



**Minutes - draft**  
**DESCHUTES COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**DESCHUTES SERVICES CENTER**  
**1300 NW WALL STREET, BEND, OREGON, 97703**  
**APRIL 10, 2025 – 5:30 P.M.**

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**I. Call to Order**

Chair Matt Cyrus called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Planning Commissioners present in person: Chair Matt Cyrus, Vice Chair Susan Altman, Nathan Hovekamp, Toni Williams, Jessica Kieras, Kelsey Kelley. Commissioners present via Zoom: Mark Stockamp. Staff present: Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Director; Will Groves, Planning Manager, Tarik Rawlings, Senior Transportation Planner, Tanya Saltzman, Senior Planner, Stephanie Marshall, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The Planning Commission (PC) reviewed the minutes from the March 27, 2025, meeting.

**Motion:** Vice Chair Altman moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kelley seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Five votes in favor, two abstentions from Commissioners Hovekamp and Williams.

**III. Public Comment**

None.

**IV. Action Items**

**1. Public Hearing - Continued: Clear and Objective Housing Text Amendments – Title 17 (Subdivisions), File No. 247-25-000110-TA,**

**Presenter:** Tarik Rawlings, Senior Transportation Planner

Tarik Rawlings, Senior Transportation Planner, provided an update regarding the ongoing public hearing for Title 17 Clear and Objective Text Amendments. He noted two additional written comments had been received: one from Chair Cyrus and another from Daniel Robinson with Schwabe Williamson and Wyatt (a follow-up to his initial comment). Both comments were being uploaded to the electronic record and provided in print form to Commissioners.

Tarik noted that since the initial March 27, 2025 hearing, two written public comments had been uploaded into the record. These came from Schwabe Williamson and Wyatt and from Rand Campbell, an attorney who also gave oral testimony at the previous hearing. The comments expressed concerns about various provisions, asking for changes to discretionary language or expressing general concerns.

Vice Chair Altman inquired about the definition for lot width in the code but not for lot length. Will Groves, Planning Manager, explained that lot width and lot depth are used in the code to address developable areas and constraints on lot layout. He noted that the code amendment approach was trying to move away from those specific terms where possible, focusing instead on buildable areas.

Commissioner Kieras asked about staff's response to public comments received. Tarik indicated that the general approach to addressing concerns would be to restore discretion through a two-track format: creating both a clear and objective track and a discretionary track to provide flexibility.

Will Groves further explained that staff tried to avoid closing opportunities in the code while creating clear and objective pathways. He noted that if feedback indicates options were unintentionally foreclosed, they would work to restore those options.

Commissioner Hovekamp asked for an update on how other jurisdictions were handling the July deadline for clear and objective language. Will explained that cities had been working with this requirement for years before it was applied to counties. He noted that the two-track approach being used by Deschutes County is one method that jurisdictions have employed. He added that while some sister counties are working on similar updates, many jurisdictions are taking a wait-and-see approach.

Commissioner Williams inquired about potential changes before the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) hearing. Will confirmed that typically staff would massage language in response to Planning Commission recommendations, particularly to address concerns about options that may have been unintentionally foreclosed.

With no further public testimony or commissioners' questions, Chair Cyrus asked for the discussion of the Commission.

**Motion:** Commissioner Williams moved to close the hearing, leave the written record open until 5:00 p.m. on April 16, 2025 and hold deliberations on April 24, 2025. Vice Chair Altman seconded the motion.  
**Vote:** All in favor, motion passed.

## **2. Deliberations: Draft Planning Division Work Plan for FY 2025-2026**

**Presenter:** Will Groves, Planning Manager; Peter Gutowsky, Director

Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Director, presented a memorandum outlining projects for the upcoming fiscal year. He noted that Table 4 represented staff's effort to identify priority discretionary and nondiscretionary projects or zoning text amendments. He requested Commission feedback on which projects should be prioritized as resources become available.

Will Groves noted that in previous years, the PC's approach had been to have group discussions about priorities rather than formal motions.

After discussion, the PC identified the following priorities ranked in order:

1. Dark Skies – Commissioners Williams, Kieras, Hovekamp, Kelley, Cyrus
2. Natural Resource and Hazard Planning – Commissioners Williams, Kieras, Stockamp, Cyrus, Altman, Kelley
3. Newberry County Update

Zoning Text Amendments rankings - Peter suggested the option of what the PC did last year by allowing staff to prioritize based on their workflow availability and known public priorities. Chair Cyrus suggested agreement with Peter and deferring staff for this category. Commissioner Williams agreed. Commissioner Kieras brought up rural childcare as a priority, agreed to by Commissioners Kelley and Altman.

**Panel Rankings :** Commissioner Kelley suggests a panel on housing.

Rankings 1-4 (add housing)

After much discussion there was not a winner by a large margin. All topics were of interest including the added topic of housing. The PC together decided that the priorities are:

- Water Resources
- Housing

### **3. Work Session: Clear and Objective Housing Text Amendments – Goal 5 (Title 18)**

**Presenter:** Tanya Saltzman, Senior Planner

Tanya Saltzman, Senior Planner, presented information on Module 3 of the Clear and Objective Housing Text Amendments, focusing on Goal 5 provisions in Title 18. She noted that consultants from MIG—Kate Rogers and Matt Hastie—were available online to answer questions.

Ms. Saltzman explained that this amendment package addresses landscape management combining zones, wildlife area combining zones, sensitive bird and mammal habitat combining zones, rimrock setbacks, wetlands, and fill and removal. She emphasized that the proposed amendments do not alter the acknowledged Goal 5 inventories or impact areas. They simply create clear and objective pathways through existing regulations. She confirmed that no public or agency comments had been received to date. A public hearing is scheduled for April 24, 2025.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions about specific provisions:

Commissioner Stockamp inquired about a provision requiring retention of trees and shrubs between rimrock and proposed structures. Will explained that this was a visual standard, and while the existing code only required retaining vegetation that reduced visibility, the clear and objective option would require retaining all such vegetation. The discretionary path would still be available for those with concerns about fire hazards.

Chair Cyrus questioned language about driveway access in landscape management areas. Will acknowledged this needed clarification to ensure property access was maintained while managing visual impacts.

Chair Cyrus also noted a potential conflict regarding height calculations compared to previous recommendations. Will explained that landscape management combining zones have separate height restrictions with different purposes from base zone height restrictions, and the natural grade provision was intentional to limit visual massing.

## **V. Planning Commission and Staff Comments**

Will Groves updated the PC on:

- The status of Clear and Objective amendments, with at least one more module in progress.
- Monitoring of development activity, which shows land use applications remain robust while other development applications have slowed.
- DLCD rulemaking regarding solar energy projects that may require future Commission action.

Peter Gutowsky provided updates on:

- Timeline for presenting the work plan to the BOCC, tentatively May 7, 2025.
- The Thornburg destination resort's LUBA remand initiation on April 7, 2025, with a hearing scheduled for May 7, 2025.
- The Community Development Department's budget hearing scheduled for May 13, 2025.

Commissioners expressed appreciation for staff's work, particularly on the Clear and Objective text amendments, noting the professional handling of a complex mandate from the state.

## **VI. Adjourn**

Chair Cyrus adjourned the meeting at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Griffin

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