

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
STATUTES SECTION 13D.021
12-03-2025**

The December 3, 2025, 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, Ron Hanegraaf, Gretchen McClure, and Robb Olson.

The meeting was held in an interactive technology meeting format. In attendance via interactive technology was Jennifer Lattin and Karen Fleming.

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

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Approval of November 5, 2025 Joint City Council and Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- 4. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

Nothing at this time.

- 5. PUBLIC HEARING – McClure Acres Preliminary Plat and Variance**

At this time, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing to consider a request for McClure Acres Preliminary Plat to create one (1) new lot in the Rural Residential ('RR') zoning district and associated variance request to reduce required lot width from 220 feet to 165 feet to accommodate an existing subsurface sewage treatment system.

Applicant Gretchen McClure, 7523 165th Avenue NE, stated that she is proposing to subdivide her property into two parcels within the Rural Residential district. McClure explained that the variance is necessary due to the location of her existing septic system, which was installed in 1998 and was recently inspected and confirmed to be compliant. She noted that relocating the system would result in significant financial burden and present environmental concerns. The proposed lots meet minimum acreage requirements and are

consistent with surrounding parcel sizes. McClure confirmed she had received the staff report dated December 3, 2025, including findings and conditions, and had no questions.

Commissioner Heinen noted that his only question had been regarding the results of the Septic Compliance Inspection, but the inspection report had been provided as a handout prior to the meeting. The report confirmed that the existing system is fully compliant, and he had no further questions.

Chair Wood asked how long Ms. McClure has owned the property and whether she had intended to split the land at the time of purchase. McClure stated she has owned the property for nine years and did not originally intend to subdivide it. Chair Wood also asked whether she had any potential buyers; McClure stated she did not. Chair Wood noted that the septic system at issue was installed in 1998 and asked City Administrator Davis about the typical lifespan of a septic system. Davis explained that there is no reliable or consistent life expectancy, as systems can last anywhere from one day to fifty years depending on usage and site conditions.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Snell to continue the public hearing for the McClure Preliminary Plat and Variance to the December 17, 2025, Planning Commission meeting. Seconded by Ostwald. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Wood – Aye. Motion carried.

6. DISCUSSION – ORDINANCE 25-04: FENCE REGULATIONS

Assistant Planner Hahn presented the final revisions to Ordinance 25-04: Fence Regulations. She explained that the ordinance was reviewed at the November 5, 2025 public hearing and this meeting serves as the required follow-up discussion.

Hahn summarized that the city attorney recommended minor clarifying language updates and organizational adjustments to ensure consistency with other code sections. No substantive changes were made to the regulatory content.

Commissioners stated they had no additional questions.

Motion by Snell to recommend approval of Ordinance 25-04: Fence Regulations to the City Council. Seconded by Ostwald. Roll call vote: Snell – Aye; Ostwald – Aye; Heinen – Aye; Wood – Aye. Motion carried.

7. PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chair Wood noted that Commissioner Snell will be continuing her service on the Planning Commission, and the Commission expressed appreciation.

The Commission discussed the current vacancy and encouraged outreach for potential

applicants. Staff confirmed one application has recently been received and is under review. Notices will remain posted until the position is filled.

Commissioners also briefly discussed the possibility of spouses serving simultaneously; staff confirmed there is no ordinance prohibiting it.

8. ASSISTANT PLANNER'S REPORT

Assistant Planner Hahn reported that end-of-year meeting vouchers will be sent to Commissioners for review and signature. She added that Commissioners with expiring terms will receive information on how to request reappointment.


Administrator Davis then raised the idea of revisiting the City's policy that requires an automatic second meeting after every public hearing. He noted that some applications are straightforward enough that a second meeting may not be necessary. The Commission expressed interest in reviewing the policy, and staff will bring forward recommended amendments at a future meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Recording Secretary Eleanor Hahn

