

**ROUTT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**APRIL 2, 2026**

The meeting of the Routt County Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Chair Steve Warnke and Commissioners Brian Kelly, Nick Belz, Tim Sullivan, Robin Schepper, Andrew Benjamin, Bill Norris, and Linda Miller. Commissioners Jim DeFrancia, David Hoffman and David Miller were absent. Planning Director Kristy Winser and staff planner Greg Jaeger also attended. Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes.

The new board members Nick Belz, Robin Schepper, and Tim Sullivan each introduced themselves and reviewed their backgrounds.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Walter Magill stated that it remains unclear what the County expects and desires regarding wildlife mitigations plans, particularly for smaller projects.

**MINUTES – MARCH 19, 2026**

Commissioner Kelly moved to approve the above cited minutes, as written. Commissioner Benjamin seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**Activity:** PL20250052 & PL20250053

**Applicant:** Area 51B Storage LLC, Todd Moore

**Petition:** Conditional Use Permit - Self Storage with variance requests; Zone change from Agriculture/Forestry to Industrial

**Location:** 13475 County Road 51B; located 0.76 miles from the intersection of CR 27 and US Hwy 40

Commissioner Benjamin recused himself from this item, citing a potential conflict of interest. He stated that he is working for the owner of the property on a different project.

Mr. Walter Magill of Four Points Surveying and Engineering, representing the petitioner, reviewed the application for an expansion of an existing self-storage

operation. The petition includes an application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) with variance requests, and a Zone Change from Agriculture/Forestry (A/F) to Industrial (I). He said that the proposal is for an expansion of an existing storage operation on a 10-acre parcel located on CR 51B, behind the Hayden Station Power Plant. He stated that variances are being requested from the requirements related to bicycle parking, pedestrian facilities, and public spaces, as well as from the screening standards specific to self-storage units. Mr. Magill reviewed the existing operation and the history of the parcel, as detailed in the staff report. He said that when the owner of the property wanted to expand the existing self-storage operation he discovered that were elements of his plan that do not meet the requirements of the Unified Development Code (UDC). The current application is intended to rectify those issues to allow for the expansion of the business.

Mr. Magill stated that the requested expansion would add 2800 Sq. Ft. of additional container storage and 5200 sq. ft. of flexible storage and warehouse space. Mr. Magill said that the operation does not experience a lot of vehicle traffic and that, even with the expansion, the anticipated number of vehicle trips to the site is eight per day. He noted that this is substantially less traffic than was generated by the prior uses of the site. Mr. Magill said that no outdoor storage is being proposed. He said that the parcel does have a dwelling unit that is occupied by an employee of the operation who provides onsite security and management. Mr. Magill stated that the variance requests are appropriate for the site, which is far from residential property or urban uses and is not on an entry corridor to a municipality. Regarding the screening, Mr. Magill stated that the site is fenced and is adjacent to unscreened heavy industrial development.

Mr. Jaeger reviewed the proposal. He noted that the requested petition would change the use category for the operation from a Special Use Permit (SUP) – Home Industry in the A/F zone district to a CUP in the Industrial zone district. He said that although the request is for a CUP, the variance requests and the zone change require the entire application to be reviewed by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC).

Mr. Jaeger reviewed the history of the parcel and its uses, as detailed in the staff report. He also described the existing facilities and the ongoing self-storage operation, which is currently permitted as a Home Industry. The permit allows for indoor vehicle, RV, camper, etc. storage within the existing warehouse and for three additional structures to be used for self-storage. A dwelling for the onsite manager was also allowed under the existing permit and is located within the warehouse. Mr. Jaeger presented a site plan and aerial photo and noted that the property is within the Hayden Three-Mile Plan, and therefore, within a Tier 2 growth area.

Mr. Jaeger reviewed the petition to change the zoning from A/F to I, and to allow for two additional buildings to be used for self-storage within the fenced area. The additional buildings consist of 2,880 sq. ft. of container style storage and 5,220 sq. ft. of either warehouse or container style storage, depending on community needs and demand.

Mr. Jaeger reviewed the requested variances from the UDC requirements for bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, public space, screening and the location of bay doors. He said that staff is in support of the application and the variances. He said that past uses and approvals after the freight business ceased created constraints on the property, which is currently in the A/F zone district. He stated that the current operator had successfully redeveloped this property, although the Home Industry classification was never a perfect fit. The requested zone change and use classification change from Home Industry to Self Storage Units/Mini-Warehouse better fits the ongoing use and the character of the property. Mr. Jaeger said that the proposal would allow the business to grow while maintaining a safe circulation plan, along with sufficient parking and areas for snow storage. He stated that staff supports the variance requests because the parcel is located in an industrialized area, and it is unlikely that the bicycle, pedestrian, and public facilities required by the UDC would be utilized in this location. He added that the requirement for decorative fencing is inappropriate in this industrial area. Mr. Jaeger reviewed the requirement that storage bay doors shall not be visible from any public road. He said that the applicant had provided a view corridor analysis showing the areas near the parcel that will be visible. In addition, the applicant will add opaque slats to the existing 6-ft. fencing to mitigate the views of the bay doors. He said that while the bay doors will be somewhat visible, their location will improve the traffic flow and safety through the property. Mr. Jaeger presented photos of the site and the surrounding area, with its agricultural and industrial uses.

Chair Warnke asked about the single-family residence on the site. Mr. Jaeger clarified that the dwelling unit is located within the warehouse. He said that the 2020 permit had given the applicant the option of building a free-standing single-family home or to build within the warehouse. Building within the warehouse proved to be the most cost-effective alternative.

Commissioner Sullivan asked for a clarification of the conditions that allow for a zone change. Mr. Jaeger offered that the parcel has, through the history of how it has been used and the fact that it is adjacent to existing industrial zoning, come to be used industrially. Ms. Winser added that on the Hayden Future Land Use Map this area is designated for industrial use. The requested zone change is, therefore, consistent with the Hayden Community Plan, which is a sub-area plan of the Routt County Master Plan.

Commissioner Sullivan asked about the variance from the requirement for decorative screening. Mr. Jaeger stated that because the parcel is not located in an entry corridor or other visually sensitive area, the use of decorative screening would be excessive. He stated that it is staff's position that the addition of slats to the existing fencing would be sufficient, particularly since no screening or landscaping was required for the Home Industry and the adjacent industrial uses are unscreened.

Commissioner Belz asked if there are other parcels in a similar situation that may request a zone change to Industrial. Ms. Winser stated that zone change requests are rare. She said that this application and parcel, with its existing use, are unique in the A/F zone district. She said that the findings of fact and conditions of approval (COAs) were crafted to be very specific in order to avoid setting a precedent.

There was no public comment.

Chair Warnke asked if Planning Commission was in support of the variance requests. Commissioner Kelly said that he drives by this parcel often. He said that the high-voltage power lines and the power plant are big obvious features that are clearly visible; the subject site and use are not. He said that maintenance of the slats will be important due to likely wind damage, but that additional screening beyond the slats is unnecessary. Chair Warnke asked if the slats are even necessary. Commissioner Sullivan offered that the slats are a good compromise for the location. There was consensus in support of the variance requests.

### **ZONE CHANGE- PL20250053** **MOTION**

Commissioner Kelly moved to recommend approval of item PL20250053, a zone change from Agriculture/Forestry to Industrial, based on the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal with the following conditions meets the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan and Town of Hayden's Three Mile Area Plan and is in compliance with the applicable provisions of Chapter 4 of the Routt County Unified Development Code.
2. The existing Zone District is inconsistent with the policies and goals of the applicable Master Plan and any applicable adopted area or community plan.
3. The area for which rezoning is requested has changed or is changing to such a degree that it is in the public interest to encourage a new use or density in the area.

This approval is subject to the following condition:

1. The change of zone from Agriculture and Forestry (AF) to Industrial (I) shall become effective upon signing of a resolution amending the Official Zoning Map by the Board of County Commissioners, said resolution to be recorded in the Routt County Clerk and Records Office within 3 years of approval.

Commissioner L. Miller seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 7 – 0, with the Chair voting yes.**

**Conditional Use Permit- PL20250052**

**MOTION**

Commissioner Kelly moved to recommend approval of item PL20250052, a CUP for Self-Storage/Mini-Warehouse in the Industrial zone District with the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal with the following conditions complies with the applicable guidelines of the Routt County Master Plan and Town of Hayden's Three Mile Area Plan and is in compliance with Chapters 3 and 4 of the Routt County Unified Development Code.
2. The proposal complies with Variance criteria 4.71.C
  - a) The variances further the intent of the master plan because due to the remoteness of the site and distance from growth areas requiring bicycle, pedestrian facilities, public spaces, and decorative fencing will not improve the use of the site or benefit the public. Strict application of the standard will only create improvements that are not utilized.
  - b) Although this site is within Hayden's 3-mile planned area, the vicinity is designated for industrial uses, where such amenities are not expected to support the intended use or require connectivity.
  - c) The variance further the intent of the master plan because the master plan encourages infill development and redevelopment. The proposed building orientation maximizes site use within the existing disturbed area. Traffic circulation, parking, and infill redevelopment for increased density are all improved by this design.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

**General Approval Requirements:**

1. The CUP approval is contingent upon compliance with all applicable provisions of the Routt County Unified Development Code.

2. The CUP is limited to uses and facilities presented in the approved project plan. Any additional uses or facilities must be applied for in a new or amended application.
3. Any complaints or concerns that may arise from this operation may be cause for review of the CUP, at any time, and amendment or addition of conditions, or revocation of the permit if necessary.
4. In the event that Routt County commences an action to enforce or interpret this CUP, the substantially prevailing party shall be entitled to recover its costs in such action including, without limitation, attorney fees.
5. Permits will be assessed an Annual Fee in accordance with the Fee Schedule maintained by the Routt County Planning Department.
6. This approval is contingent upon the acquisition of and compliance with any required federal, state and local permits. The operation shall comply with all federal, state and local laws. Copies of permits or letters of approval shall be submitted to the Routt County Planning Department prior to the commencement of operations.
7. Prior to the issuance of the permit, the permittee shall provide evidence of liability insurance in compliance with the County's Insurance and Surety Requirements policy then in effect. The certificate of insurance shall include all permit numbers associated with the activity and Routt County shall be named as an additional insured. Permittee shall notify the Routt County Planning Department of any claims made against the policy.
8. Accessory structures/uses associated with this permit may be administratively approved by the Planning Director, without notice.
9. Transfer of this CUP may occur only after a statement has been filed with the Planning Director by the transferee guaranteeing that they will comply with the terms and conditions of the permit. If transferee is not the landowner of the permitted area, transferee shall submit written consent for the transfer by the landowner. Failure to receive approval for the transfer shall constitute sufficient cause for revocation of the permit if the subject property is transferred. Bonds, insurance certificates or other security required in the permit shall also be filed with the Planning Director by the transferee to ensure the work will be completed as specified. Any proposal to change the terms and conditions of a permit shall require a new permit.
10. The Permittee shall prevent the spread of weeds to surrounding lands and comply with the most current version of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act and Routt County regulations for noxious weeds.

**Specific Conditions:**

11. The Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is valid for the life of the use provided it is acted upon within one year of approval. The CUP shall be deemed to have automatically lapsed if the uses permitted herein are discontinued for a period of one (1) year

12. Prior to operation, permittee shall submit to Routt County proof of a Sales Tax Account /License.
13. A dwelling unit shall be occupied by the onsite manager
14. The facility shall be well-maintained, including regular cleaning and maintenance of the facility, such as site sweeping, and upkeeping of site landscaping. Units shall be maintained in good repair, free from rust, peeling paint, graffiti and other forms of deterioration.
15. Proper installation and continuing maintenance of fencing and privacy slats, lighting, and/or buffering materials or structures is required.
16. Each unit shall have a cohesive color scheme that comprises the entire facility. Neutral colors are encouraged.
17. All property stored on the site of a storage facility use shall be entirely within enclosed buildings.
18. The storage shall occur only within a clearly delineated, designated area.
19. Fuel, flammable materials, or hazardous materials shall be kept in a safe area and shall be stored in accordance with state and local environmental requirements.
20. Hours of operations are 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week
21. Revegetation of disturbed areas shall occur within one growing season with a seed mix that avoids the use of aggressive grasses. See the Colorado State University Extension Office for appropriate grass seed mixes.

Commissioner Norris seconded the motion.

**The motion carried 7 - 0, with the Chair voting yes.**

Commissioner Benjamin re-joined the meeting.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Winser reviewed the upcoming agendas and the applications in the pipeline that have not yet been scheduled. She said that a training with land use attorney Jerry Dahl for Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, the BCC, and the Attorney's Office has been scheduled for May 21.

Ms. Winser said that the election of Planning Commission Chair and Vice-Chair would be postponed to the night of the training. She discussed the process. She said that representatives to the APCC also need to be chosen. Commissioner DeFrancia is one of the representatives and the other position is open. Commissioner Schepper volunteered to serve on the APCC.

Ms. Winser noted that there are new code requirements from the state that must be implemented by July. The proposed changes to the UDC will be reviewed for approval by Planning Commission. There are also new requirements for Comprehensive Plans that must be implemented by the end of the year. Ms. Winser stated that most of the required elements are already in the Routt County Master Plan and just need to be provided to DOLA. Other elements will need to be added to the Master Plan.

Ms. Winser reported that the BCC had approved the application for the Hewes gravel pit and will proceed with the purchase of the property.

There was discussion of the Stagecoach Community Plan and when it would be appropriate to update it.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.**