



BLUE RIVER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

5:30 PM

0110 Whispering Pines Circle, Blue River, CO

Minutes

Call to Order, Roll Call

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Carlsted
Commissioner Johnson
Commissioner O'Brien
Commissioner Manin

ABSENT:

Commissioner Beck
Commissioner Cleary

Also present:

Town Manager Chad Hull
Town Attorney Robert Widner
Deputy Town Clerk John Debee
Building Official Kyle Parag
Building Inspector Whit Smith

Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes – July 7, 2026

Commissioner Carlsted moved and Commissioner O'Brien provided a second to approve the minutes of the July 2026 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting. All ayes – motion passed.

Project Approval

B. 6871 Highway 9 - Addition

The Building Official submitted a Planning/Zoning/Architectural Guidelines Review in the agenda packet indicating the proposed project's compliance with applicable Development Standards.

The Commission reviewed revised application materials previously requested at the July meeting, including updated survey information, easement documentation, and calculations related to exterior siding replacement.

The Building Official reported that the applicant provided calculations demonstrating that proposed siding replacement remained below the 25% threshold of the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code. As a result, the proposed materials could proceed as submitted without triggering full exterior replacement requirements.

The Commission reviewed revised survey and easement information and discussed the existing pedestrian easement shown on the property. Staff indicated the revised submission adequately addressed prior concerns regarding setbacks and easement depiction.

The Commission also discussed the property's two existing driveway access points onto Highway 9. Members reviewed historical imagery and noted that the dual-driveway configuration appears to have existed for many years, with available imagery indicating its presence as early as 2008. Staff noted that the current application does not propose modifications to circulation or access improvements.

The Commission discussed that any future modifications to the driveway or parking configuration could require compliance with current Town standards and applicable CDOT access requirements. However, because the current application does not alter the existing access arrangement, the Commission determined that no action related to the driveway configuration was required as part of this review.

After discussion, the Commission found that the applicant had adequately addressed the concerns identified during the July meeting.

Commissioner O'Brien moved to approve the application as presented. Commissioner Manin provided a second. All ayes – motion passed.

Work Sessions

A. 1253 Indiana Creek Rd – New Construction Work Session

The Commission conducted a work session regarding a proposed new single-family residence at 1253 Indiana Creek Road. The session was designed to provide guidance to the applicant regarding the proposed application.

The Commission discussed interpretation of the Town's building-height regulations, including how height should be measured where significant grading occurs to accommodate below-grade garage access. The Building Official noted concerns regarding compliance with the 35-foot maximum building height requirement based on the submitted plans. The applicant and architect provided additional drawings and

grading information. The Commission reviewed the definitions and standards contained within the Land Use Code and discussed whether recessed garage entrances should be treated similarly to basement entrances for purposes of calculating building height.

Following discussion, the Commission generally agreed that the proposed recessed garage entrances may qualify as basement-entry features contemplated by the Code. The Commission requested revised exhibits showing both existing and proposed grades to clearly demonstrate compliance with the 35-foot height limitation.

The Commission also discussed the proposed floor plan, including the presence of two full kitchens within a structure proposed as a single-family residence. Staff reviewed Land Use Code definitions for Single-Family Dwelling, Duplex, Family, and Lock-Off Unit. Commission members expressed concern that the design could function as multiple independent dwelling units in the future due to the presence of two kitchens, separate living areas, and the potential for future conversion. The Town Attorney advised that restrictions based solely upon familial relationships would be difficult to enforce and that future use of the structure must be considered as part of the review. Discussion included the possibility of restrictive covenants or conditions concerning future use; however, several Commissioners indicated greater comfort with a design containing a single kitchen rather than relying upon recorded restrictions.

The Commission next discussed proposed garage and vehicle-gallery areas within the lower level of the structure. Staff noted that garages are limited by Code to 25% of the total building square footage and estimated that the currently proposed design may exceed that standard. The Commission reviewed the proposed use of the space for vehicle display, vehicle lifts, tire storage, and accessory recreational activities. The Commission generally concluded that the lower-level gallery area, as currently designed, meets the Code definition of a garage. Discussion focused on possible redesign options, including separating habitable areas from garage areas and revising the design to achieve compliance with the garage-size limitations.

The Commission also discussed the relationship between the proposed carriage house and the existing Spruce Valley Ranch PUD regulations.

The Commission provided the following direction to the applicant when developing an application for formal review:

- a. Provide revised grading exhibits demonstrating compliance with the building-height requirements.
- b. Revise the design to address concerns regarding two kitchens and future lock-off or multiple-dwelling configurations.
- c. Revise garage areas or calculations to demonstrate compliance with the 25% garage limitation.
- d. Confirm compliance with applicable Spruce Valley Ranch PUD requirements.

No action was taken during this work session item.

B. Discussion of Blue River Wetland Protection Program Items

Commissioners discussed recent changes to federal wetlands regulation and the State of Colorado's expanded role in wetlands regulation. The Commission expressed support

for utilizing the Army Corps of Engineers' delineation methodology while developing local procedures for identifying when wetland reviews should be required.

Discussion focused on creating a clear, legally defensible process for triggering wetland evaluations. Commissioners discussed the possibility of identifying general "areas of concern" within Town limits where additional review may be required, rather than preparing an immediate town-wide delineation map. The Commission discussed a review process under which staff would conduct an initial screening utilizing federal, state, and local information, and if triggered, applicants within identified areas of concern may be required to provide additional information. Further discussion was had regarding whether professional wetland delineations would be required where sufficient concern exists and a principle that consultant review could occur at the applicant's expense.

The Commission also discussed buffer requirements and generally supported an interim 12-foot no-disturbance buffer around delineated wetlands. Additional topics discussed included mitigation plans, monitoring, remediation requirements, enforcement mechanisms, and development exceptions for properties that may otherwise become undevelopable due to wetland restrictions. The Town Attorney noted that exception procedures may provide a more practical alternative than a formal variance process in limited circumstances.

The Commissioners directed staff and the Town Attorney to continue preparing draft language for future Commission review.

No action was taken.

C. Proposed Amendment of LUC Shed Provisions

The Town Attorney summarized revisions reverting the Code to the previous standard allowing a maximum of two sheds per property, each not exceeding 200 square feet. The proposed revisions would eliminate the previously adopted large-shed category and include additional enforceability provisions.

The Commission expressed support for the proposed revisions and directed staff to prepare final draft language for review at a future meeting before forwarding the amendment to the Board of Trustees.

No action was taken.

D. Proposed Amendment of LUC Garage Provisions

The Commission reviewed draft amendments to the Land Use Code regarding garage design and placement standards.

The proposed amendments included:

- a. Prohibiting habitable space above garages.
- b. Requiring garages to be architecturally consistent with the principal structure.
- c. Replacing advisory language with mandatory design standards.
- d. Requiring that garages not appear as the predominant structure on a lot.

- e. Allowing attached garages to project in front of the residence when appropriately designed.
- f. Requiring detached front-facing garages to utilize side-loaded designs where feasible.
- g. Providing Commission discretion to approve alternative configurations where lot constraints make strict compliance impractical.

The Commission discussed the concept of substantial compliance and the degree of discretion available to Planning and Zoning when reviewing unique site conditions. The Commission also discussed whether a maximum absolute garage square footage should be established in addition to the existing percentage-based restrictions for larger homes.

Staff and the Town Attorney were directed to continue refinement of the draft amendments.

No action was taken.

Adjourn

Commissioner O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Manin provided a second. All Ayes - Motion passed.

Chairman Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:13 PM.