

DRAFT MINUTES
City of Stevenson Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, February 09, 2026
6:00 PM

Attending:

PC Chair Jeff Breckel; Planning Commissioners Charles Hales, Anne Keesee, Auguste Zettler. Commissioner Lawson was not in attendance.

City Staff: **City Administrator Wesley Wootten, Daniel Pitairu, Permits and Records Manager**

Skamania County Community Development Staff: Mandy Hertel, Planner II

Public participants: Mary Repar, Andrea Wilbanks, Bernie Bacon, Dave Cox

PC Chair Jeff Breckel called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A. Public Comment Expectations: Reminders of meeting protocol.

PC Chair Breckel requested **City Administrator Wootten** explain the meeting protocol. Commenters must raise their hand and be acknowledged by the Chair. Please state your name clearly for the minute taker. Individual comments may be cut off after 3 minutes. Disruptive individuals may be required to leave the meeting. Persistent disruptions may result in the meeting being recessed and continued at a later date. Tools for remote or call in participants: *6 to mute/unmute & *9 to raise hand.

PC Meeting minutes from January 2026 were approved unanimously following a motion by **Commissioner Hales**, seconded by **Commissioner Keesee**.

1. Public Comments:

Mary Repar stated her opposition to the tree removal along Rock Creek by the PUD. She advocated for undergrounding utility lines. She also commented on methane monitors at the site of the former dumpsite.

B. Old Business
None provided.

C. New Business

1.

Public Hearing - Conditional Use Permit (applicant Wesley Huston)

VALUATION: The Planning Commission was asked to review Conditional Use Permit application **CUP-2025-003** and consider whether the proposed use (campground) can be

permitted under Suburban Residential zoning designation (SR) pursuant to CS 17.39.020.

The applications and project plans were available for public review at City Hall during regular business hours and at <https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/news>, and notice of the hearing had been published in a newspaper of general circulation on January 21st and 28th, 2026.

The CUP-2025-003 application requested permission to provide customers of Cohoperative, Inc., a nursery (Existing Use) located at 365 Foster Creek Road, Stevenson, Washington with the option of making overnight use of the same property through a limited number of primitive campsites (Proposed Use). Seventeen sites are proposed on the 3.2 acre property, which is also a commercial hop growing business.

a. Appearance of Fairness Doctrine

PC Chair Breckel explained and administered the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. The Appearance of Fairness Doctrine is a rule of law requiring government decision-makers to conduct non-court hearings and proceedings in a way that is fair, impartial and unbiased in both appearance and fact. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed to ensure fairness and impartiality. Disclosures include any financial interest in the final outcome, any outside (ex-parte) communications made with any party of interest or anything else that could be construed as a conflict or affects any decision making. Decision makers can be challenged by applicants regarding any perceived conflicts of interest.

Upon questioning, none of the Planning Commissioners disclosed any ex-parte communications concerning the application, and none reported any financial conflicts or other matters that would impede a fair and impartial decision. There were no challenges by the applicant or the public.

b. Presentation by Staff:

Mandy Hertel, Planner II with Skamania County Community Development provided a staff report. She shared a PowerPoint presentation showing the location, topography, and site characteristics of the property and reviewed applicable zoning codes. She noted the site is zoned suburban residential.

The Planning Commission will need to address four questions to determine if the Conditional Use:

- 1. Will not endanger the public health or safety;**
 - 2. Will not substantially reduce the value of adjoining or abutting property;**
 - 3. Will be in harmony with the area in which it is located;**
- and**
- 4. Will be in conformity with the comprehensive plan, transportation plan, or other plan officially adopted by the council.**

She addressed outdoor burning regulations, noise control, sanitation and restroom facilities as required through Environmental Health, and emergency vehicle access.

Bernie Bacon provided written comments on the pack in/pack out description for the site. Garbage, health concerns, generator noise, road access, and fire rings were additional issues raised. She questioned if 17 sites were considered low density under the zoning code.

c. Presentation by Applicant:

Wesley Huston, the applicant provided details on the proposed project. He considers the proposal to be a form of a co-op, as campers would be working on the hop farm. He noted campers would have to be personally known to him, there would be no transient options. For 17 campsites he would allow only 6 people per site for a total of 102 people.

Campers would be required to have their own sanitation and cooking facilities. Fire pits or fire rings will be available with possible limitations due to fire hazards.

He addressed noise concerns by noting generators would be in self-contained vehicles. He stated the Skamania Lodge located above the property could also be loud, but he would manage noise levels at the site.

Commissioners asked a series of questions regarding required restroom facilities, water and sewer usage, visual appearances of the site, density limits and a previous structure shown on the site map.

d. Public Hearing.

PC Chair Breckel opened the public hearing at 6:30.

Public comments received pro:

Andrea Willby spoke in support. She lives across from the site.

Dave Cox suggested looking for ways and conditions that would allow the project to work rather than approaching it negatively.

Public comments received against:

Mary Repar spoke about parking needs, setback requirements and utilities. She questioned if a CUP could be granted without a plan.

PC Chair Breckel closed the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

D. Discussion

Following the presentations and comments, the Planning Commission engaged in a substantial discussion. **PC Chair Breckel** noted the role of the Planning Commission is to determine what conditions to place on the CUP proposal to allow approval. Questions remained on water, sewer, bathrooms, and roadways for access. **Commissioner Zettler** stated it is a unique situation, and in the future there may be more instances of a business entity being in a residential area. He pointed to the need for a site plan as a lot of information was missing.

Mandy Hertel, Planner II suggested determining what parameters are needed prior to making any decisions.

MOTION to table the decision until March was made by **Commissioner Zettler**. It died for lack of a second.

MOTION to continue the public hearing until March 2026 was made by **Commissioner Zettler**, seconded by **Commissioner Keesee**.

The motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote the Commissioners agreed to send to the City Council their recommendations regarding short-term rentals in Stevenson. No changes or revisions were made.

Mary Repar spoke about a seed exchange coming up on April 18th at the Stevenson Library.

E. Adjournment

PC Chair Breckel adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.