

Town of Empire
30 East Park Avenue/P.O. Box 100 Empire, Co 80438
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Empire Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2024 ~ 6:30 pm

1. Call to Order – Chairperson Kim Hubert called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held in person and through Zoom.

2. Roll Call – The Empire Planning Commission requires a simple majority of three commission members present at the meeting for a quorum.

Present: Chairperson Kim Hubert, Randy Horning, Sally Rush, and Eileen Wheelock. Also in attendance were Town Administrator Jeannette Piel and Deputy Town Clerk Lisa Kunze.

Absent: Wendy Koch.

A quorum was present.

3. Approval of Agenda - December 11, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda

WHELOCK MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 11, 2024, HORNING SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.

The Agenda was approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes –

- Minutes - November 20, 2024 Regular Meeting

Staff will amend an awkward sentence at the bottom of page 2 to read, “Lon has spoken to the County who indicated the structure has failed inspections, and he also spoke to the owner and reviewed the requirements the PC listed on the building permit that was approved with him.”

HORNING MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED NOVEMBER 20, 2024 MINUTES, WHELOCK SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.

The amended November 20, 2024 Minutes were approved.

5. Development Permit Updates - Authorize Zoning Officer to issue permits when conditions are met and to conduct inspections

Town Administrator Piel explained that staff are working on our process for issuing a permit, and trying to have it match other permit processes. The Ordinance simply says a Development Permit will be issued. It does not give any guidelines for approving or inspecting. The Development permit is never issued independently; it is always after the Planning Commission has approved some other plan or application. So, everything that needs to be addressed in the Development Permit process has already been approved by the Planning Commission. It seems redundant to have you look over all the conditions and requirements again.

What we would recommend is that you authorize Lon, as Zoning Officer, to control that process, and then the Planning Commission would hand it off to him in the same way that you hand off building plans to the building department. Lon will be your boots on the ground, and he will make sure every condition is met. He will inspect every action item, including consulting with our evaluation team and having them do inspections if need be. We can create a permit document that will show every item

being signed off after inspection, and you will get the final report when the permit has been completed. At that time, the developer can then apply for building permits. Lon can give you updates on the project in our new Reports section, but it will move much more efficiently if it doesn't have to be approved at every step in a meeting.

Planning Commission members discussed that this step has not happened in the past 5 years, and how this is necessary considering previous projects have not met PC recommendations. This will help developers with a physical permit and a process for follow-up and enforcement.

RUSH MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE THE ZONING OFFICER TO ISSUE DEVELOPMENT PERMITS, HORNING SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.

Development permits will be issued by the Town's Zoning Officer.

- a. Harmony Domes – No new activity.
- b. West Fork Village, LLC – No new activity.

6. Training: Processing Public Comment in Difficult Times

Deputy Clerk Kunze introduced the training to the Planning Commissions asking for reactions to the Public Comment segment in meetings throughout the West Fork Village Subdivision process. The 16 pages of Public Comments during the WFV Subdivision process were made into a spreadsheet and divided between the Planning Commission members. This will be used in the training to process the emotions and highlight possible future suggestions for revising Ordinance 170.

7. Reports

- a. Updates from the Chair
 - i. Bear Excavating Update – had hoped to be completed by December 1st but are still wrapping up loose ends, with the plan to return in the Spring for final water system and road repairs.
- b. Updates from Town Zoning Officer Lon Fulton
 - i. 187 E. Sunny Avenue - retaining wall enforcement – Owner and contractor at 187 E. Sunny are on notice that they are not in compliance on several aspects of their project. The Permit and Inspections office at Clear Creek County has notified them that no inspections beyond structural and mechanical rough-in will be conducted until this has been addressed.

Other updates: Owner and contractor at 187 E. Sunny are on notice that they are not in compliance on several aspects of their project. The Permit and Inspections office at Clear Creek County has notified them that no inspections beyond structural and mechanical rough-in will be conducted until this has been addressed.

- c. Answer Public Comment/Questions from Previous Meeting -
No public comment to address

8. Public Comment: Public comment is limited to 3 minutes per person. The Planning Commission does not respond to questions during this time. For operational questions, please email the clerk.

9. Moment of Appreciation – At each of our Board and Planning Commission Regular Meetings, we want all of you to tell us what you appreciate about Empire. It can be anything. What’s the first thing that comes to your mind, or what’s the first thing you show people when they visit, or what do you miss the most when you are away. Short and sweet – please keep it positive!

- Hearing ducks next door, which does not happen in the city!
- The visitor’s center looks great with the Christmas lights, thanks Lon and Steve!
- Appreciate roofs that you don’t have to deal with hard pitches and old designs
- All hard work we do to make Empire the town it is
- Appreciate Sally, and how she included him in in previous years
- Merry Christmas everyone!
- All the people who decorate with pretty lights for the Holidays.
- Thanks to Empire’s Edge Cafe’ for gathering sponsors and the community for a Thanksgiving dinner!

10. The Next Training Session of the Empire Planning Commission is January 15, 2025 at 6:30 pm. In-person with remote access.

11. The Next Regular Meeting of the Empire Planning Commission is January 29, 2025 at 6:30 pm. In-person with remote access.

**12. Adjourn Meeting –
HORNING MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING, WHEELOCK SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

(Planning Commission Chair Kim Hubert)

(Deputy Town Clerk Lisa Kunze)