CITY OF GILLETTE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
Council Chambers ~ City Hall ~ September 8, 2026 ~ 5:15 pm

PRESENT

Commission Members Present: Chair Shaun Hottell, Vice-Chair Richard Cone, Lance Walker, and Jack Colson.

Commission Members Absent: Matthew Nelson, Brian Rozier, and Ian Scott.

Staff Present: Meredith Duvall, City Planning Manager, Amy Smith, City Planner; Jami Johnson, City Planner; and Jill McCarty, Administrative Coordinator.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Jack Colson to approve the meeting minutes of August 11, 2026. Lance Walker seconded the motion. Motion carried 4/0.

Case No. PL2026-0042 – EASEMENT VACATION – 2300 S Douglas Hwy

The applicant is requesting the partial vacation of an existing 20-foot wide General Utility Easement; the vacation area being located entirely within 2300 S Douglas Hwy The portion proposed for vacation measures approximately 15,262 square feet, or 0.350 acres and runs north to south along the existing Walmart building and then curves west to wrap around the building.

As required, the applicant submitted an 811 utility locate ticket with the easement vacation request. The portion of the easement that they are requesting to vacate does not have any utilities within, and the utilities locate confirms this. Additionally, City staff have not received any objections from internal utility divisions or external utility providers regarding the proposed vacation.

Meredith Duvall said the Planning Division received one inquiry that was a Walmart employee calling at their manager's request after seeing the sign posted for the case, and was a general inquiry with no objections.

Chair Hottell asked if there were any comments or questions by the public or the Commission.

There being no further comments or questions, Lance Walker made a motion to approve the case, and Vice-Chair Cone seconded. The Motion carried 4/0.

Case No. PL 2026-0043 – EASEMENT VACATION – 2300 S Douglas Hwy

The applicant is requesting the partial vacation of an existing Access and General Utility Easement; the vacation area being located entirely within 2300 S Douglas Hwy. The portion proposed for vacation measures approximately 2,518 square feet, or 0.058 acres and is located at the Grocery Entrance of the building.

As required, the applicant submitted an 811 utility locate ticket with the easement vacation request. The portion of the easement that they are requesting to vacate does not have any utilities within, and the utilities locate confirms this. Additionally, City staff have not received any objections from internal utility divisions or external utility providers regarding the proposed vacation.

Meredith Duvall said the Planning Division received the same inquiry from the Walmart employee calling at their manager's request after seeing the sign. Like the previous case, there were no objections to the proposed vacation.

Chair Hottell asked if there were any comments or questions by the public or the Commission.

There being no further comments or questions, Vice-Chair Cone made a motion to approve the case, and Lance Walker seconded. The Motion carried 4/0.

Case No. PL 2026-0040 – MINOR SUBDIVISION | FINAL PLAT – Pronghorn Ranch Phase III, Filing 1A

The proposed Final Plat – Major Subdivision for Pronghorn Ranch Phase III, Filing Number 1A is for a new development of 11 residential lots between 7,200 – 11,200 square feet (or 0.16 – 0.25 acres) and one larger Tract at 465,395 square feet (or 10.68 acres) for a total subdivision area of 13.53 acres.

The subdivision is location just south of Big Lost Drive and will extend the 60-foot right-of-way that is Star Hope Drive south and dead-end until a future phase of the subdivision extends Star Hope Drive further. This subdivision is zoned R-1, Single Family Residential District, with the land to the north containing single family homes and the land to the south and west being undeveloped and vacant.

All lots within the R-1 District are required to be a minimum of 6,000 square feet and have a minimum width of 50 feet; all proposed lots meet these requirements. Many of the underground utilities for this subdivision are already in place. A Recorded or Unrecorded Plat Agreement will be required prior to City Council acceptance of the Final Plat. All lots will be serviced with city utilities and can have a stick-built or modular homes on each lot. Water, Sewer, Stormwater, Electrical, Street, and sidewalk utilities will be required to be extended as part of the Final Plat submittal process if not already in place.

The Parks and Beautification Board approved the Preliminary Plat for this subdivision on December 13, 2012 and was determined at that time that no park fee will be required for this development.

Meredith Duvall said the Planning Division received two inquiries from the public on the case, and were general inquiries with no objections.

Chair Hottell asked if there were any comments or questions by the public or the Commission.

There being no further comments or questions, Jack Colson made a motion to approve the case, and Vice-Chair Cone seconded. The Motion carried 3/0/1 Abstention.

Case No. PL 2026-0041 – MAJOR COMMERCIAL SITE PLAN – 3800 Commercial Drive

If a Commercial Site Plan is proposing multiple buildings or is proposing a building over 25,000 square feet, it is required to be submitted as a Major Commercial Site Plan and go before Planning Commission for approval. The applicant has submitted a Major Commercial Site Plan for the development of the new Enzi Applied Learning Center, located at 3800 College Drive, which is at the intersection of Enzi Drive and W Sinclair Street.

The site currently has access to all city utilities (water, sewer, and electric) and the applicant has provided staff with their required pipe sizing and electrical loads, none of which are an issue for the various utility divisions. The proposed building is 48,752

square feet, with parking provided in front of the building. The purpose of the building is for higher education, which is a permitted use in its zoning district of C-O, Office and Institution.

Meredith Duvall said the Planning Division received no calls from the public on the case.

Chair Hottell asked if there were any comments or questions by the public or the Commission.

Chair Hottell asked what the round track-like shaped drawing on the far right of the proposed site map was, and Meredith Duvall said it was an on-site detention area for managing water, snow melt, and runoff.

There being no further comments or questions, Lance Walker made a motion to approve the case, and Jack Colson seconded. The Motion carried 4/0.

Case No. PL 2026-0025 – MAP AMENDMENT – Lot 2, Chara Hills Estates, Ph III

The applicants seek to amend the Zoning Map to rezone Lot 2 of Chara Hill Estates, Phase III from R-S, Suburban Residential District to C-O, Office and Institutional District. The property is 2.88 acres and is currently vacant and undeveloped. No plans for the development of the property have been submitted to the City Planning Division at this time.

At the time of development, a landscape buffer will be required for any commercial business that locates on Lot 2, per the Landscape Section of the Zoning Ordinance. Lot 2 does have access to city utilities (water, sewer, and electric). Also, at the time of development, a Drainage Study and Traffic Impact Study will be required.

Per Section 1.e(1) Amendment Procedures, Statement of Policy: Any person, corporation, or the City may initiate amendments to the Zoning Code to: Correct an obvious error or oversight in the regulations; or Recognize changing conditions in the City that requires an amendment(s) for the public health, safety, or general welfare. Staff recognizes that the proposed rezone serves to “recognize changing conditions” for the “general welfare”. “This District allows for a compatible mixture of public, quasi-public, and private institutional and professional service uses at a moderate level of intensity, designed to be compatible with nearby residential districts.” (Section 3, I. Zoning Ordinance).

When considering this rezone, staff considered the following: future access, road classification, and surrounding zoning and use. Future Access: future access for any commercial development will come off of E Boxelder Road Road Classification: E Boxelder Road is classified as a Major Collector street and is a connector between the commercial businesses along E Boxelder Road to the east, the Energy Capital Sports Complex going west, and Cam-Plex further west. Surrounding Zoning and Use: The property directly east along E Boxelder Road is zoned C-1, General Commercial, that currently abuts the Chara Hill Estates subdivision; directly across Chara Ave is a Calvary Baptist Church of Gillette (zoned, R-S, Suburban Residential) and half of the lot containing 1801 Chara Avenue, a residential house.

The 2025 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map identifies this area as Complete Suburban Living. This neighborhood typology, “is comprised of existing neighborhoods in Gillette that are suburban in form but largely incomplete because of the lack of connectivity and lack of variety in housing types. These places were built in the post-World War II style of large lots with bigger yards and curvilinear, winding

streets…Neighborhood-scale commercial should be allowed along key intersections and higher intensity roadways, ensuring there are plenty of opportunities within walking distance for residents" (pg. 78, Comprehensive Plan). Staff does recognize the neighborhood feel when entering off of E Boxelder Road onto Chara Avenue, however the frontage of Lot 2 along E Boxelder Road is prime for commercial, office, and institutional uses and is a logical extension of those uses.

Meredith Duvall said the Planning Division received multiple written comments and calls from the public on the case. They were as follows:

Public Comment 1: Against the rezone because the drainage in Phase 1 of Chara Hills was not done properly. They said they worked with City Engineering last year and got land from the church to help fix the drainage, but it did not move forward mainly due to the subdivision. Ms. Duvall noted that, per her understanding, the property owner has since spoken with the resident and reached a mutual understanding/compromise regarding the drainage.

Public Comment 2: Inquired whether the zoning would remain the same. Ms. Duvall said they advised the zoning for Lot 1 and Tract A were staying RS – Suburban Residential District and Lot 2 was proposed for change to Commercial.

Public Comment 3: Inquired about what was being proposed. Ms. Duvall said they were advised it was a minor subdivision as well as a zoning district map amendment. They wanted to know if there would be streets connecting, and they were advised no plans had been submitted to the Planning Division for development for through traffic. They stated they were adamantly opposed to the rezone and the development in all forms.

Public Comment 4: Had general questions regarding the proposed rezone and did not have strong feelings either way.

Public Comment 5: Expressed support of the subdivision and map amendment and stated hope that the land gets developed. They thought it would be a good thing and asked if landscaping would be required, and Ms. Duvall clarified that commercial development requires a landscaping plan, whereas residential development does not.

Public Comment 6: Concerned about not receiving a surrounding property owner notice. Staff investigation revealed that the previous homeowner had moved and the County Assessor's contact records had not yet been updated. Ms. Duvall informed the resident they would receive all future notices and hand-delivered the subsequent surrounding property owner letter. The resident also asked what type of business would occupy the commercial lot; Ms. Duvall advised that specific development plans are unknown at this time.

Public Comment 7: Had concerns about increased traffic, dangerous intersections and drainage concerns possibly due to an undersized culvert along Shalom Ave. The resident also inquired about a possible berm installation on a lot that is not considered for rezone.

Public Comment 8: Had traffic concerns, stating they thought they were purchasing a home in a quiet neighborhood and had concerns about the rezoning to commercial.

Public Comment 9: Adamantly against the proposed rezoning as it does not align with the intent of the neighborhood.

Public Comment 10: Expressed concern after a neighbor placed a notice on the mailbox advising residents to attend the Planning Commission meeting to vote for or against the map amendment. Ms. Duvall said the flyer claimed the zoning was to be changed to C-O, Office and *Industrial* and it led neighboring residents to believe that they would be voting. Ms. Duvall said she advised the correct zoning would be C-O, Office and Institutional, and that the residents would not be voting on the proposed rezoning, but rather the Planning Commission would be voting on the case. Also, Ms. Duvall advised the case would then move to City Council for approval as well. The resident said they would then address the misleading flyer within the neighborhood.

Public Comment 11: Opposed commercial land use in the neighborhood and objected to the map amendment.

Chair Hottell asked if there were any comments or questions by the public or the Commission.

Rachelle Kadow of 1700 Chara Ave spoke in opposition to the proposed zoning change and presented the following comments:

Ms. Kadow stated that any rezone should be conducted in consultation with a Homeowners Association (HOA) meeting through an elected representative. Ms. Kadow said she did not have adequate time to prepare for the meeting after being rear-ended at the neighborhood entrance in late July, adding the same kind of events have been frequent and will increase. Ms. Kadow said Shalom Avenue will be affected as people will see it as a shortcut rather than entering off Boxelder Road, which has heavy traffic.

Ms. Kadow asked the Commission to remember purchasing their first home that they could be proud of with a neighborhood of families who believed they were moving into a private residential area. Ms. Kadow said she was referring to an upper-middle class neighborhood where homes are between $500,000 to $1 million. Ms. Kadow noted she is proud of their neighborhood with the highest HOA in the city because they do not have mobile homes, only stick-built homes, that are on a higher level of value.

Ms. Kadow said there is also low crime in her neighborhood, with children riding bikes unattended and that would probably cease because of the potential of being hit by cars and traffic issues. Ms. Kadow said turning off Boxelder Road would become congested, making people use Shalom Avenue prompting more traffic there.

Ms. Kadow said paying off her home was a wonderful accomplishment, but changes are now being proposed to her neighborhood beyond her control that she was led to believe would not by her realtor and by the neighbor who watched her house while she was in Italy for a month. Ms. Kadow said there would not be as many Sunday evenings with people walking their dogs because the whole nature of the neighborhood would change.

Ms. Kadow said it was her understanding that discussions have occurred regarding potential buyers of the lot without changing the zoning, allowing for more meaningful development options other than C-O.

Tom Kremer, Developer of the lot for the proposed rezoning, was present and said the citizen who contacted City Planning about concerns of drainage did get in contact with him and they put together a plan. Subsequently, Mr. Kremer said he spent Labor Day weekend digging a culvert at a church site in the neighborhood. As well, the area was resodded he said.

Mr. Kremer said access to the lot would be off Boxelder Road only, with no access being granted off Chara Avenue, so the concerns of increased traffic on streets like Shalom Avenue will not be an issue with any new development on the property.

Ms. Kadow said she also wanted to point out that she understands the developer wants to be particular about what type of business is developed on the property; however, she said they had no control of how long that business would last and what business would follow and could include a vape shop (e-cigarette retailer).

There being no further comments or questions, Lance Walker made a motion to approve the case, and Jack Colson seconded. The Motion carried 4/0.

OLD BUSINESS — None

NEW BUSINESS — Meredith Duvall said the September 22, 2026, meeting is canceled and the next meeting will be October 13, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT — The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 pm

Minutes prepared by Jill McCarty, Administrative Coordinator.