



CITY OF ALBANY
Planning Commission

MINUTES

September 15, 2025

Council Chambers – 5:15 p.m.

Approved: October 13, 2025

Call to Order

5:15 p.m.

Chair JoAnn Miller called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Skylar Bailey, Stacey Bartholomew, Tami Cockeram, Ron Green, Ted Bunch Jr., Paul Spilsbury, Karen Cardosa, JoAnn Miller

Not present: Kenny Larson (excused)

Approval of the Minutes

5:16 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Cockeram moved to approve the minutes with noted correction from the August 18, 2025, Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Public Comment

None.

Scheduled Business

Public Hearing: Planning File CU-04-25 – Type III Quasi-Judicial Process

Application for Conditional Use Review to convert an existing single dwelling unit at 1617 Belmont Avenue SW used as an in-home daycare into a Montessori school classified as an educational institution.

Chair Miller called the public hearing to order at 5:17 p.m.

Commission Declarations

No members declared a conflict of interest.

No members reported ex-parte contact.

None reported a site visit.

No members abstained from participating in the proceeding.

There were no challenges to the participation of any commissioners or their right to determine this matter.

David Martineau, Planning Manager, read the procedures.

Staff Report

5:19 p.m.

Project Planner Liz Olmstead presented the staff report for planning file no. CU-04-25 sharing slides*.

Applicant Testimony

5:22 p.m.

Homeowner and Director, KatieMarie Zambrano, provided testimony that with the growth of the community, childcare is at a premium. With this conditional use they will be able to fully utilize their square foot capacity and sustainably remain in operations for their teachers, students and community.

Commission Questions

Commissioner Cardosa shared that having 31 people in a 1300 square foot home seems a lot and wondered how it is set up. Zambrano explained the layout of classrooms incorporated in the bedrooms/living areas and redesigned garage space. She emphasized that the number of students varies day-to-day so there is little overcrowding.

Commissioner Bartholomew asked about the parking availability and needs. Zambrano explained use of the property for parking as needed but is unsure at this time about creating more space. Bartholomew asked for clarification about the owner's statement about how additional students will make the playground quieter. Zambrano answered that there are only a fixed number of children allowed outside at a time, right now they can all go out, but with more students they will limit the number by half, which should reduce the noise level.

Commissioner Cardosa asked whether a permit was required for using the garage. Zambrano replied that there is a permit required, and they are waiting for the approval of the conditional use before applying for permits.

Public Testimony

5:29 p.m.

Edith Taylor enthusiastically supported approval of this application as a benefit to the neighborhood and surrounding community.

Irene McTavish, whose son had attended Peaceful Gardens, testified to the positive experiences she has had with their educators.

Applicant Rebuttal

None.

Chair Miller closed this public hearing at 5:37 p.m.

Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Miller noted her only concern was about the parking or congestion and that was addressed during the testimony regarding drop-offs.

Motion: Commissioner Bailey moved to approve Conditional Use Review as conditioned under planning file CU-04-25. This motion is based on the findings and conclusions in the September 8, 2025, staff report and the findings in support of the application made by the Planning Commission during deliberations on this matter. Commissioner Cockeram seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Public Hearing Type III Quasi-Judicial Process File CU-05-25, RL-06-25, and SP-13-25

Request for a master plan development called 15Fifty to construct 83 single dwelling units with common open spaces, shared community center on an undeveloped lot. The replat is to combine 5 lots into 2. A site plan review for the removal of 28 trees to construct infrastructure and homes at 1550 Waverly Drive SE.

Chair Miller called the public hearing to order at 5:41 p.m.

Commission Declarations

No members declared any conflict of interest, ex-parte contact or specific site visit (it is a site driven by frequently).

No members abstained from participating in the proceedings.

No one attending the hearing challenged the commissioners right to decision.

David Martineau read the procedures.

Staff Report

Project Planner David Martineau presented the staff report for planning file no. CU-05-25 et al sharing slides*.

Applicant Testimony

5:47 p.m.

Nichols & Irish-Land Use Planning Consultant, Darren Nichols and Carson Halley with Green Elk Holdings provided the following summarized testimony. The project 15Fifty Place is a planned neighborhood community. The project is trying to meet needed housing needs for seniors, veterans, and workforce members in Albany. The location is walkable to services and shopping, and direct public access to the library.

Commission Questions

5:59 p.m.

Commissioner Cardosa asked about the criteria for move-in and concerns she had with parking. Halley answered that there is a credit criterion, and some units are reserved for seniors or veterans. The remainder of the units are for the entry level workforce as an interim step for housing starting at 80% of area median income.

Cardosa then asked about the management of common areas. Halley shared that those areas will be managed professionally by central management.

Commissioner Bartholomew noted the difference between the current presentation and the application materials and asked about why the difference occurred. Joseph Tanner, architect, came forward to explain that the initial designs were conceptual and the final designs changed a bit from the preliminary designs for small high-quality units.

Commissioner Cockeram asked about Central Property Management. Halley answered that they manage up and down the corridor from Corvallis through Everett, WA.

Halley added that this is a privately funded project, they aren't taking any public subsidies which enables them to be flexible and able to deliver the project quickly.

Commissioner Cockeram asked if they were open to selling outright any of the units as there are not enough affordable housing available to buy. Halley said they had investigated those options, but it didn't work with the overhead involved.

Commissioner Cardosa asked about a Homeowners Association (HOA). Halley said there is a uniform management plan for the whole community and no HOA will be involved.

Commissioner Spilsbury asked if there were other communities they had set up in a similar way. Halley answered that they are really pioneering this concept.

Commissioner Miller was also wondering about the market study as there seems to be apartments that are still not completely occupied in the area. Halley agreed on that observation, but the apartment rents are higher and are trying to be competitive rent wise.

Commissioner Bartholomew asked about their request for exemptions on the property taxes and how they viewed that as a possibility for the development. Halley shared that there have been discussions on a property tax exemption on multi-unit exemptions as an incentive to help offset the costs for multi-unit development they remain optimistic that Albany will explore that but know it probably isn't feasible on their current timeline.

Bartholomew continued by asking as a phased project what the timeline is. Halley explained that the phasing is a function of the financing process.

Martineau added that the City Council did approve the ordinance that allows the SDCs to be deferred.

[Ron Green joined the meeting at 5:58 p.m.]

Commissioner Green congratulated the developer on the issue of car-centric expectations. He thought that the location and site was very forward thinking, allowing people to be less dependent on cars and promoting the use of other forms of transportation.

Public Testimony

6:22 p.m.

Bobbie Gress testified against the application sharing that she heard the developer's presentation, but she had concerns with parking.

Dale Bowder, landlord for two single-family residences rented out in that area had personal experience with burglary and vandalism to those properties. He has concerns with increasing density of lower income housing.

Rebuttal Testimony

6:34 p.m.

J.R. Weiss, one of the co-owners of the development, addressed the comment about crime in the area. He emphasized that this is not low-income housing, it is unsubsidized affordable housing.

Staff Response

None.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 6:36 p.m.

Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Spilsbury asked staff for an explanation of the parking codes for a development versus a new apartment complex. Martineau shared that there used to be minimum parking standards in the code, now there are maximum parking standards.

Planner Anne Catlin explained that a rule passed in 2023 that eliminated the rule for required parking. The general market still seeks to provide ample parking, but it is not required.

Commissioner Cardoso emphasized that she was pleased that The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) units do provide significant driveway access and those who need to have parking probably wouldn't choose to live there aside from the units that have a driveway.

Commissioner Bailey acknowledged the need for affordable housing in Albany, especially entry level workers, and he noted the risk by the owners in their innovative approach to providing housing.

Commissioner Miller stated her concern was with parking, but she understood there was accommodation for ADA and some of the units had traditional parking. If it's in compliance with state regulations the Commission's role is to follow those state guidelines and regulations.

Commissioner Green noted that car ownership itself is somewhat of an unavoidable expense, so doing without car payments/insurance/maintenance would go a long way to making these rents affordable.

Catlin responded on the tax exemption question that there has been no adoption of a multiple unit property tax exemption by the City Council available to this development at this time.

Motion: Commissioner Cockeram motioned to approve the proposed Conditional Use Review, Replat and Tree Felling as conditioned under Planning Files CU-05-25, RL-06-25 and SP-13-25. This motion is based on the findings and conclusions in the September 5, 2025, staff report and the findings in support of the application made by the Planning Commission during deliberations on this matter. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Public Hearing Planning File DC-03-25, CP-02-25 and ZC-02-25 Type IV Legislative Process

Applications to make amendments to Albany Comprehensive Plan and Map, the Albany Zoning Map, and Albany Development Code to adjust the Downtown Climate-Friendly Area (CFA) boundary to correct uses allowed in the Lyon-Ellsworth (LE) zone, for a maximum block length and pedestrian perimeter lengths to comply with Climate-Friendly rules and add Comprehensive Plan consistency review criteria and reduce the special noise corridor setbacks for residential development.

Anne Catlin read the procedures.

The Chair called the public hearing to order at 6:46 p.m.

Staff Report

Anne Catlin provided background information on the package stating that they have been working to comply with State rules for Climate-Friendly and Equitable Community rules which included the previously discussed parking rules. Then they did the Climate-Friendly Area candidate identification around the city. Adoption of those identified areas was in May 2025.

Commissioner Bartholomew asked if there are other properties in the CFA that are not historic. Catlin answered that there are in the Downtown Historic District which are close.

Catlin continued clarifying what the code allows in the Historic Downtown Zone within the CFA and non-CFA. Another obstacle to development has been the setbacks, so providing exemptions reducing some setbacks for residential use above commercial or with enhanced landscaping.

Walkability standards require a maximum block length for new residential development, so they are reducing maximum block length from 800 feet to 500 feet (or 800 feet with mid-block access). Also adding pedestrian perimeter standards for walkable areas. She then reported miscellaneous amendments to require development be compatible with the comprehensive plan and any relevant city plans and updates clarifying language on setbacks and orientation.

Amendments to Review Criteria varied regarding Land Use Planning, Natural and Cultural Resources, Housing, Transportation and Energy Conservation and Urbanization.

Commission/Procedural Questions

None.

Public Comment

None.

The Chair called the public hearing closed at 6:59 p.m.

Commission Deliberation

None.

Motion: Commissioner Bunch II motioned to approve that the Albany City Council approve the proposed legislative amendment package as described in planning files CP-02-25, DC-03-25 and ZC-02-25. This motion is based on the findings and conclusions of the September 2, 2025, staff report and the findings in support of the application made by the Planning Commission during deliberations on this matter. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Business from the Commission

None.

Staff Updates

None.

Commissioner Bunch II asked how the major legislation coming out of the 83rd Session on middle housing affects how the Commission conducts business. Catlin reported it will take effect at the end of next year and is planning a work session with the Council and Commission and the change in some of the standards that could be adopted early.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2025. Currently, there will be no meeting scheduled for November.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

David Martineau
Current Planning Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@albanyoregon.gov.*