



Minutes

**DESCHUTES COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
DESCHUTES SERVICES CENTER
1300 NW WALL STREET, BEND, OREGON, 97703
JUNE 26, 2025 – 5:30 P.M.**

THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN PERSON, ELECTRONICALLY, AND BY PHONE. IT WAS AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDED AND CAN BE ACCESSED AT THE DESCHUTES COUNTY MEETING PORTAL WEBSITE WWW.DESCHUTES.ORG/MEETINGS

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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, Kelsey Kelley, Nathan Hovekamp, Jessica Kieras. Present via Zoom: Toni Williams, Mark Stockamp. Staff present: Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Department (CDD) Director, Will Groves, Planning Manager, Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner.

II. Approval of Minutes

The Planning Commission (PC) reviewed the minutes from the June 12, 2025, meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Kelley 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: Farm and Forest Housekeeping Text Amendments, File no. 247-25-000297-TA

Presenter: Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner

Nicole opened the public hearing following standard procedures. She noted that no members of the public were present either in person or via Zoom, and no written comments had been received.

Commissioner Altman asked for clarification regarding replacement dwelling provisions and wildfire risk mapping language in ORS 215. Nicole explained that the proposed code amendment references state statute directly, allowing the county code to automatically align with any state legislative changes without requiring local amendments.

Motion: Commissioner Kieras moved to close the public hearing and commence deliberations. Vice Chair Altman seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Following brief deliberations:

Motion: Commissioner Kieras moved to adopt the recommendations presented in the public hearing and forward them to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Vice Chair Altman seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

2. Work Session: Dark Skies Text Amendments, File no. 247-25-000377-TA

Will presented information for the upcoming public hearing scheduled for July 10, 2025, on behalf of Tanya Saltzman. Key points included:

- The proposal simplifies current 1994 lighting regulations.
- New standard: all non-exempt fixtures must be downcast, shielded, with no light trespass.
- Emphasis on education and voluntary compliance per the BOCC direction.
- Removal of complex wattage-based tables.

Commissioner questions and discussion:

- *Building Inspection Involvement* – Chair Cyrus and Commissioner Kieras questioned why building inspections would not include lighting compliance verification, noting it would not seem overly burdensome since inspectors are already on site. Peter Gutowsky provided scenarios explaining the challenges. Chair Cyrus requested that someone from the building division attend the public hearing to address these concerns and explain why inspections would be burdensome. He shared his experience on a design review committee where they routinely inspect properties for light pollution/trespass compliance.
- *Enforcement Approach* – Commissioner Kieras asked whether the proposal would maintain a complaint-driven enforcement process versus voluntary compliance only. Will suggested discussing enforcement expectations during the public hearing process.
- *Agricultural Exemptions* – Vice Chair Altman inquired about why greenhouse lighting provisions were removed entirely from the proposed code and noted ambiguity in related text. Will indicated that farming and forest practices are exempt, though permanent installations would need to conform to ordinances.
- *Implementation Timeline* – Commissioner Kelley asked about requirements for new construction versus existing buildings. Prior installations were exempt for five years. Replacement fixtures or new installations need to meet the new standards.
- *Public Notification* – Commissioner Stockamp emphasized the importance of a thorough public notification process given the significant interest in previous dark skies discussions. Will confirmed that Tanya has sent notices to previous participants. Peter added that social media notifications would also be utilized.
- *Educational Approaches* –
 - Commissioner Kelley expressed enthusiasm for the initiative and suggested creating a “badge” or recognition program for properties meeting dark skies standards to encourage public participation.
 - Commissioner Williams suggested including dark skies education information in the annual property tax bill mailings.
 - Commissioner Hovekamp expressed appreciation for the emphasis on education and outreach, understanding capacity limitations while supporting the simplified code approach. He endorsed Commissioner Williams’ suggestion and emphasized the need for both education (“carrot”) and enforcement (“stick”) approaches.

V. Planning Commission and Staff Comments

Will Groves:

- Dept. of Land and Conservation Development (DLCD) solar rulemaking for Eastern Oregon has created new rules where counties are opted in by default for reduced regulatory burden on solar siting.

- BOCC will consider whether to opt out to preserve local discretion.

Peter Gutowsky:

- Senate Bill (SB) 83 repealing wildfire hazard maps awaits Governor's signature.
- SB 75 (third reading in House) would remove fire hardening requirements for rural ADU's; staff would recommend code amendments to align with state law.
- SB 1154 regarding groundwater areas of concern (applicable to South County) up for third reading.
- McKenzie Meadows applicant-initiated Goal 4 exception plan amendment/zone change from forest use to MUA-10 zone near Sisters; Hearings Officer recommended approval; BOCC hearing scheduled for August 6, 2025.

Nicole Mardell:

- The BOCC held first reading of County 2040 Plan yesterday, second reading scheduled for late July.
- The BOCC received presentation on sage grouse populations in Brothers area from Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon State University professor.
- Temporary hardship dwelling amendments: The BOCC approved PC recommendations with no changes; effective August 19, 2025

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioner Williams asked if there was a chance the BOCC would maintain fire hardening recommendations for rural ADU's. Peter indicated this would be discussed with the BOCC in late July.
- Vice Chair Altman is looking forward to the dark skies public hearing.

VI. Adjourn

Chair Cyrus adjourned the meeting at 6:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Griffin

All materials including (but not limited to) video, presentations, written material and submittals are subject to the County Retention Policy. The meeting was conducted in a hybrid format, adhering to the guidelines set by the Deschutes County Planning Commission for public engagement and meeting conduct.