

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
STATUTES SECTION 13D.021
10-15-2025**

The October 15, 2025, Joint City Council & Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Wood at City Hall. Present were Planning Commission members Susan Bautch, Kim Snell, Mike Ostwald, and Andy Heinen. Also present was City Council Liaison Scott Wendell, City Administrator Jack Davis, Assistant Planner Eleanor Hahn, and Alex Trueman.

The meeting was held in an interactive technology meeting format.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER – Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 p.m.**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. CONSENT AGENDA**

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Approval of October 1, 2025 Joint City Council and Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Bautch to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Snell. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Bautch – Aye; Wood - Aye. Motion carried.

- 4. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

Nothing at this time.

- 5. DISCUSSION – VERIZON WIRELESS SMALL CELL IUP & TEXT AMENDMENT – 15201 ZURICH ST NE**

At this time, the Planning Commission reviewed the Verizon Small Cell Installation Interim Use Permit (IUP) and Text Amendment request for 15201 Zurich Street NE, located in the Running Aces parking area.

Alex Trueman, a Verizon representative, explained that the proposal includes replacing one existing light pole with a new structure capable of supporting small cell antennas. The upgrade is intended to enhance Verizon’s network capacity during large-scale events at Running Aces and to ensure reliable emergency communications. A second pole replacement in the same parking lot is planned for next spring.

Assistant Planner Hahn presented the staff report dated October 15, 2025, which included findings #1–12 and conditions #1–11. Hahn noted one revision since the public hearing: adding a provision allowing city staff to administratively approve a second antenna installation at the site next year, provided it remains consistent with the approved design.

Chair Wood asked if this improvement benefits other carriers such as T-Mobile. The Verizon representative clarified that the installation serves only Verizon customers. Commissioners had no additional questions or comments.

Motion by Bautch to recommend approval of the Verizon Small Cell Installation IUP and Text Amendment to the City Council with the revisions discussed. Seconded by Snell. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Bautch – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Wood – Aye. Motion carried.

6. DISCUSSION – FENCE REGULATIONS

Assistant Planner Hahn presented proposed updates to the City’s fence ordinance. The proposed changes address fence height limitations, approved materials, drainage considerations, lake overlay restrictions, and property maintenance requirements. Hahn summarized that the revisions were intended to modernize the ordinance, clarify expectations for residential and commercial fencing, and provide clear enforcement language for materials that fall into disrepair or create nuisances.

The Planning Commission discussed whether fence permits should be required and how such a process might balance administrative oversight with homeowner convenience. Commissioners agreed that a simple zoning permit process would provide a reasonable level of review without placing unnecessary burden on residents. Under the proposed system, applicants would submit a basic site plan showing the location of the proposed fence. A certified survey would not be required, recognizing the cost burden that such a requirement could impose on property owners. Instead, applicants would sign a property verification statement affirming that the fence is located entirely on their property. This certification would protect both the City and neighboring property owners in the event of future boundary disputes.

Commissioners discussed the need for minimum fence clearance to avoid impeding stormwater flow, given Columbus’s flat topography and drainage concerns. They agreed to include a requirement that solid fences, such as wood privacy fences, maintain at least four inches of clearance from the ground to allow for adequate water drainage. Chain link fencing was confirmed as an approved and acceptable material, and the Commission recommended that it continue to be permitted throughout the City.

The Commission also discussed whether a mandatory setback from property lines should be required. After consideration, members agreed not to require a specific setback, allowing property owners the flexibility to install fences directly along their property boundaries if they choose. Chair Wood noted that while a two-foot setback is often recommended to allow for maintenance access, such spacing is not practical for narrow lots and should remain optional. Commissioners emphasized that by signing the property verification statement, the responsibility for ensuring the fence is within the correct property boundaries rests with the property owner, not the City.

Hahn stated that all discussed updates will be incorporated into the next draft of the ordinance and brought forward for a public hearing at a future Planning Commission meeting.

Motion by Bautch to call a public hearing for Ordinance 25-03: Fence Regulations, incorporating the revisions discussed. Seconded by Snell. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Bautch – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Wood – Aye. Motion carried.

7. PLANNING COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

Nothing at this time.

8. ASSISTANT PLANNER’S REPORT

Nothing at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Snell to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Bautch. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Bautch – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Wood – Aye. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Eleanor Hahn

Recording Secretary Eleanor Hahn

