



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
April 7, 2026 - 7:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Judi Roland called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main Street.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Planning Commission Meeting was held in person and virtually.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Roland led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Chair Judi Roland, Vice Chair William Stewart, Julie Berry, Lynn Walters, and Kirk Hiller. Commissioners Aaron Vanderpol and Ajay Ganesan were excused.

Staff members present: Planning Services Manager Alexandria Teague, Senior Planner Alyssa Tatro, Planner II Gabriel Clark, Senior City Staff Attorney Chandra Hein, and Deputy City Clerk Rebecca Wood-Pollock.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

Business Item #3 (Citywide Design Standards Update and Related Code Update) and Business Item #4 (Downtown Design Standards Update and Associated Zoning Code Update) were removed from the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bonnie Helms provided comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. March 3, 2026 Draft Minutes from Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Walters moved and Commissioner Hiller seconded to approve the March 3, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 5-0

BUSINESS ITEM #1

A. Critical Areas Ordinance Update Staff Introduction/Presentation (Tatro)

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Critical Areas Ordinance, Chapter 16.10 Auburn City Code (ACC) to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council

Planner Tatro provided the Commission with a presentation on the Critical Areas Ordinance Update, including its background and purpose, key objectives, and an overview of each of the updates to the Code's sections, including Definitions and Administration, Applicability, Exemptions and Nonconforming Uses, Classification and Rating of Critical Areas, and Buffer Areas and Setbacks. She also addressed geologic hazard areas, minimization measures, mitigation framework and standards, stream regulations, site potential tree height, existing and proposed stream buffers, vegetative standards, comparisons to other jurisdictions, and a summary of the changes.

B. Public Hearing

Chair Roland opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Dylan Marcus provided comments.

Chair Roland closed the Public Hearing at 7:34 p.m.

C. Deliberation and Vote

The Commission discussed the Critical Areas Ordinance Update.

Vice Chair Stewart moved and Commissioner Walters seconded to recommend to Council the proposed updates to the Critical Areas Ordinance as recommended by staff.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 5-0

BUSINESS ITEM #2

A. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Code Update Staff Introduction/Presentation (Clark)

Staff will present the proposed development standards and land use approval pathways for BESS to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

Planner Clark shared a presentation with the Commission on the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Code Update, including its purpose, applicable sections of the City Code, applicable regulations, an overview of the tiered system and zoning classifications, public feedback and concerns, and staff recommendations.

The Commission discussed firefighter protocol for thermal events and incident mitigation plans, Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) resources and staffing, differences in safety between the different tiers, battery certifications, separation requirements, the steps in the application process, power substations, noise pollution, the BESS moratorium, and expressed interest in forming an ad hoc committee to do further research regarding BESS safety.

B. Public Hearing

Chair Roland opened the Public Hearing at 8:04 p.m.

Julien Lou, Dylan Marcus, and Bonnie Helms provided comments.

Chair Roland closed the Public Hearing at 8:15 p.m.

C. Deliberation and Vote

The Commission discussed power grids, setbacks, fire response, critical areas, vulnerable populations, and the next steps in the process.

Vice Chair Stewart moved and Commissioner Hiller seconded to recommend to City Council the proposed updates to the Battery Energy Storage System Code as recommended by Staff.

MOTION CARRIES. 3-2. Commissioner Berry and Commissioner Walters voted no.

The Commission discussed forming a fact finding committee for further research and added that to next month's agenda.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Manager Teague shared information about the new Home Depot location, unit lot subdivisions, social media advertising for the Planning Commission, the A Street Roundabout project, the awarded contract for the Auburn Theater, and shared that the next meeting would be held on May 5, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

APPROVED this 5th day of May, 2026.

JUDI ROLAND, CHAIR

Rebecca Wood-Pollock, Deputy City Clerk

