



Planning Commission Meeting

May 14, 2026

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Planning Commission Meeting of May 14, 2026 was called to order at 6:30 PM at the Public Safety Building, 401 E Third St, Newberg, Oregon.

The Chair recognized and welcomed newly appointed Planning Commissioner Tania Bitz.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Kriss Wright (Chair)
Jose Villalpando (Vice Chair)- via Zoom
Jason Dale
Mathew Mansfield
Randy Rickert
Tania Bitz

Commissioners Absent: Abby Seits (Student Commissioner)
Linda Newton-Curtis

City Council Representative: Absent

Staff Present: Community Development Director: Scot Siegel
Associate Planner: Jeremiah Cromie
Administrative Assistant/Secretary: Fé Bates

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments for items not on the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR

2/12/2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the February 12, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes was made by Commissioner Jason Dale and seconded by Commissioner Mathew Mansfield.

The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Legislative Session Update

Legislative Update review of the land use bills that passed in 2026 and are relevant to the City's Code Maintenance work, which is scheduled for review this summer.

Community Development Director Scot Siegel presented an informational overview of land use legislation enacted during the 2026 legislative session, noting that several bills built upon earlier legislation from 2024 and 2025 and carry varied effective dates and, in some cases, sunset provisions.

House Bill 4037 — Governor's Housing Bill 2026. Director Siegel explained that the legislature has increasingly prescribed local housing processes, shifting away from locally driven, community-input-based planning toward a more formulaic and state-directed model. The most consequential provisions of HB 4037 include: (1) limiting mailed legal notice for housing applications involving fewer than 20 dwelling units to a 100-foot radius, reducing Newberg's current 500-foot notification standard; (2) prohibiting public hearings on housing applications processed under clear and objective standards, with only the applicant retaining appeal rights; and (3) effectively removing the Planning Commission and City Council from the decision-making process on such housing applications, with appeals directed to the Land Use Board of Appeals or circuit court rather than local bodies.

Director Siegel noted exceptions for historic landmarks and clarified a correction in the staff memo: development in Goal 5 resource areas such as wetlands and stream corridors remains subject to the clear and objective process unless a variance is sought. He also indicated that the city must verify with the state whether housing in commercial zones currently allowed only as a conditional use must be reclassified as an outright permitted use.

Planning Commissioner Matthew Mansfield raised concern about the customer service implications of these changes, emphasizing the need to clearly communicate new pathways to citizens who may no longer be able to bring concerns to the Planning Commission or City Council. Director Siegel agreed, noting that staff anticipates increased public inquiries beginning July 1 and intends to develop web-based public education resources and improve information provided through the city's online permitting system. Associate Planner Jeremiah Cromie added that, given that only applicants may appeal, community members would face significant difficulty challenging decisions even through the Land Use Board of Appeals.

House Bill 4035 — Urban Growth Boundary Amendments. Director Siegel noted that this bill refined Senate Bill 1537 (2024), increasing the allowable acreage for a one-time urban growth boundary amendment from 100 to 150 net acres and clarifying that the area must accommodate housing, including affordable units, as well as open space, parks, and supportive commercial uses. Staff indicated that the city intends to initiate this process in the summer, with a solicitation expected to be published June 1.

House Bill 2138 — Middle Housing and Related Provisions. Director Siegel and Associate Planner Cromie summarized several provisions of this bill with varying effective dates. Currently in effect is the removal of the noticing and local appeals process for middle housing land divisions and expedited land divisions. Provisions effective January 2027 include the introduction of single room occupancy housing as a defined use requiring code integration, and the voiding of recorded covenants in homeowners associations and CC&Rs that prohibit middle housing or manufactured housing otherwise allowed by zoning. Staff confirmed that code amendments will be forthcoming for the single room occupancy provisions. The bill also allows middle housing and accessory dwelling units to interact in new ways, including permitting accessory dwelling units on middle housing land division child lots and allowing existing primary structures with ADUs to count as a single unit toward a middle housing configuration.

A provision allowing bonus dwelling units where a type-A accessible or affordable unit is provided was also discussed. Planning Commissioner Mansfield and Director Siegel acknowledged uncertainty regarding the precise application of this provision and committed to further analysis.

Senate Bill 974 — Design Standards and Streamlined Review. Director Siegel noted that Section 8 of this bill prohibits the application of architectural design standards to residential developments of 20 or more units, while expressly preserving standards related to health, safety, engineering, environmental protections, and historic landmarks. Staff indicated no immediate need for code amendment, as no applicant has yet invoked this provision in Newberg. Section 3, effective July 1 of this year, requires that initial decisions on rezonings, planned unit developments, and variances be made by staff without a public hearing, with hearings available only on appeal to the Planning Commission. Director Siegel expressed reservations about staff making initial decisions on quasi-judicial rezoning applications and indicated that any application meeting clear approval criteria would be processed accordingly, with denials available for appeal.

State Rulemaking — Tribal Consultation. Director Siegel described forthcoming state rulemaking by the Land Conservation and Development Commission that will require local governments to notify and consult federally recognized tribes as part of the land use review process. Associate Planner Cromie noted that the Commission on Indian Services is compiling a list of tribes wishing to receive notice, which will be provided to cities and counties. Staff indicated that a code amendment formalizing this process will be brought to the Planning Commission and that the city anticipates no substantive change to development review, as federal protections on archaeological resources already exist.

No vote was taken; this item was presented for information and commission feedback only.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

Review Planning Commission updated Guidelines that are to supplement the Newberg City Council, Board, Committee & Commission Guidelines that were adopted by the City Council on October 20, 2025.

Administrative Assistant Fe Bates presented revised Planning Commission participation guidelines, noting that the document was updated to reflect current practices and to identify which sections are superseded by the Newberg City Council, Board, Committee & Commission Guidelines adopted by the City Council on October 20, 2025.

Discussion focused on the challenge of commissioners, particularly new members, needing to navigate multiple documents. The Chair raised concerns about potential conflicts between the documents, citing quorum provisions as one example. After discussion, the commission reached consensus that a single, consolidated document would be preferable. Director Siegel suggested incorporating the relevant excerpts from the city council guidelines directly into the planning commission document, with citations indicating the source provision. Associate Planner Cromie suggested using distinct formatting, such as italics, to differentiate text drawn from the city council guidelines. Administrative Assistant Bates agreed to revise the document accordingly, noting that any future changes to the city council guidelines would need to be reflected in the planning commission document as well. The commission confirmed that provisions previously voted upon — including procedures for recusal and removal of persons for violations — would be retained.

No formal vote was taken; staff was directed to produce a consolidated document for subsequent review.

ITEMS FROM STAFF

Anticipated Schedule of Planning Commission Activities

Associate Planner Cromie outlined the upcoming code maintenance schedule: a work session with the Planning Commission is anticipated in August, a public hearing is expected in October, and adoption by the City Council with the amended code in effect is targeted by year-end.

Director Siegel advised that the urban growth boundary amendment solicitation is expected to be published June 1. He also noted that a property owner in the southwest riverfront district has applied for deannexation of parcels located primarily within the floodplain and stream corridor, and that this matter will be before the City Council.

Staff Updates for Planning Commission

Associate Planner Cromie reported that land use approval for the Hive Project on North College Street was granted during the week of the meeting. The project — an acronym for Housing Innovation Village Experience — utilizes alternative construction methods as part of a cottage cluster development to accelerate housing production.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Mailed Notice Envelope Standards. The Chair raised a concern stemming from a prior application in which mailed notices were sent in envelopes bearing commercial branding, causing recipients to discard them as junk mail. The Chair proposed a draft code amendment requiring mailed notices to be sent in plain envelopes displaying only the sender's address and no promotional markings. Director Siegel clarified that notices of this type are mailed by applicants rather than the city, but expressed support for establishing uniformity requirements. The commission concurred, and staff indicated the matter would be incorporated into the upcoming code maintenance work program.

Data Center Regulations. The Chair raised the issue of data center development, citing an instance in Michigan where a local planning commission's unanimous rejection of a rezoning request was subsequently overturned through litigation. The Chair proposed that the commission consider adopting a new chapter of the municipal code addressing data center facilities, encompassing infrastructure definitions, discretionary review requirements, water consumption standards, energy impact, cooling technology, cumulative regional analysis, community benefit arrangements, and decommissioning responsibilities. Planning Commissioner Jason Dale expressed support for proactive protections while noting that Newberg is not currently a high-risk target for large-scale data center development. Planning Commissioner Mansfield suggested that a water consumption threshold applicable to industrial infrastructure could address a core concern. Director Siegel acknowledged that Newberg's current power infrastructure limits its attractiveness to data center developers but agreed that preparation was prudent. The commission directed staff to add a study of potential data center regulations to the long-range planning work program.

Sidewalk Maintenance and Funding. Planning Commissioner Mansfield inquired about the status of a prior discussion regarding alternative sidewalk design options. Director Siegel indicated that while the River Street project is exploring alternative street sections, no formal policy direction has been received from the City Council. He noted that an update to the Transportation System Plan — for which a grant application is being pursued — would be the appropriate vehicle for formally revising city street sections and sidewalk standards. The Chair raised the related concern of property owners being legally obligated to replace sidewalks within 90 days of receiving notice from the city engineer, with potential liens on noncompliance, while the city's sidewalk grant and concrete crew assistance programs are currently unavailable. Director Siegel confirmed that restoration of such programs would require a budget request to the City Council and noted that the city's concrete crew is fully committed to ADA ramp replacement at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wright adjourned the May 14, 2026 Planning Commission meeting: 8:20 p.m.

These minutes are submitted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Attest:



Kriss Wright, Planning Commission Chair



Fé Bates, Secretary