

MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF JACKSON, WYOMING
February 4, 2026

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in a regular session on February 4, 2026 in the Town Council Chambers located at 150 E. Pearl Ave. in Jackson, at 5:30 pm. This meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

BOARD: Thomas Smits, Eliska Garcia, Katie Wilson, Georgie Stanley appeared in person. Megan Jennings appeared via Zoom. Laura Bonich and Steph Wise are not present.

STAFF: Tyler Valentine, Andrew Bowen, Mary Tippetts

MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Smits and seconded by Commissioner Stanley to approve January 7, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting minutes. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. Commissioner Wilson does not vote. The vote showed all in favor and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

I. P25-139: Text Amendment to LDR Div. 5.3

STAFF PRESENTATION:

Andrew Bowen provided an overview of the proposal: text amendments to LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4 (P25-234) and 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C (P25-139). Staff provide change analysis comparing the current and proposed string lighting language. Key questions: Does the Commission find that the proposed amendments strike an appropriate balance between preservation of dark skies and support for economic vitality within the Town; Does the Commission agree with staff recommended exemption language which permits year-round illumination of the Town Square.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF:

The discrepancy between the need for public safety and use of string lights is clarified. The reasoning behind the proposed changes is discussed. Enforcement is considered. The Commission clarifies which of the proposed amendments will apply only to string lights.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION:

Samuel Singer with Wyoming Stargazing gives an overview of the proposal. The reasoning behind the proposed amendments are given. The intent is to limit the brightness level in the Town to preserve dark sky compliance. Lighting as it relates to public safety is discussed. The applicant is amenable to adjustments to the exact language of the amendments with input from the Chamber and the Town. The applicant understands the difficulty with enforcement and illustrates options for dimmers.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Howe with the Chamber of Commerce addresses the Commission. The Chamber believes string lights in the central business district should not be turned off at dark as it discourages visitation. The Chamber encourages string lighting as it is a tourist draw.

Sadik Darwich with Hotel Jackson addresses the Commission. He recognizes that while string lighting is not necessarily for safety reasons, it feels comforting to have soft lighting rather than bright safety lights. He disagrees with turning off string lights after close of business. He appreciates that compliance will not be retroactive; he does not appreciate that compliance is complaint based rather than a resolution or education based.

Linda Cordair addresses the Commission. She argues that more string lighting would be beneficial to the tourist community and does not want string lights to be turned off at the close of business.

Steve Meadows addresses the Commission. He would like string lights to remain during the winter season and they improve the ambiance of the Town.

Scott Fossil addresses the Commission. He appreciates the Downtown string lights.

Susan O'Brien addresses the Commission. She is in favor of some amendments one and four but against others.

Lisa Mapp addresses the Commission. She is in favor of string lights which may not have intended to provide safety but ultimately do.

Jim Waldrop addresses the Commission. He believes the amendments need more work to be ready for consideration by Council and thinks the applicant and interested parties can come to an agreement on amendment language.

Austin O'Brien addresses the Commission. He agrees with Mr. Waldrop and believes the amendments need more consideration and does not want to reduce lighting.

Judd Grossman addresses the Commission. He supports the effort of Wyoming Stargazing to address light pollution and light trespass.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commission discusses P25-234 regarding shielding and color. Commission finds the amendments are consistent with the purpose and organization of the LDRs, improve the consistency of the LDRs with other provisions of the LDRs, and are necessary to address changing conditions, public necessity, and/or state or federal legislation, and is consistent with other adopted Town Ordinances. Commissioner Smits does not believe that the amendments provide flexibility for landowners within standards that clearly define desired character and does not believe in forced compliance.

Commission discusses P25-139 as it relates to string lights. Commission would like the applicant and interested parties to come to an agreement on string lights, especially as it relates to safety, business interests, and equitable distribution.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Garcia to recommend approval of Text Amendment P25-234 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and Articles 2, 3, and 4, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this Staff report dated February 4, 2026. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. Commissioners Wilson, Garcia, Jennings, and Stanley vote in favor. Commissioner Smits votes against. The vote shows 4-1 and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Smits to recommend continuance to a date uncertain of Text Amendment P25-139 to amend LDR Sections 5.3.1.B and 5.3.1.C, subject to the attached departmental review comments and this Staff report dated February 4, 2026. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. The vote showed all in favor and the motion carried.

MATTERS FROM STAFF:

The LDR workplan and indicator report will be heard at the first March 4 Planning Commission meeting.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Wilson to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smits called for the vote. The vote showed all in favor and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

minutes:mt