for businesses. As a resident of the same subdivision, he preferred residential development there and believed higher-density housing would be more compatible with the community and generate less traffic than commercial use. The dark-blue zone made sense to him. He noted that most of the sliver general-commercial area to the south consists of slopes or power-line easements. Allowing greater density could also help the developer provide the required open space and potentially improve community amenities. Regarding the green area south of Phase 3 near his home, he understood concerns about higher density but viewed it as a suitable transition toward Silver Acres and the existing R-3-6 zone. He suggested that lower-density residential development could be placed along the road nearest Main Street, transitioning to higher density toward SR-17. Because the project remained in the planning stage, he did not expect substantial additional high-density development beyond what had already been approved or built. He also noted that the Zion Corridor Trail would run behind Todd's home through the upper section.

Commissioner Juluson commented on the pink area maybe extending over into some of that orange and green area. We kind of highlighted in past planning commissions and other reviews that that would be a spot that the city could look at for high density just because of issues where it does slope down. Taller buildings would look lower in height and more single family and higher density. He agreed that would be a good fit. He couldn't think of any commercial business wanting to build there with little access and the slope. A standalone building with a big wall blocking it wouldn't be profitable.

Commissioner Harrison wanted to make some comments on his actions with the public weren't inopportune. He simply wanted to gauge public opinion by talking with people and communicating with people. His goal wasn't to sway anyone's opinions, but to hear and try to understand better. He appreciated everybody coming out to the public hearing. He agreed with Commissioner Howard on that section of commercial. He was hesitant to give up what commercial we have. There's the question of viability of that spot as a commercial zone of what could actually be done there, commercial, and if it's not a viable commercial zone, it's better served to be mixed with that residential. The green area, which does seem to be a point of a lot of concern. The way it is currently zoned they could have duplexes, and the new zone would open up quadplexes. He didn't know if it was worth it to get a couple extra houses in that area compared to what they could already do with it zoned as is. The upper zone is already zoned for development. The question is what kind of density do we want to put in there. He appreciated all the public input of wanting smaller density zone out there. That's valid input and a valid desire to want. It's just a question of what we do with what little we have, and where the growth is going to go eventually, and what happens when we're done growing. You know, there's consequences to not growing as they are to growing too much.

Commissioner Richard Howard commented they have very little opportunity to do much further work, changing the zoning in the future. He was of two minds with the blue parcel because Matt and Kyson's suggestion is probably more aesthetic and more functional because the neighborhood that Interstate Rock is built along. It's really nice when you go up there. It would probably be able to flow much better than commercial. He didn't like losing commercial property. He could see both points of view.

Commissioner Bice commented that it's not prime commercial property. They haven't had anyone interested in buying it because of access issues. At the Utah League of Cities and Towns, where the community's leaders meet and discuss things, we are tens of thousands of housing units short of having enough housing units for people. And the place that we're short isn't at the high-end houses; those are popping up. It is more affordable

houses. And by more affordable, they're still going to be expensive. Everybody wants affordable housing. Everyone wants their children to be able to come back and live here. Nobody wants it in their backyard, and every place is somebody's backyard. He appreciated the concerns. He wouldn't want R--36 in his backyard, but it's a need for the city. We originally thought about everything we didn't want in town we'd put on topside, and I'm not sure that's practical. I'm not sure that's going to be affordable. He appreciated the comment and understood those of them who have moved here for a certain reason. We don't get to decide how La Verkin can grow, or we don't get to decide whether La Verkin can grow. We get to decide how. He suggested they should take a little bit more time and discuss this, having heard the concerns.

Commissioner Richard Howard was concerned about the citizens having to return in two weeks for the vote. Some have a hard time getting here. He wanted them to know how they voted. He didn't feel it needed more examining or more discussion. If they needed more discussion, they should do it now. He didn't agree to wait until next meeting, so these people would miss the opportunity to see what has been discussed and how we're going to vote.

Commissioner Bice responded that didn't want to feel like we were unnecessarily hasty. He wanted to take some time to consider the comments made that night. Sometimes doing that changes his mind or possibly comes to discover a different possibility.

Commissioner Spendlove suggested the developer talk about the plans they have for this property.

Chase Stratton said the proposal had been revised in response to comments from the previous Planning Commission meeting. He explained that developers typically seek a zone change before investing substantial time and money in detailed subdivision plans, so the exact layout, streets, and building locations had not yet been finalized. However, he agreed that residents and the Commission would benefit from reviewing a clearer plan tied to a development agreement that would specify what would be built and why the zone change was needed. Stratton said the developer was confident in moving forward with the blue and pink parcels but preferred to withdraw the two green parcels from consideration because they had generated the greatest neighborhood concern. The developer could return later with a more detailed proposal. He explained that large transmission and power lines south of 740 North make commercial development difficult, while R-3-6 zoning would allow townhomes to be situated more effectively. He said the company monitors property values because it owns substantial property in the area and plans to sell additional single-family homes. Its research indicated that mixing single-family and multifamily housing has only marginal effects on property values and can create strong communities with varied housing types and income levels. Drawing on his own positive experience living in multifamily housing as a young parent, he objected to assumptions about the people who would live there. Stratton thanked residents for attending and apologized for any inaccurate or misleading information they may have received from real estate agents or others. He reiterated that the developer would postpone the two green parcels but wished to proceed with the commercial and pink parcels because of the power-line constraints and the limited viability of the commercial site. He asked the Commission to consider moving those two requests forward, while acknowledging that it could table them for further review.

Commissioner Richard Howard made a motion to not approve the zone change. However, there was not a second for his motion.

Commissioner Harrison had more questions about what was allowed in a R-3-6 zone as far as duplexes, townhomes, triplexes, quadplexes.

The motion was made by Commissioner Christian Harrison to recommend ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from General Commercial (COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID# LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17

to be table until September 23, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Richard Howard. Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Spendlove-yes. The motion carried unanimously

2. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Retail Commercial (R-COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Commissioner Harrison commented he had the same questions about this piece of property. What exactly would be allowed in it. He thought it was a strange piece of property, so he agreed more with the rezoning possibilities.

Commissioner Spendlove added that there is only access from the residential neighborhood and not off of SR9 so he agreed the zone change would make more sense.

Commissioner Juluson responded that they should either table both 1 & 2 or vote on them both. That made more sense to him. Just extends the high residential into a little piece of property that won't have other utility. The smaller lots could actually help the topography and the slopes. Adding that R-3-6 would make that a nice piece of land.

The motion was made by Commissioner Kyson Spendlove to recommend ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Retail Commercial (R-COMM) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17 to be table for further discussion on September 23, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Matt Juluson. Spendlove-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-no. The motion passed.

3. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from One and Two Family Residential (R-1-10) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-159-A, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Chase Stratton revoked the application for this property until they have a rough idea of what they want to put on the property to show the public.

4. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Residential Agriculture (R-A-1) to Multi-Family Residential (R-3-6) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-3-1-13-3420, Located at 740 N Main Street and SR-17.

Chase Stratton revoked the application for this property until they have a rough idea of what they want to put on the property to show the public.

D. Public Hearing:

5. An ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone La Verkin Five Acres from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 1.97 acres General Commercial (COMM) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-1, Located between 300 S and 100 W.

Chase Stratton outlined the developer's plan for the next two applications. The 1.97-acre western parcel, currently zoned R-1-14, would be rezoned General Commercial, while the 3.03-acre eastern parcel would be rezoned HDR-11, allowing up to 33 units per acre. The proposed plan includes 32 units. He requested a development agreement so the approved concept would be binding, and the project would be built substantially as presented, avoiding concerns about a later "bait and switch." Along 100 West, the plan shows 12 individually owned single-family lots averaging about 4,400 square feet. The interior would contain attached townhome-style rental units with shared side walls, generally two bedrooms and one bathroom, rather than vertically stacked apartments. The rentals would be limited to long-term occupancy, not short-term rentals such as

Airbnb's, and that restriction could be included in the development agreement. Access would be provided from 100 West, with a wall separating the residential area from commercial development. In response to concerns raised at the previous meeting about multifamily housing in front of 100 West, the plan was revised to place single-family homes along the street as a transition between the commercial area and nearby residential neighborhoods. The townhomes would be approximately 1,200 square feet over two stories and would have designated parking and garages. Stratton noted that the building arrangement, parking, and open-space amenities—such as a park, playground, dog park, or pickleball court—would be refined during detailed planning, while the overall unit count and placement of the single-family lots would remain consistent with the proposal.

Public Hearing opened at 7:15 p.m.

Debra Howard: She said the proposal would significantly affect residents east of State Street, south of Center Street, and along Main Street, 300 South, and 100 West, fundamentally changing the neighborhood. She saw no reason to convert additional residential land to commercial use and urged the City to preserve the area's residential character. She noted that commercial zoning could allow a wide range of businesses. Although she opposed the rezoning, she supported a development agreement because it would require the developer to build what was promised. She said the neighborhood had already been affected by the Hot Springs development and a hotel built on a 0.65-acre lot, which she believed existing zoning laws should have prevented. Because three properties border the motel, she was concerned about what future commercial development could occur there and asked the Commission not to approve the change.

Jillian Ballard: She said she owns the small parcel at 300 South and 100 West, so the proposed changes would directly affect her. Although she had wanted to build on the property, she had delayed doing so until plans for the adjacent five acres became clear because she did not want a high-density development across the street. Referring to a map, she noted that some land near the hot springs had previously been residential while other land was commercial.

She said the map showed residential land near the hot springs being converted to commercial use and warned that approving this request would continue that pattern, leaving only a narrow residential strip. She argued that the City's responsibility is to protect residents and uphold its land-use plan, not ensure that developers can profit from property they purchased. Ballard suggested dividing the site into smaller single-family lots instead of adding 32 permanent rental units. She questioned whether rents of approximately \$1,800 to \$2,500 per month would be affordable, noting that tenants would be paying a developer's mortgage rather than building equity. She also worried that expanding the commercial zone could allow a future hotel or another intensive use. She urged the Commission to preserve the residential character of the area.

Hugh Howard: He respectfully asked the Planning Commission to deny the proposed rezoning from R-1-14 to HDR-11. Although he supported growth and recognized the need for additional housing, he said development should be carefully planned, appropriately located, and compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. He explained that the existing R-1-14 zone was intended to preserve the area's quiet, low-traffic character and that residents had invested in their homes with the expectation that nearby development would remain compatible. Citing the City's zoning standards, he said new development should align with the general plan, harmonize with the neighborhood, and avoid adverse effects on adjacent properties. In his view, placing 32 residences on three acres would be a substantial and permanent departure from the current zoning rather than a transition. He suggested that R-1-6 zoning, which could allow approximately 18 single-family homes, might provide a more balanced alternative. He acknowledged the pressure to identify locations for high-density housing but argued that the center of town was not appropriate. He urged the Commission to protect the community's long-term interests and avoid a decision residents might later regret.

Stephen Haddaway: He has one of the two houses directly impacted by this on the north end of the property, just across the street. When he built his house, he had to do the infrastructure. Changing the zoning would be

devastating for those who live close. The amount of commercial property would change what businesses would be allowed, changes to traffic patterns, and roads. He asked they carefully consider how this would affect those who live nearby.

Daniel McKeehan: He owns his house and the lot next store. He agrees with growth but also planning matters. He grew up in Henderson and watched what he liked about that city destroyed by bad planning. He had a chance to sit down with Mr. Stratton, and he put some concerns at ease because he was under the impression there were going to be high-rise apartments there, and he was glad to see that that wasn't the case. He agreed with Mr. Howard; these plans and these zones are set to protect residents and careful planning matters. His opinion was that if they stay at R-1-14 or R-1-6 would be a happy compromise. But high density in that area just doesn't fit. It adds traffic. People who live in high density are just starting out and there's a need for that, and every city has a place where they need to zone that. The south end of town, and you know whether it's a historic district or not, it's a part of this community, a big part of this community, and he hated seeing it changed. Hurricane cities put their high density all in one area, so it fits the community. It doesn't fit the community needs. It doesn't fit the residents' needs in that area, and he would be against the HDR move. He hoped that they would consider their comments and their thoughts, like you did with those on the north of town.

Brandy Johnson: Pointed out that the road where they want to put the townhomes and apartments, has so much traffic in the morning to get kids to school and the construction traffic for the new Motel. That is not something we want for our neighborhoods. She was concerned about the multifamily units not having garages and parking on an already narrow street. Even if they improve that road it will be crowded. She wanted neighbors who owned their property not to rent it. Who would stay and contribute to the town. They rented for the first 10 years of their marriage, but the kids can't afford \$1800-2500 for rent. How will that be limited or controlled to make affordable. Commercial property has so many guidelines, but once you give them that green light, the proposal is not set in stone. She also thought that Mr. Spendlove, having a conflict of interest, should recuse himself.

Monique Ruesch: Expressed her concerns for her neighbors that live in the area. Some are veterans sensitive to noise. There are handicapped kids as well. She was concerned about the suicide risk on the bridge and the police having to go there and kids seeing this. Not to mention heavier traffic that is already heavy for that neighborhood.

Karen Dick: Commented she was concerned about the character of the neighborhood and what it means to those of us who live in it. We do have a veteran in our neighborhood who struggles with noise, and even the noise that he experiences in this very quiet neighborhood is sometimes overwhelming. He's an extreme example of what I think a lot of us have experienced in the neighborhood. We've come to get away from the noise, and we're happy to be in a place where we can be away from traffic and be away from pileups. And that street that you're wanting to build on is very narrow, and introducing a lot of families into that area could certainly compromise the experience of those.

T.J. Dick: He echoed the concerns expressed by other residents and said the proposed change was inconsistent with the established low-density zoning on the south end of town. He argued that the site is not merely at the neighborhood's edge but extends into an existing low-density residential area, so rezoning it for high-density housing would alter the neighborhood's character. He said the City Council and Planning Commission should prioritize protecting the community residents chose to live in rather than increasing a developer's potential profit. Although he recognized the need for affordable housing, including options for younger families, he did not believe high-density housing belonged in the middle of one of the city's lowest-density residential neighborhoods. This neighborhood has been established low - density residential for a purpose. Please keep it that way. That's what everybody wants in this neighborhood. Please consider that. Thank you.

Aaron Gubler: Echoed everything that has been said. He agreed we should keep it in harmony with the community around it. He felt we have a gem here with the hot springs, and we should, as a city, be mindful of that and protect that. Face of the town, people come from all over the world to recreate at those hot springs. He thought there's more opportunity than apartments or high-density stuff there that would have a better face value for the hot springs and give the town a little bit more of a better-looking face.

Public Hearing closed at 7:40

6. An ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone La Verkin Five Acres from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 3.03 acres High Density Residential (HDR-11) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-2, Located between 300 S and 100 W.

Public Hearing opened at 7:40

Jillian Ballard: She said single-family homes generally appreciate in value, while apartments, townhomes, and other high-density housing may depreciate over time. She argued that building more homes would better support residents' quality of life and expressed concern about additional parking on an already narrow street. She also warned that, if the zoning changed and the property were sold, a future developer might pursue a different project. She cited previous cases in which plans changed after property was sold and questioned whether the City could still hold a new owner accountable. She urged the Commission to consider what was best for La Verkin and noted that it could deny the request, as it had done before. In her view, homeowners are more likely than renters to remain invested in the community. Referring to the Fields project, she said units intended for people to live and work locally were now vacant and might again become short-term rentals. She concluded that preserving La Verkin's local character requires residents who intend to stay and invest in the community rather than those who can easily leave an apartment or townhome.

Debra Howard: She said she and her husband moved to La Verkin when they married 39 years ago and returned after a four-year absence while he completed his degree. They have lived in the city for more than 34 years since then. She reflected on the neighborhood's history and longtime residents, including Gently, Anne Haldeman, Emily Gubler, Doug and Vicky Gubler, and her husband's grandparents, Lauren and Amelia Squire, who once owned and farmed the field. Their son later inherited the property and refused to sell because he wanted to preserve La Verkin, but his children sold it after his death. She urged the Commission to protect the neighborhood's history and character for returning family members and future generations. Although she recognized that change and progress are necessary, she opposed commercial development and additional town homes at this location. She said single-family homes would meet demand while preserving La Verkin's appearance. She asked the Commission not to yield to pressure for high-density housing at this site and suggested planning such development in a new area, such as Topside, to protect the city's legacy.

Hugh Howard: Wanted the commissioners to please consider the long-term consequences. He knows the developer wants to maximize use of this property, and one of his greatest regrets about selling the property in the Hot Springs is not using that money to turn around and buy this piece of land, so he could keep something like this from happening. They want to maximize profit. But maximizing the density and the profit should not come at the expense of people who already live here and have invested their lives here. So please consider the long-term consequences of this, and please recommend voting against this change. Thank you.

Public Hearing closed at 7:48

E. Business:

5. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 1.97 acres General Commercial (COMM) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-1, Located between 300 S and 100 W.

Fay explained a misconception of the speakers that if the zone change were granted, and the developer then at some point said, "Oh, I don't really want to do this, or I'm going to sell the property to somebody else," there would be nothing that would prevent someone coming in doing something completely different than what was approved. That's wrong. Not true. The city has at its disposal a tool that we often use in zone changes, and that's called a development agreement. So that if in fact the city council were to approve the zone change, it likely would be contingent upon entering into a development agreement that spells out very specifically what the development is going to entail. And then that development agreement will get recorded at the Washington County Recorder's Office, so that in the event the developer says, "Oh, I don't want to do this anymore. I'm going to sell the property to somebody else." Whoever comes in and purchases that property takes that property subject to the terms of the development agreement. So that developer has to comply with the terms of that agreement, or he's got to come back into the city and go through this kind of a process to modify that development agreement.

Commissioner Harrison thanked Fay for the clarification. That was a concern of his as well of something being able to switch that. He thanked the public for attending and speaking. They seem to be of the same opinion and that weighs a lot on him and his decision. Being able to hear their input and consider their ideas he felt like there might possibly be a way to keep it as medium density residential and leave the commercial the same. He understood the city needs more commercial for the revenue but would like to come to a compromise.

Commissioner Juluson added that as time goes on, the R-1-14 has been changed. He has been on planning commission for six years and R-1-14 has not been viable. When the Hot Springs came in, he thought the entire piece of land would go commercial. There is a sliver of residential left which is helpful. Not too long ago in an earlier meeting the public wanted affordable housing. The public was concerned their kids couldn't move back because it was too expensive and now, we are trying to balance it, and the public doesn't want it. He lives on what used to be the Cherry Orchard. The neighbors talked about their kids running through there and riding horses, but he still feels that neighborhood, that old cherry orchard, still feels the same. Progress happens whether we like it or not. He wants what is best to handle the needs of this community.

Commissioner Harrison added that he didn't really like the HDR plan. The traffic flows and moves from such big residential properties to high residential.

Commissioner Richard Howard asked what was driving the proposed change. He noted that the City already had a zoning plan and that residents had spent two hours expressing concern about altering the existing zoning. He agreed with Commissioner Juluson that R-1-14 had been a standard zone 10 years earlier. He also cited the prior conversion of residential land to commercial use for a hotel, which he believed should not have been built on such a small parcel, and questioned repeating that pattern across the street. Although he acknowledged that larger lots are less affordable, he believed there were other viable ways to use the property that would align with community expectations. He asked why additional commercial property was needed.

Commissioner Bice commented we do not have the ability to expand like Toquerville or Hurricane has. We don't have that, and we have our little commercial corridor. We tried some years ago to create a transition zone and let light commercial go outside of our commercial corridor, and there was a tremendous amount of opposition to that. This change lines up with the east end of the Hot Springs. It seemed to him like a rational place to expand the commercial zone a little bit.

Commissioner Richard Howard if we expand it, it gives the opportunity to build something huge there. Is it Walmart? What is it? In Pheasant Glen and some other places, we had slow growth, but it's old growth. A community growth, families and homes. He didn't want to lose that in the center of Old Town, La Verkin. When you look at Riverwood and Cottonwood Hollow down there, it was a nice way to expand the town in a coordinated and developed way. But where's critical junction here if we change the zone here in the center of

Old Town, La Verkin, it's going to change the whole nature. It already has with the Hot Springs. So as much as we might need commercial, he doesn't know why they want more with this strip, unless they're adding something really big there.

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to Not recommend granting a zone change for ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 1.97 acres General Commercial (COMM) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-1, Located between 300 S and 100 W, seconded by Commissioner Richard Howard. Spendlove-no, Bice-no, Juluson-no, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-no. The motion did not carry.

The public disagreed with Commissioner Spendlove voting because of his conflict of interest.

Fay explained that under the Utah Municipal Employees' Novels Ethics Act, if someone has a conflict of interest, their duty under the act, under the law is to disclose that conflict, and then it's up to the individual to be. Whether or not they can exercise impartiality in making the determination, if they can, they're entitled to vote, and that's what he's done. He's declared the conflict but feels like he can make a vote that's impartial and fair, considering the needs of the community. So, he's fulfilled his obligation.

The public disagreed with commissioner Spendlove voting.

Commissioner Spendlove said he knew many of those present and was hurt by suggestions that financial gain might influence his decisions. He explained that he disclosed the conflict of interest precisely to be transparent and emphasized that he had devoted substantial time and effort to serving the community. He asked the public to remain respectful during the Commission's discussion, as commissioners had been while listening to public comments. He reiterated that the Commission serves the city and its residents and said he hoped the public understood his long-standing commitment to the community.

Commissioner Juluson agreed with the commercial part. Extending that would give more access, three more roads. Access points to it instead of just one off the state street would be a much better layout and help with traffic by having those two extra private roads coming in and then more access points to the property.

Fay explained that we voted on is there was a motion made to recommend a denial of the zone change, and so we voted against that motion to recommend denial. So now what remains is. We either make a motion to recommend approval, or we make a recommendation, a vote to recommend continuing this hearing, for further discussion amongst.

Commissioner Spendlove addressed concerns about the width of 100 West, noting that any development would likely require the road to be widened and significantly improved. He viewed this as a benefit regardless of the project being ultimately approved. He added that 300 South would also be affected and remained a concern, but he believed the proposed development could improve that roadway as well.

The motion was made by Commissioner Kyson Spendlove to recommend ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 1.97 acres General Commercial (COMM) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-1, Located between 300 S and 100 W to be table for further discussion on September 23, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Matt Juluson. Spendlove-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-no. The motion passed.

6. Discussion and possible action to approve an ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 3.03 acres High Density Residential (HDR-11) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-2, Located between 300 S and 100 W.

Commissioner Harrison commented that having heard the public now and looking at this, maybe HDR eleven is just not the right zone there. Maybe there's something else that could look at a change. Maybe there is something more like a medium density or R-1-6, R1-8. That could give us a bit more density, without it having to go to the high density that does seem to concern the residents.

Commissioner Richard Howard agreed and again asked what was driving the proposed change. He acknowledged the need for developer profitability and additional housing and emphasized that he did not oppose growth. However, he was concerned about the development's lasting effect on the community. What is built today will remain for decades, making this a pivotal decision about the future character of central La Verkin. Recalling Mrs. Ballard's photographs and his own view of the town from the hill that morning, he described La Verkin as a charming small town and said the Commission had a responsibility to respect its established zoning. Although R-1-14 lots may no longer be practical, he did not believe that justified introducing high-density housing in the center of town, where it had never been envisioned. Comparing development to strip mining, he noted that developers eventually move on while the community lives with what remains. He therefore saw no compelling need for high-density zoning at this location.

Commissioner Harrison said he lives with his family in a 990-square-foot modular home on a lot of just under one-fifth acre. Although modest, it provides enough space and a small yard for his children. He acknowledged that R-1-14 zoning may no longer be practical but suggested a middle-ground solution that better fits the neighborhood and preserves the single-family housing residents clearly prefer.

Commissioner Bice thought everyone should make as much money as they possibly can, including developers. He sees a need for this kind of housing. He was not sure this is the place for it and wanted more time to consider the options than they have had in the public hearing.

Commissioner Spendlove disagreed with the claim that high-density housing does not belong in the center of town. He noted that UDOT's SR-9 corridor study and the City's experience with commercial projects have shown the difficulties created when residential and commercial uses directly adjoin one another. In several cases, the City has had to rezone property or revise development standards, including building-height requirements. Although he was unsure of the best solution for this site, he cautioned against placing low-density residential development immediately next to commercial property and repeating the same conflicts experienced elsewhere. He emphasized the need for a transition zone between commercial and residential areas, noting that this site offers an opportunity to create one. He was concerned that the Commission might overlook options for medium- to high-density development while maintaining the lowest practical residential density along 100 West. A thoughtful transition would provide a better buffer and help avoid placing commercial uses directly behind homes, as occurred near the Hot Springs.

The motion was made by Commissioner Matt Juluson to recommend ordinance amending the zoning map of and for the City of La Verkin to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-1-14) to 3.03 acres High Density Residential (HDR-11) parcel with the Tax ID # LV-49-A-2, Located between 300 S and 100 W. to be table for further discussion until September 23, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Kyson Spendlove. Spendlove-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-no. The motion passed.

7. Discussion and possible action to set a public hearing for September 23, 2026, regarding amending the Sign ordinance.

The motion was made by Commissioner Richard Howard to recommend postponing the public hearing regarding the sign ordinance amendments to a future meeting, seconded by Commissioner Christian Harrison. Spendlove-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Discussion regarding the City of La Verkin's Development Agreement.

The motion was made by Commissioner Richard Howard to the discussion for the City of La Verkin's Development Agreement be postponed to a future meeting, seconded by Commissioner Christian Harrison. Spendlove-yes, Bice-yes, Juluson-yes, Harrison-yes, Richard Howard-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Adjourn:

Commissioner Bice adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

19 Oct 26

Date Approved



Planning Commission Chair