

**BRISTOL ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THURSDAY JULY 24, 2025**

1. Call to Order

By: Chairman White

Time: 5:00 P.M.

Place: Via Zoom

MEMBERS	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	David White (Chairman)	X	
	Thomas Marra (Vice Chairman)		X
	Richard Harlow	X	
	Richard Goodwin (Secretary)		X
	John LaFreniere	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	Michael DeRoehn	X	
	Sara Mangiafico	X	
	Peter Caruso		X
STAFF:	Robert M. Flanagan, AICP, City Planner	X	

Per the order of Chairman White, the meeting was called to order at 5:00 P.M.

Chairman White reminded the Commission the next regular meeting was Monday, August 11, 2025.

Mr. Gomes would review the Commission's schedule. The consultant wanted to review the seven items on the Agenda List that included two new recommendations. Mr. Gomes said the Commission's discussion location was now in the Site Design and Sign Regulations. The consultant next month would review the administrative aspects of the Regulations. This evening Mr. Gomes would present the drafted recommendations.

Staff inquiries: The consultant said the recommendations would more than likely go to a public hearing in October 2025 that would be the end of the project. Mr. Gomes said the last meeting would be in August but if an added meeting was needed in September, there would be a strategy meeting.

Staff thanked the Commission and Mr. Gomes for their commitment to this project that helped Staff tremendously.

2. New Business RF

- a. Review and discussion of proposed amendments to amend the Mixed-Use and Street Wall Requirements to allow Ground-Floor Residential in the BD (Downtown Business) zone.

Item 2. a., under New Business was taken out of order and discussed later in the meeting with Items 2.a, 2.f., 2.g. and 2.h.1. and 2.h.2.

- b. Review and discussion of proposed amendments to:
"A" Multi Family Residential Zone

The consultant reviewed the recommendations for the A-Zone that were fully drafted. Mr. Gomes recommended increasing the density similar to the RT-5 Zone and other density standards. The consultant observed that many existing A-Zone properties had the Regulations applied after the properties were constructed. Mr. Gomes wanted the A-zones to be more flexible. The consultant reviewed the proposed setbacks for the A-Zone in Section 7.2.2. and the impervious surface limits to be increased.

Staff noted there was a potential developer that wanted to develop an A-Zone property in Forestville. The City Planner stated that because of this potential development, the conversation to revise the A-Zone was started.

c. Preliminary review and discussion on:
Outdoor Lighting

Mr. Gomes reviewed the list for potential recommendations to the Lighting Regulations for Section 11.2. The consultant overviewed the recommended Exempt Use list and the illustration of the lighting styles. Mr. Gomes indicated the recommendations were to prevent thousands of non-conforming properties by strengthening the Regulations. The consultant outlined the recommended lighting Regulations for the Residential Zone Regulations.

Commissioner DeRoehn disagreed with the limit of 60 watts bulbs for today's standards for the Residential Zone because people have floodlights and landscape lighting. Chairman White agreed with Commissioner DeRoehn's view on the lighting.

The Commission agreed to discuss the recommendations for the Residential Lighting at a later meeting. Mr. Gomes would do some additional review of the Residential Lighting recommendations.

Mr. Gomes reviewed the recommendations for the Lighting of Common Areas Regulations. The consultant reported Staff had heard from architects that the existing footcandles were too bright at maximum of 6 footcandles and should be reduced to a maximum of 3 footcandles.

The Commission had no comments for the recommendations for the Lighting Standards, the Athletic Field or Activity, and the Lighting Enforcement Regulations.

d. Preliminary review and discussion on:
Signs

Mr. Gomes presented many of the recommendations for the Sign Regulations and noted he did not want to create any non-conforming uses. The consultant reviewed the recommendations to rename some of the signs. Mr. Gomes said the Non-Commercial Signs should be eliminated from the Regulations. The consultant reviewed the list of exempted signs. Mr. Gomes described the reason that window signage should start to be regulated because of safety.

Staff indicated the Commission should not be regulating political signs and that should be removed from the Regulations. The City Planner noted the window signs at the worst plazas should be addressed first and work from that point.

Commission inquiries: The consultant verified there would likely be a lot of complaints for regulating the signage in the windows. Mr. Gomes suggested flashing lights in the windows are prohibited without a Zoning permit. The consultant said that internal lighted window signs may be in violation if the lights are too bright or flashing. Mr. Gomes noted however the Commission does not want to create large amounts of non-conformities and strives to be business friendly.

Commissioner Harlow suggested that the window signs should be regulated for brightness and for certain times during the day. The consultant would prepare a draft of all the recommendations to compare with the existing Regulations for the August meeting.

Staff wanted to discuss painted murals that were omitted from the new Regulations and had to be added.

Mr. Gomes pointed out that Regulations would need to be expanded for the painted murals. The consultant said the painted murals would be excluded from the painted wall sign prohibition.

e. Preliminary review and discussion on:
Access Management

Mr. Gomes next discussed Access Management in Section 12 of the Regulations that was continued to be worked on. The consultant indicated these were unique Regulations to regulate the driveways in this area for industrial and commercial properties. The consultant commented the Access Management Regulations should be taken out of the Parking Regulations and placed under Section 12. Mr. Gomes suggested the Access Management Regulations be rewritten. The consultant suggested the Access Management Overlay Zone be applied it to the entire City with a required Site Plan and/or a Special Permit.

The Commission and Staff agreed with the consultant's suggestion for Section 12 for the Regulations. Mr. Gomes would draft Regulations for the August meeting for the Access Management to be applied to the entire City.

Staff suggested Mr. Gomes draft Regulations that would not allow developers to avoid addressing the Regulations.

Item 2.a., under New Business was discussed at this time with Items 2.a, 2.f., 2.g. and 2.h.1. and 2.h.2.

- a. Review and discussion of proposed amendments to amend the Mixed-Use and Street Wall Requirements to allow Ground-Floor Residential in the BD (Downtown Business) zone
- f. Preliminary review and discussion on:
Site Design Standards
- g. Preliminary review and discussion on:
Posting of Property for Public Hearings
- h. Preliminary review and discussion on:
 - 1. The definition of Average Finished Grade (AFG) and
 - 2. The process for determining the height of a building using the AFG

Mr. Gomes said the BD-Zone Amendments first floor dwelling units would not be prohibited for buildings facing Main St., South St. and Prospect St. The consultant noted any other street in the BD-Zone would have a limited percentage of first floor dwelling units. Mr. Gomes indicated 50% of the windows would be required to be glazed for the residential units.

The consultant went over the recommendations for Additional Items for Landscaping and Fence Requirements; Posting of Properties; Average Finished Grade; and Data Centers. Mr. Gomes said the Landscaping and Fence Requirements were part of the Site Design Standards.

- i. Data Centers

The City Planner explained there was a potential application on Riverside Avenue for a data center for fuel cells. Staff indicated that Data Centers were not defined in the Regulations, so he wanted to plan for this applicant and future applications. The City Planner mentioned all the Regulations would be reviewed for the property including the Riparian Corridor Zone.

Mr. Gomes said he would finalize some draft amendments to the Regulations to present them at the August 21, 2025, meeting at 5:00 P.M. The consultant indicated he and Staff would review the Special Permit and Site Plan application requirements for the August meeting. Mr. Gomes said at the August meeting most of the Regulations would be concluded but there would be new sections of the Regulations drafted. The consultant noted the Commission may then possibly schedule a meeting for a public hearing in October 2025.

Staff indicated that the item Animal Grooming should be added to draft some Regulations. The City Planner reviewed the bulk requirements chart not in the Regulations but handed out in the Land Use Office. Staff verified that he and Mr. Gomes were working on items such as the Zoning Map and going in a positive progression.

- b. Staff Reports

There was no staff report.

- 4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

- 5. Adjournment

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioners DeRoehn and Mangiafico to vote on the adjournment.

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:27 P.M.

By: White

Seconded: DeRoehn.

For: Harlow, LaFreniere, DeRoehn, Mangiafico and White.
Against: None.
Abstained: None.

This meeting was recorded.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy King
Recording Secretary

David White, Chairman

Richard Goodwin, Secretary