

City of Kenmore
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
April 7, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Planning Commission Members – In Attendance (the meeting was held onsite and virtually using the Zoom online platform)

Tracy Banaszynski, Chair
Kara Macias
Chris Olson
Edouard Lassalle (virtual)
Mike Vanderlinde

Excused

David Dorrian, Vice Chair
Dwight Thompson

Staff

Debbie Bent, Community Development Director
Todd Hall, Principal Planner
Brittany Chue, Senior Planner
Samantha Loyuk, Development Services Director
Riley Rosbotham, Planner
Shannon Tipple-Leen, Planning Commission Clerk
Scott Passey, Co-Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Banaszynski at 7:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Dorrian and Commissioner Thompson were excused.

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Land Acknowledgement was read.

4. FLAG SALUTE

The Flag Salute was done.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comment was given.

6. CONSENT AGENDA - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from April 7, 2026, were approved. The consent agenda was accepted with unanimous consent.

7. AGENDA ITEMS

Neighborhood Retail Engagement

Brittany Chue gave an update on Neighborhood Retail and upcoming community engagement.

Questions/Comments:

Commissioners were concerned about how engagement would be share and ways to include other small businesses that would want to share opinions. Staff said she would work with city's small business liaison to make sure they were included.

Development Services Presentation

Samantha Loyuk and Reilly Rosbotham gave a presentation on the City's Development Services Department and statistics relating to housing in Kenmore.

Questions/Comments:

Development Challenges

- Building affordable housing—especially ownership units—is difficult for for-profit developers due to differing business models and limited profitability.
- Fee-in-lieu options and rental developments are generally easier to implement and remain important tools.

Financial and Financing Constraints

- Selling affordable units is financially challenging and often not profitable.
- Significant differences exist between for-profit and non-profit financing, particularly for deeply affordable housing.
- Additional input from ARCH is needed to better explain financing structures.

Regulatory and Process Barriers

- Overlapping and sometimes conflicting code requirements (e.g., building, fire, frontage, and critical areas) create challenges.
- The City does not enforce HOA deed restrictions.
- Variances are commonly requested for critical areas and tree code issues.
- Pre-application stage barriers include navigating these regulatory complexities.

Project Design & Requirements

- Affordable units in mixed-use developments are typically dispersed throughout projects and include a mix of unit types, as reviewed by ARCH.

Market Conditions & Trends

- Builder confidence is slightly below the regional average, with rising material costs contributing.
- Long-term data (3–5 years) is needed to identify meaningful trends.
- It is difficult to isolate specific variables that impact development due to the number of influencing factors.

Current Development Activity

- Some for-profit developers include affordable units (e.g., Beechwood II and other pipeline projects).

Developer Engagement & Feedback

- Following up with developers on what works and what doesn't is considered good practice.
- Predictability in the development process is critical to reducing risk and encouraging participation.

Housing Strategy Plan

Debbie Bent and Todd Hall gave a presentation on the updates to the Housing Strategy Plan.

Questions/Comments:

Role of the City vs. Market Delivery

- Discussion centered on whether challenges in developing deeply affordable housing are driven more by process or political factors.
- Clarified that the City's role is to plan and enable affordable housing (i.e., "set the table"), not necessarily to build or directly deliver all units.
- Compliance with state law requires jurisdictions to provide sufficient capacity for a range of housing types and affordability levels.

Planning vs. Production

- Emphasis that meeting housing targets is about ensuring zoning and code allow for development, rather than guaranteeing construction of those units.
- No requirement for the City to construct all planned affordable housing units.

Financing Challenges

- Even if regulations allow for affordable housing, financing remains a key constraint and may limit whether projects are ultimately built.
- Question raised as to whether regulatory changes alone are sufficient to achieve desired outcomes.

Regulatory and Political Considerations

- Inquiry into whether there are clear political or regulatory barriers currently preventing development.
- General acknowledgement that enabling policy is necessary but may not be sufficient on its own.

STEP Housing (State-Mandated)

- STEP housing cited as an example of state-driven requirements.
- Must follow the same development process as standard residential projects, without additional local conditions.
- Adopted in June as part of compliance with state law.

Next Steps:

Planning Commission Meeting April 21, 2026.

ARCH will participate in future meetings and assist with community engagement and development of HSP strategies.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Banaszynski adjourned the meeting at 9:52 PM.

Shannon Tipple-Leen

Planning Commission Clerk

Approved by Planning Commission on: 4/21/2026