



MEETING MINUTES

Bend Planning Commission

Monday, 2/23/2026, 5:30 p.m. Regular Meeting

The hybrid meeting started at 5:31 p.m., in-person and online.

The public was invited to watch online at: www.bendoregon.gov/planningcommission

1. Roll Call:

- Margo Clinton – Chair
- Nathan Nelson – Vice Chair
- Bob Gressens
- Suzanne Johannsen
- Erin Ludden
- Katie Schnur
- Scott Winters

Commissioners Present: All Commissioners were present except Commissioner Ludden and Commissioner Winters.

Staff Present: Ian Leitheiser, City Attorney; Colin Stephens, Community Development Director; Renee Brooke, Planning Manager; Pauline Hardie, Senior Planner.

2. Visitors:

The Chair opened the floor for comments on non-agenda items. Attendees were encouraged to fill out a speaker slip and approach the podium, or raise their hand online, to provide comments.

Will Green spoke about the Planning Commission liaison initiative, expressing support for the goal of improving communication with neighborhood districts but concern about how community input is collected and presented. He emphasized the importance of data transparency and suggested that community engagement efforts include basic demographic reporting and documentation of outreach, so that decision-makers understand who is participating and which segments of the community are not being reached.

3. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing:



3.1 PLTEXT20250659: Proposed amendments to Bend Development Code (BDC) 3.6.500, Short-Term Rentals, to require properties within the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zoning district to follow the Short-Term Rental (STR) review type, concentration limit, and number of STRs allowed per property as the underlying residential Comprehensive Plan Map designation.

Staff: Pauline Hardie, Senior Planner, phardie@bendoregon.gov

Chair Clinton convened the hearing at 5:35 p.m. and asked the Commission if anyone had pre-hearing contacts, bias, prejudice, or personal interest. Commissioner Johannsen reported visiting the three subject sites but stated this would not affect the ability to participate impartially. The Chair then asked meeting attendees if there was any challenge with respect to Commissioners' bias, prejudgment, or personal interest. No challenges were made.

Planning Manager Brooke explained the quasi-judicial procedural requirements of State law.

Senior Planner Hardie gave her **presentation**. The proposal is a text amendment initiated by the City of Bend to modify Bend Development Code (BDC) 3.6.500, Short-Term Rentals, for five legacy Neighborhood Commercial (CN)-zoned properties in the Old Bend Neighborhood District that carry an underlying Comprehensive Plan designation of Medium Density Residential (RM). Under current code, Short-Term Rentals (STRs) on CN-zoned properties are processed through a Type I Review with no public noticing requirement, are exempt from the 500-foot separation standard that applies in residential zones, and are not subject to a numerical cap on STR units per property. One of the five properties currently has a legally permitted STR. The proposed amendments would align these CN properties with the STR standards applicable to surrounding RM-designated properties by requiring a Type II administrative review with public notice, compliance with the 500-foot separation requirement between STRs or vacation home rentals, and a limit of one STR unit per property. The proposed amendments do not currently include any specific grandfathering provision for existing property owners beyond existing legally permitted STRs.

Hardie summarized the history of the proposal, noting that in September 2024 the City Council directed staff to prepare amendments to apply residential standards to CN-zoned properties for STR permit review. The Planning Commission held a work session and a public hearing in October 2024 and recommended approval to Council. In December 2024, the City Council held a public hearing but tabled the matter due to the complexity of potential revisions raised late in the meeting. In November 2025, the Council revisited the issue and directed staff to move forward with the amendments. A Planning Commission work session on the current proposal was held two weeks prior to this hearing and a City Council hearing on the amendments is tentatively scheduled for April 15, with a second reading anticipated in May and an effective date in mid-June if adopted.



Hardie outlined the applicable Quasi-Judicial text amendment criteria in BDC Chapter 4.6 and the need for consistency with relevant policies in Bend Comprehensive Plan Chapter 11 and the Statewide Planning Goals. Aligning STR regulations for these CN properties with the underlying RM designation helps promote long-term housing opportunities, supports the City Council's housing goals, and helps preserve neighborhood-serving commercial opportunities in complete, walkable neighborhoods. Staff concluded that the proposed amendments meet all applicable approval criteria and recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council.

Vice Chair Nelson asked for clarification on the 12-month gap from when this item was proposed back in 2024. Hardie clarified that the lapse was primarily due to scheduling and the timing of a Council request to bring the issue back.

Chair Clinton opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. Testimony was provided by the following individuals:

Michael McLandress: Supported the proposed amendments, stating that CN-zoned properties currently create a loophole that allows excessive STR concentration in Old Bend. He emphasized neighborhood livability, existing STR saturation, and consistency with City housing goals.

Chris Hughes: Voiced support for the amendments and concurred with the concerns and points raised by the previous speaker.

Michael Olin: Supported the amendments, explaining that STR density in Old Bend has grown excessively and negatively affects long-term neighborhood character and livability.

James Malarkey: Opposed the amendments, expressing concern about significant financial consequences for CN property owners who invested under the existing STR rules. Requested fairness, regulatory predictability, and possibly grandfathering for current owners.

Jason Bowerman: Opposed the amendments, stating that limiting STRs would impose major economic impacts on affected properties and may unintentionally discourage redevelopment and mixed-use investment.

Scott Crawford: Opposed the amendments, arguing the changes target only five tax lots and would not meaningfully affect citywide STR supply but would financially harm owners and undermine confidence in Bend's regulatory environment.

John Frey: Opposed the amendments, explaining that redevelopment plans relying on STRs would be jeopardized and that STRs could improve neighborhood vitality. Expressed concern about shifting rules after property acquisition.

Andrew Crosby: Supported the amendments, emphasizing that the issue is a straightforward policy correction. Stated that CN was never intended to allow new



STRs and that additional STRs harm neighborhood cohesion and long-term housing availability.

Nathan Akers: Opposed the amendments, stating that he and his partners invested substantially in the Iron Horse property based on clear guidance from City staff that STRs were allowed. Raised concerns about retroactive impacts, financial losses, and precedent.

Perka Ouellette: Supported the amendments, expressing concern about already high STR density and the effect of additional STRs on livability, parking, and fairness for long-term neighbors.

Nunzie Gould: Supported the amendments, describing them as necessary to address long-standing neighborhood concerns. Stated that CN-zoned businesses are viable without STRs and that STR-related economic arguments are overstated.

Parker Rewin: Supported the amendments, stating that STRs undermine the historic character and cultural fabric of Old Bend and are incompatible with the intent of preserving historic residential neighborhoods.

After public testimony concluded, CDD Director Stephens corrected the record, confirming that the existing STR code adopted in 2015 intentionally listed CN among the commercial districts where STRs were permitted through a Type I process, rather than omitting CN by oversight. Commissioner Gressens asked for further explanation on the intent of this original policy. Staff explained that it was deliberate at the time, but that Council has since directed staff to bring forward amendments to change that approach based on current policy goals.

Commissioner Schnur asked if there are any plans to grandfather in the Iron Horse property given the pretense and communication with the City prior to their purchase. Hardie explained that it is not included in the proposed amendments, but that the Commission could make a recommendation to amend the staff proposal.

Chair Clinton closed the public hearing at 6:24 p.m. and the Commissioners deliberated.

Commissioner Johannsen discussed the origins of Bend's STR regulations, noting that concerns raised by the Old Bend neighborhood about the proliferation of STRs and changing neighborhood character were a primary driver of the City's STR policy, including the adoption and later expansion of separation standards.

Commissioners agreed that the proposed amendments do not prohibit residential development or mixed-use projects on the subject sites and would still allow a range of housing types and neighborhood-serving commercial uses, while limiting additional STRs.

Vice Chair Nelson observed that the City Council's current direction emphasizes meeting housing needs and supporting livable, complete neighborhoods, and that applying RM-based STR standards to these five CN properties is consistent with the underlying Comprehensive Plan designation and those Council goals. He indicated openness to a



compromise, such as allowing one STR per CN property as had been previously discussed at Council.

Chair Clinton expressed support for the amendments but also empathized with property owners involved. Changes to permitted uses and zoning regulations are an inherent possibility in a growing city, and such changes occur regularly in Bend and other cities.

Commissioner Johannsen moved to recommend that the City Council amend Bend Development Code 3.6.500, Short-Term Rentals, to require properties within the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zoning district to follow the Short-Term Rental (STR) review type, concentration limit, and number of STRs allowed per property as the underlying residential Comprehensive Plan map designation. Commissioner Schnur seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Nelson proposed an amendment to the motion to allow one STR per CN property notwithstanding separation requirements. Commissioner Gressens seconded the amended motion. After a brief discussion, Gressens withdrew the second, and the amendment was not brought to a vote. The Commission then voted on the original motion as read. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Johannsen was nominated to bring the recommendation of the Commission to the City Council.

4. Approval of Minutes:

The Planning Commission approved January 26, 2026, Meeting Minutes.

5. Communications:

5.1. Reports from Planning Commissioners

Commissioner Gressens provided a brief update on his liaison role with the neighborhood districts, including forwarding information on the growth plan and discussing how liaison efforts could improve understanding of land use processes. Commissioner Johannsen reflected on the recent neighborhood survey brought up during public comment, expressing misperception about the Planning Commission's authority and responsibilities. Gressens reaffirmed the value of the liaison initiative as a way to improve public understanding and engagement, while recognizing that not all outreach efforts will be statistically representative or formally structured.

5.2. Report from Planning Manager

Renee Brooke, Planning Manager, reminded Commissioners of the upcoming Advisory Body Summit with the City Council, scheduled for Thursday from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Public Works Campus, and encouraged Commissioners to attend. The Planning

Commission's next meeting is anticipated on March 9 and is expected to include proposed amendments related to the Timber Yards Master Plan.

5.3. Report from Community Development Director

Colin Stephens, Community Development Director, had nothing to report.

5.4. Report from City Attorney

Ian Leitheiser, City Attorney, had nothing to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Maggie St. Onge.



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