



MINUTES

Planning and Zoning Commission

Tuesday, April 7th 2026
Grant County Administrative Building
1400 US Hwy 180 E.
Silver City, New Mexico

Commissioners Present:

Susan Moody, Chair
Dave Stone, Vice Chair
Dale Lane
Laura Schoen

Commissioners Absent:

John Balas

Staff Present:

Susan Mittelstadt, Community Development Director
Emily Hickle, Mapping and Planning Technician

The regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at 6:02 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and the State Pledge were recited. A roll call from commissioners was taken, and a quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Lane made a motion to approve the agenda, and Commissioner Stone seconded. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote, 4/0.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Schoen made a motion to approve the March 3rd regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Stone seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of 4/0. Commissioner Schoen made the motion to approve the February 26th working session minutes. Commissioner Lane seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of 4/0.

Community Input:

None

Continued Business:

Ms. DeMichele provided a presentation regarding the protection and preservation of manufactured home communities within Silver City. She clarified that modern manufactured homes should be recognized as permanent residences rather than mobile units, noting that relocation is often unfeasible due to high costs and potential structural damage. She explained the hybrid investment nature of these communities, where residents typically own their dwellings but lease the underlying land, and identified these parks as the state's largest source of non-subsidized affordable housing.

Ms. DeMichele expressed significant concern regarding the "financialization of housing," specifically the trend of institutional investors purchasing land to extract wealth through unsustainable rent increases. She further noted that existing New Mexico laws offer disproportionate protections to landowners, often leaving homeowners vulnerable to displacement with minimal notice. After reviewing various legislative efforts such as "Opportunity to Purchase" bills, she urged the Commission to establish a progressive model by enacting local protections to ensure the housing security and financial stability of its residents.

Ms. Susan Mittelstadt reported on the ongoing collaboration with New Mexico Main Street to develop a vacancy ordinance. The proposed system would require property owners to register vacant buildings, shifting the responsibility of notification from the town to the owner. This administrative enforcement model aims to lower the hurdles for addressing nuisance properties. A draft ordinance package is expected for review by June, with a target for adoption in the Fall.

Ms. Mittelstadt noted 90% of department accomplishments and goals have been compiled and integrated into the planning process. Public engagement efforts, including online surveys and upcoming "tabling" events at the recreation and senior centers, were highlighted. Ms. Mittelstadt emphasized a strategic shift toward prioritizing sustainable infrastructure—specifically wastewater treatment, water, and roads—noting that current systems are aging and require significant investment. A joint meeting with the Town Council was scheduled for April 23 to discuss these priorities. The Commission discussed the inclusion of emergency planning and climate change resilience within the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Mittelstadt noted these philosophical goals, along with addressing historical housing discrimination, would be directed to the contractors for inclusion in the final report.

New Business:

A resolution was introduced to double the fees for permits. Ms. Mittelstadt explained that the town's current fees were approximately 50% lower than those of similar municipalities and had not been adjusted since 2012.

Reports from Staff:

Ms. Hickle provided a brief update regarding a forthcoming variance request related to affordable housing setbacks.

Reports from Commission:

None

Adjournment:

Commissioner Lane moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous voice vote of 4/0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Susan Moody, Chair
Planning & Zoning Commission

Date