



**White Salmon Planning Commission Meeting**  
**A G E N D A**  
**May 27, 2026 – 5:30 PM**  
**119 NE Church Ave and via Zoom Teleconference**

**Meeting ID: [881 7565 8044](#)**  
**Call in Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 US (Tacoma)**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

**Approval of Minutes**

- [1.](#) March 11, 2026 Meeting Minutes
- [2.](#) April 8, 2026 Meeting Minutes

**Public Comment**

Members of the public attending the meeting, either in person or via Zoom, are welcome to provide general public comment. Each speaker will be allotted three minutes.

**Public Hearing**

Hearing continued from May 13, 2026. Type II Site and Building Plan Review. A proposal for a multiplex residential use with four (4) dwellings on a 6,012 sq. ft. parcel in the R2 zone, located at 130 SE Wyers Street, planning file WS-SPR-2026.002.

- [3.](#) Commission discussion
4. Commission action

**Discussion Items**

- [5.](#) Shared Utilities – staff feedback and continuing discussion on shared water

**Adjournment**



**File Attachments for Item:**

1. March 11, 2026 Meeting Minutes



**DRAFT**

## **White Salmon Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES**

**March 11, 2026 – 5:30 PM**

**119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference**

### **COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

**Commission Members:**

Carl Trabant, Chair  
Michael Morneault  
Brendan Brown  
Erika Price  
Nate Loker

**Staff:**

Rowan Fairfield, City Planner  
Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner  
Kelly Hickok, Legal Counsel

### **CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL**

Chair Carl Trabant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present.

Roll call was conducted by staff:

**Chair Carl Trabant** — Present

**Commissioner Erika Price** — Present

**Commissioner Michael Morneault** — Present

**Commissioner Brendan Brown** — Present (Online)

Staff confirmed that a quorum was present.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No members of the public provided comment.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Pre-approved building plans**

Dr. Michael Mehaffy provided a presentation regarding the City's proposed pre-approved housing plans and factory-built housing program. Dr. Mehaffy explained that the program was originally initiated in 2024 and is intended to reduce housing development costs, streamline permitting, and encourage construction of middle housing types compatible with the community's character. The presentation highlighted that pre-approved plans could reduce architectural and engineering expenses, provide more predictable permitting timelines, and lower development risks for builders and homeowners.

Dr. Mehaffy noted that the program would allow permit review to focus primarily on site-specific elements such as utilities and foundations, as the building plans themselves would already be reviewed for code compliance, seismic standards, and fire and life safety requirements. He emphasized that the program could support infill development and diversify the City's housing stock by encouraging smaller and more attainable housing options identified as needed in prior housing studies and the Housing Action Plan.

The Commission reviewed the results of public outreach and preference surveys conducted as part of the planning process. Stakeholder meetings and community surveys were used to

evaluate housing designs, including duplexes, multiplexes, and manufactured homes. Sixteen plans received favorable scores and were recommended for consideration, while lower-scoring designs were removed from the program. Dr. Mehaffy noted that community feedback generally favored traditional small-town architectural character over more contemporary styles.

Discussion also included estimated review and approval costs for initial plan submissions, which were projected to range between approximately \$4,000 and \$6,000 for the first review cycle, with significantly reduced costs for future use of approved plans. Dr. Mehaffy explained that repeat applications using approved plans could reduce review costs and shorten timelines substantially.

The presentation also outlined several potential implementation strategies, including establishing a Master Permit Program, pursuing grants and incentives to offset initial review costs, exploring partnerships with manufacturers and utility providers, and developing demonstration projects to showcase approved housing types. Additional opportunities discussed included sponsorships, philanthropic funding sources, and utility or system development charge incentives to encourage participation in the program.

Commissioners discussed the importance of balancing housing affordability and increased housing options with preservation of the community's traditional character. Dr. Michael Mehaffy responded to Commissioner Michael Morneault's questions regarding the financing and implementation of the proposed pre-approved housing plans program. Discussion focused on the challenge of upfront review costs for early adopters and potential strategies for distributing or offsetting those costs through grants, incentives, or other funding mechanisms. Commissioners discussed the importance of "priming the pump" to encourage initial participation in the program.

Commissioner Morneault raised concerns regarding infrastructure and utility costs associated with housing development. Dr. Mehaffy acknowledged that while pre-approved plans could streamline permitting and reduce design costs, infrastructure availability and utility hookups remain significant barriers to housing affordability and development.

Discussion also addressed the role of aesthetics and neighborhood compatibility in the review process. Dr. Mehaffy clarified that the public feedback process primarily evaluated exterior appearance and neighborhood fit rather than full architectural or engineering review. He noted that the goal was to reduce opposition to housing projects by selecting designs that align with community preferences and minimize concerns related to scale, sunlight access, and compatibility with surrounding development.

Commissioners discussed whether the selected plans adequately addressed "missing middle" housing needs. Dr. Mehaffy explained that some larger multiplex designs received less public support during the survey process, limiting the number of smaller-scale multiplex proposals included among the preferred plans. Commissioners expressed concern that some of the selected duplexes remained relatively large and may not provide the level of affordability commonly associated with middle housing.

Commissioners also discussed parking requirements and garage configurations within the proposed plans. Dr. Mehaffy noted that off-street parking requirements would still apply under

current code standards and that garage placement would vary depending on site conditions and alley access.

Commissioner Erika Price expressed support for the public outreach process and emphasized the importance of community participation in evaluating the visual aesthetics of proposed housing designs.

Chair Carl Trabant raised concerns regarding the term “pre-approved plans,” noting that the plans had not yet undergone full technical review or formal approval. City Planner Rowan Fairfield clarified that the current phase represented community-selected or community-endorsed concepts rather than fully approved plans. City Planner Fairfield explained that the City was considering an approach where early adopters would complete the first full review process, potentially supported by grants or incentives, rather than having the City fund approval of all plans upfront.

Discussion also addressed the extent to which future homeowners could modify approved plans. Dr. Mehaffy explained that minor interior modifications would likely have minimal impact on review costs, while more substantial design changes could require additional review and increase costs significantly. Commissioner Erika Price noted that homeowners requesting modifications would likely need to hire design professionals to revise and stamp updated plans.

The Commission further discussed the distinction between exterior conceptual review and full engineering review. Dr. Mehaffy explained that full plan approval would still require review for structural, seismic, plumbing, and code compliance by the appropriate agencies and consultants before plans could be considered fully pre-approved.

Chair Trabant expressed concern that some plans included very large duplexes or structures that did not align with his interpretation of affordable middle housing. Dr. Mehaffy responded that middle housing classifications refer primarily to housing type rather than unit size and emphasized that the list of plans should remain flexible and subject to future refinement.

Commissioners and staff discussed potential next steps for the program, including obtaining more detailed cost estimates and review information from the County and other agencies. City Planner Fairfield stated that additional research and outreach would continue before the item returns to the Commission for further discussion. No formal action was taken.

## **2. Shared Utilities (Continuing Discussion)**

### **Workshop topics and outreach for March 25**

The Commission then transitioned to discussion regarding shared utilities and preparation for an upcoming workshop on the topic. Chair Trabant summarized research regarding potential cost savings associated with shared sewer and water utilities, including both installation costs and monthly utility savings for homeowners. He noted that shared sewer utilities appeared more feasible than shared water utilities, particularly for smaller-scale developments.

Commissioners discussed concerns regarding billing, maintenance responsibility, and possible conflicts and solutions for shared utility systems. City Planner Fairfield summarized interviews with engineering consultants and Public Works staff, who noted that shared sewer systems can create challenges related to maintenance disputes, clogs, and homeowner awareness of shared

infrastructure responsibilities. A recent example involving a shared sewer line in White Salmon was discussed as an illustration of potential complications.

City Planner Fairfield explained that engineering staff generally viewed shared sewer systems as more practical for infill development projects where reduced trenching and infrastructure costs may provide meaningful savings. However, consultants recommended that shared utility arrangements be considered on a case-by-case basis and clearly documented through recorded plats or title notices.

Commissioners discussed additional questions to address during the upcoming workshop, including billing systems, sub-metering, repair responsibilities, contractor expectations, and whether shared utility savings would meaningfully improve housing affordability. Commissioner Brendan Brown suggested exploring coordination with utility providers and other agencies to better facilitate shared utility arrangements beyond the City's direct jurisdiction.

City Planner Fairfield and Chair Trabant discussed outreach efforts for the upcoming workshop, including notifications through the City's Voyant alert system, flyers, and direct outreach by Commissioners to interested builders and developers. The Commission agreed that additional discussion and stakeholder input would be valuable before considering future policy direction. No formal action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

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Carl Trabant, Chair

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Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner

**File Attachments for Item:**

2. April 8, 2026 Meeting Minutes



**DRAFT**

## **White Salmon Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES**

**April 8, 2026 – 5:30 PM**

**119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference**

### **COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

**Commission Members:**

Carl Trabant, Chair  
Michael Morneault  
Brendan Brown  
Erika Price  
Nate Loker

**Staff:**

Rowan Fairfield, City Planner  
Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner  
Kelly Hickok, Legal Counsel

### **CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL**

Chair Carl Trabant called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present.

Roll call was conducted by staff:

**Chair Carl Trabant** — Present

**Commissioner Erika Price** — Present

**Commissioner Michael Morneault** — Present

**Commissioner Brendan Brown** — Present (Online)

Staff confirmed that a quorum was present.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 1. Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2026**
- 2. Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2026**
- 3. Meeting Minutes – March 25, 2026**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No members of the public provided comment.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**4. Continuing discussion and next steps on Shared Utilities**

The Commission continued discussion on shared utilities and potential code amendments related to shared side sewers and shared water systems. Commissioners generally expressed support for continuing to explore shared side sewers, particularly for unit lot subdivisions and infill development, while emphasizing the need for clear standards and limitations. Discussion focused on avoiding case-by-case determinations by creating objective criteria, such as limited frontage or side yard constraints, for when shared utilities would be allowed.

Staff summarized feedback received from the public workshop, Public Works, engineering consultants, and former planning staff. Concerns discussed included long-term maintenance responsibilities, administrative burdens, meter-reading logistics, and potential neighbor conflicts. City Planner Rowan Fairfield indicated that staff is leaning toward recommending shared side

sewers only, while delaying or potentially excluding shared water systems due to unanswered operational and billing concerns.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of requiring recorded Joint Use and Maintenance Agreements (JUMAs), CC&Rs, HOA agreements, or plat notes to ensure future property owners are aware of shared utility arrangements. The Commission also discussed situations where shared utilities may be appropriate, including previously developed properties being divided through unit lot subdivisions and lots with limited space for separate utility lines.

Staff will gather additional information from Public Works, the Finance Department, and the Building Department regarding meter-reading capabilities, administrative impacts, and potential code changes needed to implement shared utility provisions. The Commission agreed to revisit the topic at a future meeting, depending on the timing of the upcoming site plan review and staff research.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

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Carl Trabant, Chair

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Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner

**File Attachments for Item:**

3. Commission discussion

## Additional Code citations and prior interpretations for WS-SPR-2026.002

Prepared by Rowan Fairfield, 5/20/2026

### 1. Principal uses, dwelling structures, and dwelling units in R2 zone

At the last meeting, the Commissioners asked for more information from staff about how the regulations of the R2 zone have been interpreted. Specifically, the question is whether the R2 zone allows multiple dwelling **units**, or multiple dwelling **structures**. The following sections of the Code are relevant to this question (bold emphasis added):

*17.28.010 Principal uses permitted outright.*

*Principal uses permitted outright in the R2 district include:*

A. *Principal uses permitted outright in residential district R1, plus up to four rowhouse or **multiplex units**, provided that the end or side units are set back five feet from the adjacent property lines, and meet other development standards of this zone.*

*17.28.040 Density provisions.*

*Density provisions for the R2 district are as follows:*

A. *Maximum number of **primary dwelling structures** per lot: Four;*

*17.08.430 - Multiple-family residence; multiplex.*

*"Multiple-family residence" or "multiplex" (or "multifamily") means a **building** arranged to be occupied by more than two families, occupying one lot.*

*17.08.495 - Primary dwelling structure.*

*"Primary dwelling **structure**" means any dwelling **unit** that is not an accessory dwelling unit.*

The Planning Department has consistently interpreted WSMC Chapter 17.28 to mean that only one (1) detached primary dwelling structure is allowed; additional detached

dwellings can be approved only if they meet the standards for an ADU. A recent appeal to the Hearing Examiner affirmed that interpretation. To summarize, the appellant wanted to build a second primary (not ADU) dwelling in the R2 zone. The Hearing Examiner found that “in order to give effect to all of the provisions of the Code, WSMC 17.28.040.A must be construed to allow a maximum of four rowhouse or multiplex units as primary dwelling structures on a single lot or one single-family detached dwelling structure as a primary dwelling structure with up to two accessory dwelling units. **This section does not allow four single-family detached dwelling structures per lot.**” (Emphasis added.)

If a second single-family dwelling is not allowed in R2 as a primary use, then it follows that a second duplex as a primary use would also not be allowed. The Planning Commission has indicated that the breezeway is not sufficient to meet the “multiplex” definition, therefore, the conclusion is that the building plans must be revised to have all four units structurally attached as a single building.

## **2. ADU Classification**

This development cannot be classified as a duplex with 2 ADUs, because the smaller units cannot meet the design standards of WSMC Chapter 17.64 “Accessory Dwelling Units”.

- 17.64.030(D) which says that “maximum unit size” cannot exceed the primary dwelling and,
- 17.64.030(G) for “scale and visual subordination” which says that the ADUs “shall not comprise more than sixty percent of the total front elevation of visible structure”. The front units are smaller and visually prominent.

## **3. Suggested Condition of Approval**

The applicant shall revise the building plans so that the four dwellings are structurally attached by at least one wall from floor to ceiling, and form a single building, sharing a foundation and roof. The revised building plans can be submitted for a building permit and approved by staff with a typical Type I-A process.

**File Attachments for Item:**

5. Shared Utilities – staff feedback and continuing discussion on shared water

## Shared Water Questions for Departments

*Prompt: The Planning Commission is proposing to allow developers to use “**shared water**” as an option for their utilities, meaning that homes on separate parcels would share a master meter. I’m gathering feedback on the feasibility, benefits, and risks of this idea.*

### **Public Works (Chris True and Jason Kinley) recommendation: No.**

Notes from staff discussion on 5/14/2027:

- Puts ownership on the master meter. If one user becomes delinquent, then water service would have to be shut off for all users.
- It would remove a lever for compliance with sewer bill. If sewer bills are unpaid, we can shut off their water. If one becomes delinquent, then water service would have to be shut off for all users.
- It would be on the owner of the master meter to bill the sub-meters. Additional administration burden for users.
- Would create a lot of billing issues. Our system is not set up to handle that configuration.
- It would negatively affect connection fees. Our fees are based on meter size. If two units are using one meter, they’d be paying half of the typical cost of the connection fee and facilities charges.
- Our rate structure would need to change. We’d need a new water rate study.
- For a certain number of service connections (fifteen units/ twenty people), Dept. of Health would require a small water system and a certified operator.
- Could affect fire flow volumes.
- Would need stringent guidelines on exactly what is allowed, especially in public right-of-way.
- Large meters are less accurate at measuring low volumes, so there’s a higher risk of the city not being compensated fairly for water use. This could be remedied with newer, more expensive meters.
- Initial construction costs (trenching) might be lower.
- Shared repair costs for the master meter might be lower, but repairs to submeters may cancel out this benefit.
- PW only locates to the master meter. It would be on the owners to locate all service lines. Increased risk to damage to service lines.

- Lower water volumes can result, for example, if one user is taking a shower while another waters the lawn.
- High risk of citizen conflicts and grumpiness.
- We have one situation like this in White Salmon ( a legacy issue).
- Chris True has seen this situation (as a legacy problem) in other water districts, and it's generally seen as something to correct and remedy, a temporary solution at best, and not allowed.
- "Too many headaches"

**Utility clerk (Troy Rosenberg) recommendation: No.**

Notes from staff discussion on 5/18/2027:

- Generally, we have an account for each parcel, so it wouldn't be a problem for the system. The problem would happen when water usage is charged.
- What property is the master meter is actually on? Could create an imbalance between the parties.
- Possible benefit if there are issues with right-of-way, but this could be solved in other ways, like sleeving.
- Used to allow "Buckhorns", where a main line terminates in a Y shape with two meters, but not anymore, because again, an issue for one branch can cause the other to also shut down for repair.
- Much higher risk of users not being charged fairly and leading to neighbor conflict.
- Owners would have to maintain their own submeters; PW maintains master meters which are city property.
- Ultimately adds to the number of items that need to be physically maintained.

## **Building Official (Chad Lindley) recommendation: No.**

Notes from staff discussion on 5/21/2027:

- Main concerns with shared water utilities include:
  - Unclear billing responsibilities and complications
  - Maintenance responsibility disputes
  - Shared shut-offs affecting multiple properties (Issues when one party fails to pay their portion of the bill)
  - Local Codes
- Lindely explained that if one property owner does not pay:
  - Another party may become responsible for the full bill
  - Water shutoff could negatively affect parties who have paid
- He also raised concerns regarding:
  - Local utility and municipal code requirements
  - Whether the water provider (City of White Salmon) would allow one meter to serve separate tax lots
- Regarding maintenance responsibilities:
  - Shared systems would require cross-contamination protection
  - Preventative measures would be needed to stop contaminated water from backing into another property's system
  - Legal documentation or contracts would likely be necessary to define maintenance obligations
- Lindely stated that shared utility systems create:
  - Administrative complications
  - Additional burdens for municipalities in establishing guidelines and enforcement
- Discussion regarding historical/shared utility practices:
  - Shared utilities may have been used historically when it was the only feasible way to provide service to another property
- When asked whether jurisdictions in Wasco or Hood River counties allow shared utilities:
  - Lindely said he was not aware of any
- Regarding who benefits from shared utilities:

- Lindely stated he did not believe they substantially benefit anyone.
- There could be an initial savings because only one tap and meter installation would be required, and property owners could split upfront costs
- He questioned the long-term advantage of a single water tap and meter serving multiple properties
- On potential cost savings:
  - Lindely acknowledged there *could* be an initial savings because only one tap and meter installation would be required, and property owners could split upfront costs
  - However, he stated this may be the only real benefit.
- Due to the number of potential issues and liabilities, Lindely's recommendation would be not to approve such arrangements.