



CITY OF ALBANY
Planning Commission

MINUTES

Monday, July 20, 2026
Council Chambers – 5:15 p.m.
Approved: August 17, 2026

Call to Order

Commissioner Larson called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Skylar Bailey, Kenny Larson, Remi Hill, Ron Green, Paul Spilsbury, Tami Cockeram
Remote Attendees - Stacey Bartholomew

Commissioners Absent: JoAnn Miller, Ted Bunch Jr.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Commissioner Hill moved to approve the meeting minutes from June 15, 2026. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

Public Comment - none

Scheduled Business

Commissioner Larson opened the Type IV Quasi-Judicial Hearing on CP-01-26 & ZC-01-26 at 5:19 p.m.

Summary: Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment to change the designation of seven separate properties

Commission Declarations

No members declared a conflict of interest.

No members declared an ex-parte contact. – Hill declared a singular, brief comment on social media

No members declared a site visit. – Bartholomew has walked past it

No members abstained from participating in the proceedings.

No one challenged the Planning Commissioners' right to determine this matter.

Staff Report – David Martineau, Current Planning Manager, read the meeting procedures. Jennifer Cepello described the case and shared slides*, along with their location and the details of the proposed zoning changes of each property.

Questions to Staff – Commissioner Hill asked about the area adjacent to the south side of the properties and if there is a plan to place any industrial development. Cockeram asked about the residential properties and how they could be developed.

Applicant Testimony –

Laura LaRoque from Pathfinder spoke and shared slides* with the group. She shared that there is no development proposed at this time for the properties in this proposal. The expansion of the water treatment plant is needed to meet future needs, as the city grows. The changes are meant for buffering and park space acquired with federal funds, as well as current industrially zoned property.

Questions from Commissioners –

Hill asked about rezoning from residential to light industrial. LaRoque explained the properties bordering light industrial (LI) zones on the north. Hill then asked about the impact on Area C with the zoning proposal. LaRoque explained how the expansion is already part of the Master Facility Plan for the City and making these proposals for zone changes comply with that direction. Green asked about the history of the lots along Willamette Street and LaRoque shared the dates of acquisition of the properties that started in 2003 and went through 2020. Green asked about the development status of the properties acquired. LaRoque shared the status of the properties acquired by the City. Bailey asked about the implications for the properties in the area. LaRoque explained that the zoning changes would allow the City to expand the water treatment plant, but development is not planned at this time. Cockeram noted the smell coming out of the treatment plant could make the area unlivable and asked that the City should include the community in future changes.

Public Testimony –

John Robinson, general contractor who lives in Albany spoke on the housing shortage in the state and his concern that the City is removing smaller lots for development. Ben Roche, a resident of Albany who works in the manufactured housing industry noted that those builders looking for infill lots are having difficulty locating smaller properties to develop.

Applicant Rebuttal Testimony –

Laura LaRoque – She shared the conversation she had with a family in the area. She also shared that there would be a negative impact to both Albany and Millersburg without expansion of the water treatment facility and the properties in question are already owned by the City, with the intent of future expansion of the facility. Bailey had a question about future expansion. LaRoque responded that there is no plan for further expansion into the residential area. Instead, this would further develop the composting area of the facility, which is located on the north side.

Procedural Questions to Staff –

Hill asked staff what the practical difference between zoning these areas as LI for buffering or zoning them as open space. Cepello responded that LI is used as a buffering between heavy industrial and residential. Hill then asked if there are uses that are consistent with light industrial that would reduce the livability in the neighborhood. Cepello responded with examples of what could be proposed. Hill asks for specifics in cases and Cepello provided examples.

Public Hearing was closed at 6:06 pm

Commission Discussion –

Bailey objected to the proposal to change the zones for future plans, which could devalue neighboring properties. Hill agreed and would prefer to have future zoning proposals come before the commission. Hill and Bailey conversed that it would make more sense to either leave them as is for now or to rezone to Open Space, until all the properties are owned by the City. Green noted that since the applicant didn't have a plan yet he didn't feel comfortable making any changes. Larson acknowledged the need to expand the treatment plant is inevitable, but would feel more comfortable with the zone change if there were details on those future plans.

Martineau interjected that the commission needs to be able to make a decision based on the review criteria. While there is not a development proposal at this time, there is a comprehensive map and a zoning map amendment. The review criteria had to be addressed in the commission's decision.

Spilsbury agreed with Martineau that the commission needs to be looking at the proposal, what the group should be discussing and vote upon that and what the commission was discussing was not part of the proposal before them. He went on to say that the commission needs to either pass it, as the staff recommendation states, or to come up with a reason to not pass it. The group discussed what their role was and what they think the group should be able to consider.

Motion: Commissioner Hill motioned to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map Amendments including conditions of approval. Additionally, an amendment to not change the designation of the R-5 lots in area C and to append a note to have a conditional use review for all the areas to the north, that are part of the expansion plans once they are in place. Commissioner Bailey seconded the motion. Role vote was called. Yes votes from Hill, Bailey, Cockeram, Green. No votes from Spilsbury, Larson, Bartholomew. Motion passed 4-3

Martineau asked for justification for the conditions. Hill responded that the R-5 area should stay as residential until all the two remaining lots are owned by the City. As for the conditional use justification, that it should require public participation and public review, as is consistent with the state's land use goals.

Business from the Commission

Hill discussed a proposal for an ordinance regarding Data Center usage, as a comprehensive review. Larson recommended that it be integrated into a work session with City Council. Martineau felt that Hill should propose to City Council, as a member of the public, to work through the process correctly.

Staff Update

Martineau distributed copies of the Planning Commission handbook to the Commissioners.

Next meeting date

August 17, 2026, 5:15 p.m.

Adjournment – 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Talley Richardson
Administrative Assistant I

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.*