

MINUTES

MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD

City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue

Monday, February 2, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT

Hannah Fehr, chair
Debbie Nuss
Shelley Carver

Brad Buser, vice-chair
Ryan Wilson
Ann Christian

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kelly Karl

STAFF PRESENT

John Adam, Assistant Director of Community Development; Lance Wackerla, Planner II

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Staff called roll and stated there was a quorum.
- 1.2 Open Public Comments.

There were none.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- 2.1 Approve the minutes of the January 22, 2026 Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board meeting
- 2.2 Approve the FINAL PLAT of Autumn Ridge, Unit 2, a 6-acre replat of Lots 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, & 6–10, Autumn Ridge Addition, located on the east side of Grand Mere Parkway between Grand Champions Drive and Enclave Ridge Circle (applicant: Ryan Clause, SMH Consultants; file no. SUB-26-002)

Buser moved to approve the consent agenda; Carver seconded.

Item 2.1 passed 5–0–1 (Christian abstaining).

Item 2.2 passed 6–0.

Wilson said he had calculated rough figures of public improvement and maintenance costs versus property tax for the proposed development as part of the approved plat. He said the proposed development did not meet the sustainable development section of the comprehensive plan and suggested

financial analysis as part of the plat approval process. He added that the plat ended in a cul-de-sac which did not further the public benefit of connectivity.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 3.1 A PUBLIC HEARING to consider the MAJOR MODIFICATION of the Southwind Capital Planned Unit Development to update signage and allow for conversion of time and temp display to digital graphic. Located at 1403 College Avenue (applicant: Virginia Baumgartner, Luminous Neon LLC; file no. PUD-26-002)

Wackerla gave the presentation and recommended approval.

The applicant, Virginia Baumgartner, said the time and temperature display had stopped working the prior year, but that the digital signage would meet the standards of a comparable commercial zoning district.

The owner, Doug Haverkamp, said the sign needed updating since the time and temperature displays were no longer manufactured and added that the digital sign would allow greater flexibility.

Nuss moved to approve the major modification; Buser seconded. Motion passed 6–0.

4. GENERAL AGENDA

- 4.1 A WORK SESSION to provide further review and recommendation on the Short-term Rental regulation amendments for the Riley County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) (file no: RCF-26-005)

Amanda Webb, Riley County Planning Director, explained that everything is included in the staff report along with a letter from the Riley County Counselor, Jacob Hansen. She provided a history of the previous meetings with this board, the Riley County Planning Board, and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in 2025. She said there was some ambiguous language in terms of how staff could apply to consider waiving the proposed 500-foot separation distance between STR units. She said staff wanted to bring it back to the planning board for discussion.

Hansen provided a background of the current language stating that we are essentially saying staff has the authority to waive this requirement but doesn't provide anything that is measured against. He said if someone is given the authority to do something, it can't be arbitrary. He said the language needs to better define the circumstances staff will use to evaluate and decide.

Webb explained the planning board's options, including returning it back to the BOCC "as is" or recommend changes, as both planning boards (MUAPB and RCPB/BZA) are required to do. She said the RCPB/BZA work session is next Monday, February 9th. She explained that the statute allows the BOCC to send

an item back to the planning board one time and it will not have go back through the public hearing process.

Nuss asked for staff guidance and Webb responded.

Hansen explained in more detail about traffic volume and parking and stated that the board would need to discuss why it agreed to waive the requirement.

Wilson voiced concerns about the waiver option.

Hanson explained traffic and volume must be enforced if the complaints are valid. He said enforcement must not be arbitrary or capricious.

City staff asked if waiving the distance requirement is an administrative decision made by staff.

Webb replied yes.

Webb then discussed the Responsible Agent provision and the concern with the existing language “be able to” as this conflicts with the intent of the agent to respond in person within one hour.

Wilson voiced his concerns about the responsible agent response time.

Carver stated this had been previously discussed about out-of-town owners and response time.

Fehr stated she is confident, as a board, the changes being made are completely appropriate.

Nuss moved to approve the regulation language regarding arbitrary enforcement should clearly indicate that staff will administratively evaluate circumstances related to mitigation of traffic and parking to decide if the separation distance requirement should be waived and that the phrase “be able to” be removed from the sentence: “The responsible agent must be able to affirmatively respond to complaints in person within an hour of notification of such complaint.” Carver seconded.

Motion carried 6–0 for regulation language regarding arbitrary enforcement.

Motion carried 5–1 for the phrase “be able to” be removed from the sentence: “The responsible agent must be able to affirmatively respond to complaints in person within an hour of notification of such complaint.” Wilson opposed.

5. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

5.1 Planning updates from staff.

Adam said the City Commission had completed the first day of their retreat and that staff would know their direction after the completion of the event.

5.2 Comments from Board members.

Fehr asked if there was any consideration for financial analysis within the MDC currently. Adam said there was not, and that its addition to the code would be dependent on having the proper analysis tools and staff capacity. He said he had seen financial analysis incorporated into a city's processes before but added that it was rare for residential development to pay its costs through tax. Wilson said the Wards district was able to pay for itself in most cases as compared to something isolated that required more vehicle trips at a lower density. He said the duplex development to the north of Autumn Ridge, Unit 2, was far more efficient at double the units and half the road. Wilson suggested encouraging or allowing duplex development in more areas. Adam said it used to be the case the City's lowest-density residential district allowed both one- and two-family uses. He added that staff had helped to reverse course on larger minimum lot sizes and had brought them down from 10,000 or 15,000 in some cases to a flat 6,000 square feet. He said to accomplish what Wilson was talking about would require switching from minimum lot size to maximum lot size, which would be a significant deviation from what had generally been the norm for planning.

Wilson said it would be a difficult mindset shift but that decision-making bodies would greatly benefit from the ability to deny plats if they would become tax liabilities. Adam said he generally agreed with Wilson, but that change would need to be slower and incremental to address the current norm expectations of what development should look like. Wilson agreed but said financial analysis would be an incremental step in the right direction, like increasing density through accessory dwelling units, which would also allow for smaller sizes of residential construction. Adam said there was no minimum house size and that the City had even adopted tiny home standards that could be used.

Wilson asked if it would be bad practice to do a rough estimate of maintenance costs for items before the board. Buser said he could provide the board with that estimate but that it would be inappropriate to use it as part of the current decision-making process. Wilson clarified he would prefer to do it for rezonings. Nuss said until financial analysis was added to the review factors that the board risked giving the appearance of considering financial factors to the public. She added that it would be more appropriate if he spoke about it after voting on the item since it was not a review factor. Wilson said it was supported by the comprehensive plan so the board should consider it. Nuss disagreed and said it was not part of the review factors within the development code and that calculating rough estimates could give the wrong impression to the public pertaining to the board's purview. Adam said there were certain goals in the comprehensive plan that were more aspirational in nature and that there were difficulties involved with turning a goal into an actual enforceable review factor. Wilson said financial analysis could provide the community with a healthier tax base and more efficient development.

5.3 Next meeting: Chair announced the next meeting is February 16, 2026

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Submitted by Lance Wackerla, Planner II