



**Minutes of the
Millcreek Planning Commission
January 21, 2026
5:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting**

The Planning Commission of Millcreek, Utah, met in a regular public meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at City Hall, located at 1330 E. Chambers Avenue, Millcreek, Utah 84106. The meeting was conducted electronically and live streamed via the City's website with an option for online public comment.

PRESENT:

Commissioners

Shawn LaMar, Chair
Christian Larsen, Vice Chair
Steven Anderson (excused)
Nils Per Lofgren (excused)
Jacob Richardson
Victoria Reid
Diane Soule
Ian Wright

City Staff

Elyse Sullivan, City Recorder
Francis Lilly, Planning & Zoning Director
Sean Murray, Planner
John Brems, City Attorney

Attendees: Council Member Nicole Handy

REGULAR MEETING – 5:00 p.m.

TIME COMMENCED – 5:09 p.m.

Commissioner LaMar called the meeting to order.

1. Commission Business

1.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2026

Commissioner Reid moved to nominate Christian Larsen as the Vice Chair. Commissioner LaMar seconded. Commissioner LaMar called for the vote. Commissioner LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Larsen moved to nominate Shawn LaMar as Chair. Commissioner Richardson seconded. Commissioner LaMar called for the vote. Commissioner LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Hearing

2.1 Consideration of ZT-25-005, Request to Repeal Community Council Provisions in Title 18 of the Millcreek Code Planner: Francis Lilly

Francis Lilly explained that in August 2024 the city requested and received an informal opinion from the Utah Property Rights Ombudsman concluding that Millcreek's community councils were subject to the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, which ultimately led to the City Council's recent decision to repeal Chapter 2.56 of the city code and related provisions in Title 18. While the repeal did not eliminate community councils, which remain private organizations, it removed special authorities they had inherited from Salt Lake County, including volunteer status with the city, prescribed election procedures, and a formal role in providing planning and zoning recommendations. Staff acknowledged that community councils historically provided valuable early engagement by facilitating productive discussions among applicants, residents, and staff prior to Planning Commission hearings, often resolving concerns in advance; however, Chapter 2.56 also created significant legal, procedural, and operational challenges. In response, staff proposed a pilot program to replace this engagement framework with a publicly noticed open house held before each Planning Commission meeting, intended to solicit early feedback, allow written comments to be included in staff reports as part of the public record, and provide community councils and other stakeholders an independent forum to participate. Staff also plans to develop a project-specific website to improve public access to basic application information. Accordingly, staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider and forward a recommendation to approve the proposed Title 18 amendments, consistent with the City Council's repeal of Chapter 2.56, and support continued exploration of innovative methods for obtaining meaningful public input prior to Planning Commission meetings.

Commissioner Reid asked if each application would be at the open house. Lilly said yes, the applications would not be presented but there would be designated areas of the room for each applicant to discuss their proposal. Commissioner Wright asked if staff or members of community councils would relay feedback from the open house to the commission. Lilly said both, all comments would be included in the staff report. He said the open house would be on a trial basis and codification of a community process would take place later depending on what worked. Commissioner Reid asked if the city would encourage the community councils to have a broader focus than land use items. Lilly said the mayor wrote a letter to the community councils stating that independence from the city provided opportunities for them to do different things. The city was willing to help fund some of their ventures or administrative items upon performing a 10-8-2 study as required by state code.

Chair LaMar opened the public hearing.

There were no comments.

Chair LaMar closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Richardson asked if the community councils would revert back to what they were for the city incorporated. Lilly confirmed.

Commissioner Larsen moved that the planning commission transmit a recommendation of approval of the proposed changes to Title 18 in consideration of the City Council's decision to repeal chapter 2.56 of the Millcreek code of ordinances, along with recommendation the

staff continue to seek out innovative methods of obtaining quality public comment on applications, particularly prior to a Planning Commission public meeting. Commissioner Richardson seconded. Chair LaMar called for the vote. Chair LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

1. Commission Business Continued

1.2 Open and Public Meetings Act Annual Training; John Brems, City Attorney

John Brems explained that the presentation constituted the Planning Commission's annual Open and Public Meetings Act training, which Utah law requires the presiding officer to ensure is completed each year. He reviewed the Act's underlying public policy that governmental actions and deliberations must be conducted openly. He clarified the statutory definition of a "meeting," emphasizing that it involves a quorum convened by authorized leadership to receive public comment, deliberate, or take action on matters within the Commission's authority, and highlighted recent legislative amendments addressing chance or social meetings and prohibiting concerted efforts outside a public meeting to predetermine decisions. He also discussed special local rules applicable to the Planning Commission, including prohibitions on ex parte communications regarding administrative or rezoning land use applications, explaining that such communications are intended to ensure fairness, equal participation, and the integrity of the decision-making process. Brems further addressed statutory provisions governing electronic communications, recordkeeping requirements that designate written minutes as the official record, and the limited and specific circumstances under which closed meetings may be held, noting that such situations are unlikely to apply to the Planning Commission. He outlined the requirements for recording and protecting closed meeting records and the affidavit obligations of the chair when closed sessions are held. Brems concluded by running through hypothetical situations wherein a commissioner might find themselves talking to applicants or the public and the recommended course of action per state code or city rules.

Commissioner Reid asked about the genesis of the ex parte rules. Brems said he has seen other cities use it, and he felt it had a valid purpose when he created the Commission's rules of order and procedure. The rules differ for the City Council because they are a legislative branch and can make decisions from public clamor. The Planning Commission is more of an administrative branch. Chair LaMar brought up the vagueness of "interested parties" and "affected persons" with ex parte rules. Brems said vagueness was intentional, but he would look into clearer definitions.

1.3 Approval of December 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Larsen requested an amendment to the first motion in the minutes on page 5 from "a specified date" to "an unspecified date."

Commissioner Larsen moved, with the amendment, to approve the minutes for December 17. Commissioner Wright seconded. Chair LaMar called for the vote. Chair LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

1.4 Housing Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Richardson reported that the Housing Subcommittee met prior to the Planning Commission meeting and discussed “expanding housing choices” policies, including those adopted in Durham, North Carolina in 2019 and Salt Lake City’s similar initiative, along with associated benefits, challenges, public noticing, and levels of public support. As a result of that discussion, staff agreed to evaluate Millcreek’s current zoning code in light of recent amendments and compare it to Salt Lake City’s approach, particularly regarding the potential citywide allowance of small-lot dwellings and duplexes or triplexes. Commissioner Richardson also shared outreach efforts with community and education stakeholders, including an initial meeting with the lead organizer of SOS Eastwood, who expressed preliminary support and willingness to share future publicly available materials with her network. Additional planned meetings include discussions with the Granite Education Association regarding the impacts of school closures on teachers and the role expanded housing options could play in enabling educators to live in the communities where they work, as well as engagement with the Millcreek Youth Council to explore how housing policy and school enrollment issues intersect with the Council’s education-focused mission.

1.5 Updates from the Planning Director

Francis Lilly provided several updates for the Commission, beginning with The Laurel at Millcreek rezone application, noting that the applicant may pursue an alternative path to compliance rather than returning to the Planning Commission, potentially reverting to the previous use due to business and parking constraints. The property remains subject to an ongoing code enforcement case related to licensing and parking requirements, and the situation is complicated by the presence of vulnerable residents, requiring a compassionate approach as the City works toward compliance; staff will continue to keep the Commission informed on the application’s status. Lilly also advised that the February Planning Commission agenda may be particularly heavy and asked commissioners to consider the possibility of a second meeting. Additionally, he reported that the mayor intends to nominate Jenny Burgess to fill the vacant seat previously held by Commissioner Vance. Finally, Lilly highlighted recent progress on public art initiatives, including a call for artists for City Hall and adjacent wall installations that received 126 submissions, as well as strong interest in developing an arts and culture master plan to help establish policies and frameworks to support and promote arts in Millcreek.

2. Calendar of Upcoming Meetings

- City Council Mtg. 1/26/26, 7:00 p.m.
- City Council Mtg. 2/9/26, 7:00 p.m.
- Historic Preservation Commission Mtg. 2/12/26, 6:00 p.m.
- Planning Commission Mtg. 2/18/26, 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNED: Commissioner Larsen moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 p.m. Commissioner Reid seconded. Chair LaMar called for the vote. Chair LaMar voted yes, Commissioner Larsen voted yes, Commissioner Reid voted yes, Commissioner Richardson voted yes, and Commissioner Wright voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVED: _____ Date
Shawn LaMar, Chair

Attest: _____
Elyse Sullivan, Recorder