



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PALISADE PLANNING COMMISSION
January 21, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the Town of Palisade was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Amy Gekas. Present were Commissioners LisaMarie Pinder, Brandon Burke, Don Bosch, Alex Sparks, Dave Hull, and Vice-Chair Ed Seymour. A quorum was declared. Also in attendance were Town Manager Janet Hawkinson, Community Development Director Devan Aziz, and Town Clerk Keli Frasier.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion #1 by Commissioner Hull, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to approve the agenda as presented.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion #2 by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Hull, to approve the minutes of the Palisade Planning Commission from January 7, 2025.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Janet Hawkinson reviewed the current and ongoing projects led by the Town of Palisade.

PUBLIC HEARING I

Conditional Use Permit Processing of Food and Related Products at 3810 North River Rd – Monumental Mushrooms

Chair Gekas opened the hearing at 6:09 pm.

Community Development Director Aziz gave a brief presentation, including the findings of fact, to discuss a proposed Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the processing of food and food-related products at 3810 North River Rd as applied for by Monumental Mushrooms.

Applicant Rhysa Ferris gave a presentation regarding why the proposed CUP is being requested and what kinds of products they grow and sell.

Chair Gekas opened the hearing to public comments. None were offered.

Chair Gekas opened the hearing to Commission discussion.

Members of the Commission and Community Development Director Aziz discussed the following items and concerns:

- Food safety
- Department of Agriculture Regulations
- Time in operation

Motion #3 by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Vice-Chair Seymour, to forward a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to approve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Monumental Mushrooms located at 3810 North River Rd to allow processing of food and related food products with staff recommended conditions.

A roll call vote was requested.

Yes: Commissioner Bosch, Commissioner Hull, Vice-Chair Seymour, Commissioner Burke, Commissioner Sparks, Chair Gekas, Commissioner Pinder

No:

Absent:

Motion carried.

Chair Gekas closed the hearing at 6:252 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING II

Variance for Accessory Structure (Garage) Height at 398 West First Street

Chair Gekas opened the hearing at 6:25 pm

Community Development Director Aziz gave a brief presentation, including findings of fact, to discuss a request for a variance request to allow the construction of a garage with a maximum height of 29 feet, which exceeds the current 15-foot height limitation by approximately 14 feet at 398 W 1st Street as applied for by Tony Ware.

Applicant Tony Ware gave a presentation about his history, as well as why the proposed height variance is needed in order to match the existing historic home.

Chair Gekas opened the hearing to public comments.

Tammy Craig of Palisade spoke in support of the application and asked the Commission to approve the request.

Bill McDonald of Palisade asked if the request was granted, if then the applicant would be allowed to turn the structure into a VRBO. Community Development Director Aziz answered no.

Chair Gekas opened the hearing to Commission discussion.

Members of the Commission and Community Development Director Aziz discussed the following items and concerns:

- Cohesiveness with the surrounding neighborhood, seeing as none of them have matching structures
- Height in relation to the existing home (the accessory structure would be 2ft shorter than the home as proposed)
- The difference between what was submitted in the Commission packet and the applicant's presentation
- The desire to see the actual dimensions and square footage of the proposed structure

The applicant closed by stating how important it is to him to match the proposed structure to the existing home due to the historic integrity of the property.

Motion #4 by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to postpone the hearing until the regularly scheduled meeting on February 4, 2025, in order to obtain more information.

A roll call vote was requested.

Yes: Commissioner Hull, Commissioner Burke, Commissioner Sparks, Chair Gekas, Commissioner Pinder, Commissioner Bosch

No: Vice-Chair Seymour

Absent:

Motion carried.

Chair Gekas closed the hearing at 7:07 pm.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

Review of Draft STVR Regulations

Community Development Director Aziz gave a brief presentation and led Commission discussion on additional edits to the draft ordinance amending section 7.01 of the Palisade Land Development Code concerning short-term vacation rentals (STVRs).

Chair Gekas opened the discussion to public comment.

JoAnn Rasmussen of Palisade spoke in favor of STVRs, recounting various stays at local rentals, and proclaimed her dismay at the idea of owners being required to be present at all times during a rental.

Matt Payne of Palisade expressed concerns about the lack of infrastructure to support additional tourists if more STVRs are allowed. He also disagreed with the idea of non-owner-occupied rentals due to documented issues that have arisen in other cities and towns.

Tammy Craig of Palisade expressed support for increasing the number of STVRs allowed and requested light restrictions be added.

The consensus of the Commission is for staff to schedule a work session for the Planning Commission to have further detailed discussions on the proposed regulations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carina Scott of Palisade expressed concerns regarding affordable housing in Palisade, and the effect VRBOs may have on housing for locals.

Matt Payne, Palisade, CO, voiced concerns and suggestions regarding a park along irrigation thoroughfares, tourism, and farmers, as well as dark-sky goals.

Sarah Owens of Palisade requested an invitation to the work session of the Planning Commission and asked them to view VRBOs as a renter and if they would want to rent a place where the owner is in the house with them.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion #5 by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Hull, to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 pm.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

X Keli Frasier
Keli Frasier, CMC
Town Clerk

X Amy Gekas
Amy Gekas
Planning Commission Chair

