



**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025
Richland City Hall – Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard**

Planning Commission Special Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Roll Call:

Attendance: Chair Richardson	Present
Vice-Chair Nicholson	Present
Member Anderson	Present
Member Hernandez	Present
Member Lambert	Present
Member Leonard	Present
Member Samuel	Present

Planning Manager Stevens, Planner Nelson, Planner Ballard and Administrative Assistant II Kirkpatrick.

Approval of Agenda:

COMMISSION MEMBER SAMUEL MOVED AND COMMISSION MEMBER HERNANDEZ SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Approval of Minutes:

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 24, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting, October 8, 2025 Planning Commission Workshop and November 12, 2025 Planning Commission Workshop.

VICE-CHAIR NICHOLSON MOVED, AND COMMISSION MEMBER SAMUEL SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING, OCTOBER 8, 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP AND NOVEMBER 12, 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0.

Public Comments:

None.

Administrative Assistant II Kirkpatrick read the Public Hearing Procedures.

Unfinished Business – Public Hearing:

2. RMC 23:54 Off-Street Parking and Landscaping

Chair Richardson opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m.

Planning Manager Stevens presented the commission with a map that outlines the affected areas and went over the amendment that reflects the Planning Commission's direction from the September 24, 2025 public hearing to remove minimum parking requirements only within the Central Business District (CBD) and Columbia Point North Waterfront District, and to apply state-mandated parking requirements throughout the remainder of the city. Detailed information can be found in the Amended Ordinance included in the agenda packet

The commission opened with discussion of the Richland School District's request to reduce bike rack requirements due to the increased use of scooters, which cannot utilize standard racks. The district proposed the use of locker-style storage systems as an alternative. Additional questions were raised regarding bonding for landscape requirements, and staff clarified that bonding creates tracking challenges for the city; therefore, it is preferred that landscaping be completed prior to issuing the Certificate of Occupancy.

Commissioner Samuel asked the Planning Manager about the recommendation that the Economic Development Committee gave at their last meeting and asked his professional opinion on what would be in the best interest of the community with the ordinance update and whether the changes could create situations similar to past parking-related challenges, such as the Dupus Boomer's example. Members also inquired about whether the state-mandated updates would benefit areas outside the CBD.

Further discussion addressed page 88 of the packet concerning the use of native plants and shrub-steppe landscaping, including comparisons of asphalt versus vegetated shading options, and noted the relevance of climate-change policies being added to the ongoing Comprehensive Plan update.

Questions were raised about the role of Code Enforcement in disputes between business owners related to parking, the use of permeable surfaces and their consistency with stormwater and climate-element recommendations, parking requirements during off-season consideration, the possibility of adjusting affordability allowances—including a potential 20% increase—and clarification on ADU parking requirements.

Public Hearing Comments:

Laila Krowiak, a Richland resident, expressed appreciation for the positive changes in the proposal, particularly improvements to the biking code. She also noted concerns regarding

church and neighborhood parking needs under the City's parking regulations.

Francine Pierre Saget, a Richland resident, referenced the prior Council workshop where Kimley-Horn presented on parking reform with their tiered strategy and encouraged the Commission to watch the presentation if they had not already.

Theodore Maier, a Richland resident and member of a local swimming club, commented on parking requirements for recreational facilities. He noted that his current pool has 13 parking spaces, which are never full, but if required to meet today's code, the facility would need 51 spaces—an amount that would consume the entire lot and leave no room for the pool itself.

Collin Berry, a Richland resident, spoke in favor of eliminating parking requirements citywide, as well as removing other related restrictions, including food pod parking requirements and parking utilization standards.

John Maier, a Richland resident, stated that while the proposed updates represent progress, they do not address past challenges where developers have appealed parking requirements for places of assembly and recreational facilities.

Chase Feifer, a Richland resident, urged the Commission to follow Council direction and abolish parking minimums citywide, noting that parking does not generate tax revenue and can be burdensome for small businesses.

Jamey Braden, a Richland resident, voiced strong support for eliminating parking minimums. She expressed concern about excessive asphalt as a "worst case scenario," and stated that limited parking can be a sign of a vibrant area with alternative transportation options.

Chris Lindhartan, Richland resident, agreed with prior comments and shared observations of ample on-street parking as an avid runner. He stated that a lack of affordable housing leads to multiple residents living in a single home, which impacts parking. He suggested that addressing the housing shortage could be another way to approach parking issues, and that removing parking regulations would give developers greater flexibility to build.

7:20 P.M. Closed the public comment period.

Vice-Chair Nicholson asked Mr. Lindhartsen to elaborate on his comments regarding the housing shortage and its relationship with parking. Mr. Lindhartsen stated that eliminating parking requirements could allow more housing units to be built within the same area, increasing housing supply, and distributing parking more effectively.

Following the presentation and public comment period Commission members discussed and offered comments on the proposed ordinance.

COMMISSION MEMBER LEONARD MOVED AND COMMISSION MEMBER SAMUEL

SECONDED THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE AMENDMENT PROPOSED TO RMC CHAPTERS 23.06, 23.22, AND 23.54 AS IDENTIFIED IN THE DRAFT ORDINANCE WITH UPDATES DISCUSSED WITH COMMISSION MEMBERS AT THE DECEMBER 10, 2025 MEETING. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS BASED UPON THE LISTED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW. THOSE IN FAVOR: CHAIR RICHARDSON, VICE-CHAIR NICHOLSON, MEMBERS ANDERSON, HERNANDEZ, LAMBERT, LEONARD, AND SAMUEL. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE.

VICE-CHAIR NICHOLSON MOVED, AND COMMISSION MEMBER HERNANDEZ SECONDED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL CONTINUE TO STUDY AND ADDRESS PARKING CONCERNS THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND TO DIRECT STAFF AND/OR PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, IF NECESSARY, TO FURTHER DEVELOP PARKING MINIMUMS CITYWIDE. THOSE IN FAVOR: CHAIR RICHARDSON, VICE-CHAIR NICHOLSON, MEMBERS ANDERSON, HERNANDEZ, LAMBERT, AND LEONARD. THOSE OPPOSED: SAMUEL.

The Commission took a brief break and reconvened at 8:03 PM.

3. AHBL – Comprehensive Plan Update Survey Results

Nicole Stickney, Associate Principle with AHBL, gave a presentation to review survey results for the recent comprehensive plan update. In the near future there will be a survey launched about transportation but first they wanted to conduct and get the results of this survey.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda packet.

Communication:

Planning manager Stevens announced that Administrative Assistant II Kirkpatrick will be transferring positions as she has accepted an offer in the City of Richland’s Energy Services Department.

Adjournment:

Chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:46 P.M.

PREPARED BY: Carly Kirkpatrick
Carly Kirkpatrick, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED BY: [Signature]
Jet Richardson, Chair