

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
LAND USE PLANNING DIVISION
MULTNOMAH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 22 2025

Virtual Meeting

This is not a full transcript. Time indicators reference the meeting recording, which is accessible at the following Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/foxwq1bliilg3lhkdm7s5/September-22-2025-Planning-Commission-Zoom-Recording.mp4?rlkey=if5ebkrjxmart9wwh8tczljhg&st=dk0eii00&dl=0>

1. Call to Order

(00:00:10) Chair Bill Kabeiseman calls the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. on September 22, 2025.

2. Roll Call

(00:01:22) Chair Kabeiseman conducts a role call and declares a quorum present.

- Present – Chris Foster, Stephanie Nystrom, Kari Egger, Barbara Alexander, Bill Kabeiseman, John Houle, John Chen
- Absent – Tim Wood

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

(00:01:30) Minutes from the July 21, 2025 meeting are presented for adoption.

(00:01:32) A motion to approve is made by Commissioner Houle.

(00:01:28) The motion is seconded by Commissioner Chen.

(00:01:40) A roll call vote is held. The motion to approve minutes is passed unanimously.

4. Opportunity for Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

(00:03:17) Chair Kabeiseman asks to see if there is anyone from the public joining the meeting wanting to give public comment on non-agenda items. Scott Robison, Recording Secretary, lets him know that Ken Cariffe signed up to give testimony, but has not logged on to the meeting.

5. Introduction – Land Use Attorney June Bradley

(00:04:14) Katherine Thomas, County Attorney, introduces June Bradley, the newest attorney to work with the Land Use team. June introduces herself, noting her background in private practice specializing in land use law, her experience as a law student interning at the Land Use Board of Appeals and Clackamas County, and her architectural studies at the University of Oregon. She mentions that she will also advise the Office of Sustainability and Transportation.

6. Briefing – Update on the Zoning Code Improvement Project and Public Meetings Summary

(00:07:18) Kevin Cook, Principal Planner, introduces Matt and EQ from the MIG group, who will present the project update. Matt explains that the presentation will cover a project update, what the team heard from the public, and the next steps. He reiterates the project's goals: to update and modernize the code, make it easier to use, align it with comprehensive plan policies, and ensure housing provisions are clear and objective. The presentation summarizes the project's four phases. The team is currently at the end of phase two, which included a code audit and public meetings. They are getting a head start on phase three, the actual code rewrite.

(00:13:37) EQ Smith discusses the consistent themes heard during the initial phases, including the need to improve code organization, simplify application procedures, refine common development standards, and update conditional use lists. EQ outlines the community engagement process, which included three in-person meetings, a hybrid meeting, and an online survey. They heard repeated feedback that the code is too complex, the permitting process is lengthy and expensive, and applicants often need professional assistance for minor applications. The need for more support for the agricultural community and improved customer service was also highlighted.

(00:20:36) The presentation moves to a list of recommended updates. Matt suggests reformatting the code from two columns to one, using more tables and graphics, and consolidating permitted uses. He and the commissioners discuss the potential for expedited review processes for certain uses, such as affordable housing projects and energy-saving installations like solar panels. They also clarify that the requirement for clear and objective standards now applies to counties, including areas outside of the Urban Growth Boundary. The discussion continues on the need for a simplified code and clear processes. Matt reviews other recommendations, including consolidating definitions, updating conditional use standards, and looking at agritourism standards. He highlights the high-priority issues of lot of record verification, full compliance, and non-conforming situations.

(00:34:20) Commissioners ask questions and provide feedback. They express support for tackling the "easier" fixes first to gain early momentum. Commissioner Alexander suggests creating an accountability dashboard with metrics like "time to permit." Commissioners Egger and Foster comment on the uniquely restrictive nature of Oregon's land use laws. The discussion returns to the high-priority issue of lot of record verification, with staff explaining they are looking to narrow the types of applications it applies to and simplify the demonstration process. The conversation turns to community engagement, and Commissioner Egger thanks the team for being open and honest at the public meetings.

7. Management and Schedule Updates

(00:54:51) Kevin Cook, Principal Planner, provides an update on the DLCD farm stands rulemaking effort, noting it has been paused. He mentions a briefing on the topic scheduled for the LCDC on September 25th. Kevin announces that the fee waivers and reductions will be presented directly to the Board of Commissioners on October 30th as a resolution. He also shares the 2026 planning commission meeting schedule. Alex Howard, Deputy Director, provides an update on staffing. Land use is hiring two Planner 1's and one Planner 2 position to increase the team's capacity and improve customer service. She explains that staff will be returning to the office two days a week next week and will soon start offering in-person appointments.

(01:03:18) Kevin Cook, Principal Planner, informs the commission the next meeting will be held tentatively on October 6th. There also a chance that could be cancelled, and then the next meeting would then be held on October 20th.

(01:06:50) Chair Kabeiseman adjourns the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Recording Secretary,

Scott Robison