



**Minutes**

**DESCHUTES COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
DESCHUTES SERVICES CENTER  
1300 NW WALL STREET, BEND, OREGON, 97703  
JULY 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, Toni Williams, Kelsey Kelley, Jessica Kieras. Present via Zoom: Mark Stockamp. Absent: Nathan Hovekamp. Staff present: Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Department (CDD) Director, Will Groves, Planning Manager, Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner, Tanya Saltzman, Senior Planner, Stephanie Marshall, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The Planning Commission (PC) reviewed the minutes from the June 26, 2025, meeting.  
Motion: Commissioner Williams moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kieras seconded the motion.  
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Public Comment**

None.

**IV. Action Items**

**1. Public Hearing: Dark Skies Text Amendments, File no. 247-25-000377-TA  
Presenter: Tanya Saltzman, Senior Planner**

Tanya opened the public hearing following standard procedures. She presented the proposed amendments to Deschutes County Code Chapter 15.10, Outdoor Lighting Control. The amendments aim to modernize regulations adopted in 1994 to reflect current science, technology, and community values. Key changes include:

- Simplified standards requiring all non-exempt fixtures to be downcast, fully shielded, and prevent light trespass.
- Removal of wattage-based tables and bulb-type terminology.
- Addition of non-regulatory guiding principles based on Dark Sky International standards.
- Reorganization for improved clarity.

Ms. Saltzman noted that building inspectors currently do not review lighting compliance and that enforcement remains challenging. The proposal focuses on voluntary compliance and education rather than enforcement, per Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) direction.

**Public Testimony:**

- John Thomas testified in support of the amendments but emphasized the need for effective enforcement. He described ongoing light trespass issues at his property lasting over 1,000 days despite multiple complaints.
- Bill Kowalik, Chair of Dark Sky Oregon, expressed general support but identified key shortcomings:
  - Absence of color temperature specifications.
  - Need for amber/warm-colored lights to reduce blue wavelength impacts.
  - Unclear treatment of greenhouse lighting.
  - Need for modern sports field lighting standards.He offered Dark Sky Oregon's assistance with future outreach efforts.
- Kim Gunderson strongly supported the amendments and volunteered to assist with public education efforts. She emphasized impacts on wildlife, particularly migrating birds.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

- Commissioner Williams confirmed American flag lighting remains exempt per federal flag code.
- Commissioner Kieras inquired about security lighting studies showing darker conditions can improve safety.
- Commissioner Kelley asked about amber light availability (currently primarily available online.)
- Commissioner Stockamp inquired about cost-effectiveness of amber lighting.

**Action:**

Motion: Commissioner Kieras moved to close the oral portion of the hearing and leave the written record open until July 16, 2025, 5:00 pm, with deliberations scheduled for July 24, 2025. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

**2. Work Session: Property Line Adjustment/Minor Variance Text Amendments, File no. 247-25-000399-TA  
Presenter: Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner**

Nicole presented proposed amendments to streamline property line adjustments involving substandard lots. The amendments would:

- Remove local criteria requiring variances for area reductions exceeding 10%.
- Directly apply state regulations under ORS 92.192
- Clarify procedures in the minor variance section.

Ms. Mardell explained the current code's 10% reduction limit creates unnecessary complications beyond state requirements. The BOCC directed staff to initiate these amendments following public testimony during the 2025-2026 work plan process.

**Commissioner Discussion:**

- Commissioner Williams expressed support for referencing ORS directly rather than creating duplicative local language, noting this approach reduces future code maintenance needs.

**V. Planning Commission and Staff Comments**

**Will Groves:**

- Confirmed the BOCC work plan update remains scheduled for July 23, 2024.

**Stephanie Marshall:**

- Reported on ongoing Comprehensive Plan update work and potential impacts from a recent Land Use Board of Appeals decision.

Peter Gutowsky:

- Announced the annual joint work session with the BOCC is scheduled for September 24, 2025.

Commissioner Comments:

All commissioners expressed appreciation for the efficient meeting and quality of public testimony received.

**VI. Adjourn**

Chair Cyrus adjourned the meeting at 6:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Griffin

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