



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 6:30 PM

Work Session, 5:30 PM, Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall,
114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia 24153

Regular Session, 6:30 PM, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia 24153

WORK SESSION

1. Call to Order

A work session meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Salem, Virginia, was held in the Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, at 5:30 p.m., on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, there being present the following members of said Commission, to wit: Denise P. King, Reid Garst, Jackson Beamer, Mark Henrickson, and Nathan Routt, constituting a legal quorum, with Chair King, presiding; together with Chris Dorsey, City Manager and Executive Secretary, ex officio member of said Commission, Charles E. Van Allman Jr., Director of Community Development; Mary Ellen Wines, Planning & Zoning Administrator, Maxwell S. Dillon, Planner, Jim Guynn, City Attorney, and Tammy Dunn, Permit Technician; and the following business was transacted:

Chair Denise King reported that this date, place, and time had been set in order for the Commission to hold a work session. The work session meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

A discussion was held on the following items:

2. New Business

A. Items for the March agenda

1. 740 North Mill Road – two family dwelling

B. Items for the April agenda

1. 213 Rutledge Circle – two family dwelling

3. Adjournment

Chair King adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Salem, Virginia, was held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, at 6:30 p.m., on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, there being present the following members of said Commission, to wit: Denise P. King, Reid Garst, Jackson Beamer, Mark Henrickson, and Nathan Routt, constituting a legal quorum, with Chair King, presiding; together with Chris Dorsey, City Manager and Executive Secretary, ex officio member of said Commission, Charles E. Van Allman Jr., Director of Community Development; Mary Ellen Wines, Planning & Zoning Administrator, Maxwell S. Dillon, Planner, and Jim Guynn, City Attorney, and the following business was transacted:

Chair King called the March meeting of the City of Salem Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Reporting that this date, place, and time had been set in order for the Commission to hold a public meeting.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll call

Mr. Routt - Here
Mr. Henrickson - Here
Mr. Beamer - Here
Mr. Garst - Here
Chair King – Here

2. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes

Consider acceptance of the minutes from the January 14, 2026, work session and regular meeting.

Chair King stated that under the consent agenda, are the minutes of January 14, 2026, Planning Commission work session and regular meeting. Chair King asked the Commission if anyone had any questions, additions, or comments. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted.

3. Reports

A. Site Plan and Subdivision Plat approvals

Max Dillon referenced a one-page report included in the agenda packet acknowledging the number of approved site plans over the past couple of months since the Commission didn't meet in February. The report shows no site plan approvals in January, two in February. There were two

Subdivision Plat approvals in January and three in February.

Chair King asked the Commission if anyone had any questions, additions, or comments. Hearing none the meeting continued to the next item.

B. 2025 Planning Commission Annual Report

Chair King explained that the 2025 Planning Commission Annual Report is a report that summarizes everything the Planning Commission did in the year 2025. If the Commission approves this report, it is then presented to City Council for their information. Chair King asked if anyone had any questions, additions, or comments. Hearing none Chair King asked for a motion. Mr. Beamer made a motion to approve the report and submit said report to City Council. Mr. Garst 2nd the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Routt – Aye
Mr. Henrickson – Aye
Mr. Beamer – Aye
Mr. Garst – Aye
Chair King – Aye

4. Unfinished Business – none

5. Public Hearing Item

Consider the request of WILLIAMHART LLC, property owner, for a special exception permit to allow a two-family dwelling on the property located at 740 North Mill Road (Tax Map # 48-2-7)

Proper legal notice has been given and all adjoining property owners have been notified of said hearing.

Chair King asked if there was anyone on the staff wanting to say something about this matter.

Mr. Henrickson recused himself from this vote due to consulting with the property owner about the property being discussed.

Chair King invited the representative of the applicant to come forward and state their name, address, and how they are relevant to this matter.

Barney Horrell from Brushy Mountain Engineering introduced himself as the representative of the property owner. Mr. Horrell stated that he had provided a packet with a concept plan showing drawings of a duplex on this residential single-family lot, understanding that duplexes in residential single-family zones require a special exception permit. Mr. Horrell continued stating that the surrounding area has quite a few rentals, helping to provide some housing for Roanoke College students. He noted this lot is oddly shaped like a pan handle, and the property owner purchased a little bit of additional ground from the property owner of 744 North Mill Road to help fit this type of structure. The Majority of the lot is in a flood plain, but the location of the house is up on the old railroad bed making it elevated sufficiently out of the flood plain. He stated this house will not be very visible from the road, and this property backs up to the

Wheeler property which is going to be developed. He mentioned this property is not located near the creek that runs through the Wheeler property. Mr. Horrell stated he would be happy to answer any questions.

Chair King explained that when there are site plans submitted, they go through other departments within the city so that everyone is aware of what is being proposed. A question has been brought to the Commission's attention about the access and the turning of a fire truck or EMT truck and their ability to turn into the driveway based on the plans that were provided.

Mr. Horrell agreed that getting a fire truck into the site and turned around would be very challenging, even as a single-family residence.

Chair King stated that the concern from the fire department was with the width of the driveway not being any bigger than it was.

Mr. Horrell commented that the plans show a 12-foot paved drive, that is the width of an average lane size on a highway.

Ms. Wines clarifying that the fire department's concerns were more with the width of the entrance at the street and the ability to turn into the property.

Mr. Horrell, understanding the clarification, stated that they would be happy to widen the radii out. He noted his plans usually use the standard driveway dimensions for drawings but making it bigger wouldn't be a problem.

Chair King reiterated it was the width of the access point to North Mill Road.

Mr. Horrell stated that there was a little access easement granted by the applicant to the adjoining rental property because that driveway comes through the front of his parcel. The concept plan shows this and maybe the driveways can be blended and take advantage of that.

Chair King asking Mr. Horrell what was going to be done to the front entrance of the property where the light pole is now, it seems to be all brush and asked if this driveway was going to be to the east side or to the west side or will it come straight out.

Mr. Horrell answered that the property owner did hire an excavator to do some grading in the back of the property already. When this project was first presented the idea was to share the driveway with the property at 740 North Mill Road, but the owner of that property expressed he wanted his own driveway. It will be a grading challenge since the part of the driveway is in the floodplain not the floodway.

Mr. Dorsey wanted to know how close this property was to the old railroad bridge located in that area.

Mr. Horrell stated that the property is immediately to the west of that bridge.

Mr. Garst, looking at the concept plan, stated that it looked like it was about 30 feet based on scale.

Mr. Horrell continued that he did have to set the house off the property line 25 feet.

Chair King expressed her concern about turning off North Mill Road but was pleased to see the site lines were good coming out of this property.

Mr. Horrell explained that he only had 40 feet or less of frontage to work with.

Chair King asked if anyone else had any questions or comments for the property representative. Hearing none, she opened the public hearing at 6:41 PM.

Chair King invited anyone who would like to speak or comment on this matter to come forward and give their name and address.

Chair King asked Ms. Wines if there were any calls, emails, or correspondence from anyone about this matter.

Ms. Wines answered no ma'am.

Chair King, seeing no one, closed the public hearing at 6:41 PM and asked for a motion.

Mr. Routt made a motion to recommend approval. Mr. Beamer 2nd the motion.

Roll Call

Mr. Routt aye
Mr. Henrickson abstained
Mr. Beamer aye
Mr. Garst aye
Chair King aye

6. Other Business – None

7. Adjournment

Chair King stated there was no additional business for the Planning Commission and the meeting was adjourned at 6:42p.m.