



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting Minutes
Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and at Memorial Hall
May 13, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Manitou Springs City Planning Commission (CPC) was held at Manitou Springs Memorial Hall, 606 Manitou Avenue. Chair Delwiche called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and declared a quorum present.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Chair Alan Delwiche
Commissioner Stephen Graybill
Commissioner Roy Rosenthal
Commissioner Keith Harper
Commissioner Frank DeLay
Commissioner Megan Day

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Vice Chair Justin Wilson (Excused)

STAFF PRESENT:

Senior Planner Chelsea Royston
Planner II Erin Ringsred

GUESTS PRESENT:

CPC Attorney Kunal Parikh

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 03.11.2026 CPC Minutes

Commissioner DeLay motioned to approve the March minutes. Commissioner Rosenthal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

2. 04.08.2026 CPC Minutes

Commissioner Rosenthal motioned to approve the March minutes. Commissioner DeLay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

C. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was discussed.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. MJT 2602 – Major Temporary Use Permit (unimproved parking lot) at 101 Higginbotham Road

Planner Ringsred presented Major Temporary Use Permit (MJT) 2602 for a parking lot intended to serve visitors shuttling to and from Rainbow Falls. It was noted that no permanent improvements to the lot were proposed.

There was a discussion about whether the lot had changed since the Commission approved the MJT in 2025. Planner Ringsred and Applicant Greg Wellen from Adventures Out West, both confirmed that nothing had changed since the last approval.

Applicant Wellen explained that the County wanted Adventures out West to run the park and ride to Rainbow Falls. He stated that they had customers most days.

Commissioner Day motioned to approve MJT 2602. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

2. MJT 2603 – 515 Ruxton Avenue – Cog Railway Sunrise Trains

Planner Ringsred presented MJT 2603. She explained the request was to extend operating hours on four specific dates for the use of sunrise trains and to accommodate parking. She noted that the applicant has a current Conditional Use Permit (MaCUP) with operating hours conditionally limited to 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM. The requested extended operating hours dates were July 4, July 18, August 1, and September 26, 2026.

Applicant Ted Johnston, General Manager for Pikes Peak Cog Railway Company, shared that they were not able to do the sunrise trains last year due to staffing constraints.

Commissioner Graybill expressed appreciation for the sunrise train tradition.

Commissioner Graybill motioned to approve MJT 2603 with staff conditions. Commissioner Day seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

3. Multiple Applications – two dwelling units

- a. MNR 2602 – Minor Development Plan for the new construction of two single household detached dwelling units on two lots
- b. VAR 2603 – Height Variance – thirty-five feet (35”) where twenty five feet (25”) is permitted.
- c. VAR 2604 – Front Setback Variance – ten feet (10”) where fifteen feet (15”) is required.

Planner Royston presented MNR 2602, VAR 2603, and VAR 2604 related to the construction of two new households at 944 Midland Avenue and 946 Midland Avenue on two lots. She explained that the MNR consolidated the applications for both properties into one. She provided an overview of the two properties, including the proposed structures, surrounding neighborhood context, and the natural slope of the lots.

Planner Royston reviewed the requested height variance, explaining that while Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) allows a 30-foot height limit, the applicants requested approval for up to 35 feet to allow for flexibility during construction.

Planner Royston also reviewed the front setback variance, explaining that the applicants requested a 10-foot front setback for the garages where 15 feet is required. She noted that the properties along Midland Avenue similarly adapted to the terrain and natural slope. Planner Royston outlined the MNR criteria and stated that the proposed massing, height and setback are generally consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. She further stated that the rear setback of the homes exceed rear setback requirements and that the driveway layouts would accommodate the minimum amount of required parking.

Planner Royston stated that approval of the MNR should be contingent on the approval of the two variances. Staff recommended that any applicant changes that would reduce the extent of the variance be administratively approved without CPC approval.

Chair Delwiche asked if sidewalks are required. Planner Royston said that because surrounding properties have no sidewalks, they are not required.

Commissioner Graybill noted that Midland Avenue is very narrow, and allowing a front setback variance would exacerbate the issue. He expressed concern about space on the road.

Planner Royston confirmed that there is 12 feet from the pavement to the property line.

There was a discussion about why the applicant was not required to seek height allowance from the HPC first. Planner Royston explained that the application for this property that went to the HPC allowed for administrative changes to a certain extent. She clarified that approving a 35-foot height variance would not be in HPC's purview.

Applicants Larry Gillan and Michelle Williams from LGA studios noted the variations of buildings they went through for the lot. Gillan explained that the garage placement was

intended to reduce roadway clutter, lower construction costs and maintain affordability for the home. He stated that the steeper roof pitches were proposed to better match the historic district. He noted that the current plan is below 35 feet in height but the variance was requested to allow for flexibility during construction. He added that the middle section of the roof is the only portion that would be affected by the additional height, and stated that the variance is not excessive. He also noted efforts to minimize construction traffic. He acknowledged the challenges of the lot and stated that efforts were made to design the project in a manner compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

There was a discussion about previous proposed developments for the lot. Applicant Gillan stated that the earlier proposals were too expensive and explained that the revised design was intended to help maintain the property as affordable housing. Chair Delwiche clarified that the project does not legally qualify as affordable housing, but that the applicant is attempting to keep the cost down.

Applicant Gillan stated that properties behind the home would not see the massing of the property for the most part.

Nathan Reitz from Summit Ministries, the property owner, and Matt Gallar from Gallar homes, the contractor, noted challenges with the topography of the lot. Reitz reiterated the goal to build affordable housing for the neighborhood, while honoring and respecting neighbors. He noted the 10 to 12 foot wall of dirt on the property that already naturally masks the home, and added that the extra height requested would not affect neighbors. Gallar stated that the proposed plans were the easiest way to develop the lot, and that the positioning of the homes on the lot made the most sense from a drainage and cost standpoint.

Commissioner Graybill stated that is not convinced that the front setback meets the CPC variance criteria.

Chair Delwiche expressed concern about the setbacks and that there is not enough off-street parking. He also suggested that there may be an opportunity to keep the height permissible.

Commissioner Day stated that the driveway would have sufficient parking combined with the garage. She added that imposing a larger garage or more parking would increase the cost and reduce housing attainability.

Planner Royston stated that the code is vague in regards to driveways as parking spots, and noted that the streets and parking department had no issues with it.

Commissioner Rosenthal expressed that he is comfortable with allowing the requested height flexibility for construction purposes.

Planner Royston provided the criteria for the front setback and explained for why the property met the minimum amount of criteria.

There was a discussion about parking requirements. Planner Royston explained that two off-street parking spaces are required, and staff interpreted the driveway as a

possible parking space along with the garage. Planner Ringsred confirmed that the setback variance would not make the driveway too small to meet the definition of a parking spot.

Commissioner Day motioned to approve VAR 2604, regarding the front setback with staff conditions. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-2), with Commissioner Graybill and Chair Delwiche opposed.

Planner Royston provided the variance criteria for a height variance. She explained that there was no anticipated reduction in light or air that would create an adverse impact. Planner Royston explained the applicants have met the minimum amount of criteria for height variance approval.

Commissioner Day motioned to approve VAR 2603, regarding the height, with staff conditions. Commissioner Rosenthal seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-1), with Chair Delwiche opposed.

Chair Delwiche commented that he thinks there was alternatives to meet the height calculations as established in code.

Commissioner Day motioned to approve MNR 2602 with staff conditions. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-1), with Chair Delwiche opposed.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

Three potential alternate members introduced themselves, including, Tom Lundgren, 415 El Paso Boulevard, Sean Warner, 240 Via Linda Vista, and Colton Berck, 107 Oak Path.

G. NOTICE OF COUNCIL ACTION AND UPDATES

Planner Royston shared that City Council held a work session regarding variance criteria revisions. She noted that Council was in favor of administrative adjustments for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, but did not support front yard encroachments or 15% dimensional adjustments, which would not be move forward. She added that staff would continue to advocate for CPC recommendations.

H. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chair Delwiche adjourned the meeting at 7:01 PM.