

**BRISTOL ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THURSDAY AUGUST 21, 2025**

1. Call to Order

By: Chairman White

Time: 7:00 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	
	Brandon Peate, ZEO	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 of the Zoning Commission is Monday, September 15, 2025.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation

3. New Business

- a. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R27 - Cannabis Cultivators Add New Section 4.3.3.

Mr. Gomes reviewed the schedule with the Commission that was near the end for work for IMEG Consultants Corporation. The consultant would go over the three new amendments that were discussed previously with the Commission.

Mr. Gomes said there were no cannabis Regulations, so these needed to be added to the Regulations. The consultant reminded the Commission there were City Ordinances for cannabis that he reviewed with the Commission.

Commission inquiries: Mr. Gomes verified the cannabis cultivation would be stipulated to be for indoor use in the industrial and industrial park zones. The consultant reviewed the numerous requirements for the amendments for cannabis facilities and micro cultivators that would require distances from sensitive areas. Mr. Gomes said the State regulates the size of the facilities.

Staff indicated there was a facility that was interested in a building on Middle St. for cannabis purposes. The City Planner wanted to prepare for any applicants that may want to file for applications.

b. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R37 - "A" Zone Bulk Standards Amend Bulk Standards.

The consultant indicated the amendment was to allow for flexibility in the A-zone to redevelop properties. Mr. Gomes indicated the density would be increased from 12 units to 20 units per acre that abuts a state highway.

Staff mentioned a developer is interested in a property in Forestville to an A-zone use that was pleased with the amendment. The City Planner's view was the potential project would be an improvement for Forestville and maybe the start of more projects.

c. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R38 - Mixed Use Standards in the BD (Downtown Business) zone. Allow Dwelling Units at Street Level.

The consultant pointed out there were minor revisions to the amendment from the July 2025, special meeting. Mr. Gomes indicated the office uses and retail uses were a weak market, but service uses and restaurants were doing a little better. The consultant noted the amendment was revised to require one third of commercial uses with two thirds residential use on the first floor in buildings in the downtown area. Mr. Gomes noted the doorways were reduced to 50% for glazing. Mr. Gomes reviewed the new Item #9 for residential doorways were limited and away from the street. The consultant reviewed the existing Regulation where streets where dwelling units were not allowed at street level: High St., Main St. and Prospect St. were eliminated from this Regulation.

d. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R39 - Signs Amend Section 14.

Mr. Gomes explained the sign Regulation amendments for content neutral signage because of a Supreme Court ruling. The consultant said political signage was revised to campaign signage. Mr. Gomes noted murals are now exempt from the Regulations. The consultant noted signs would be recategorized based on the installation process. Mr. Gomes said there is now a size limit for freestanding signs for multiple tenant plazas. The consultant noted small incidental signs would be allowed by right with restrictions. Mr. Gomes reviewed the changes to the window signage. Mr. Gomes recommended that the window signage Regulations be adopted by the Commission.

Commission inquiries: Mr. Peate thought phasing out window signage would be an improvement to the Regulations and the aesthetic of the City. The ZEO said the complaint derived system works better versus the ZEO filing a complaint because of selective enforcement complications.

e. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R40 - Outdoor Lighting Amend Section 11.2.

Mr. Gomes reviewed many of the amendments that were revised with the Commission's concerns. The consultant noted the new Regulations would enhance the regulation of outdoor lighting. Mr. Gomes indicated the new Regulations would exempt multiple lighting types and increases the prohibition of certain lighting types. The consultant noted Staff indicated the lighting levels and nuisances would be reduced in various areas. Mr. Gomes said the residential watts were increased from 650 watts to 1,600 watts. The consultant suggested the Commission not use the Dark Sky International for applications because the Regulations are now more detailed. Mr. Gomes reviewed the exempted lighting and intensities of colors for the Commission to control on properties. The consultant said the enforcement action would be extended up to 30 days for residential uses.

f. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R41 - Access Management Amend Section 12.

Mr. Gomes reminded the Commission there was a suggestion at last month's meeting to significantly update Section 12 in the Regulations. The consultant said Section 13.11 driveway standards would be revised to be consistent with Section 21.51 of the City Ordinances. Mr. Gomes recommended to eliminate the Access Management Overlay Zone to have this area consistent with the City's Regulations. The consultant noted for new driveways there would now be an increase in site distance requirements based on the property conditions.

Mr. Gomes said the traffic study requirements would be relocated near the Special Permit requirements. The consultant indicated the Section 12 standards in the Access Management Overlay Zone would be applied to the entire City but only to proposals with Site Plan and Special Permit applications. Mr. Gomes said the distances from

intersections near driveways would be a greater distance for Special Permits and Site Plans. The consultant mentioned there was some flexibility with incentives in the driveway access for difficult properties.

Staff pointed out a correction was needed on Pg. 59 that the State Traffic Authority should be the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA.) The City Planner agreed with applying these Regulations City wide.

g. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R42 - Landscaping Amend Section 11.1.

Mr. Gomes overviewed the changes to the Landscaping Standards. The consultant noted the landscaping was not specified where it should be applied. Mr. Gomes indicated the Commission had to approve the removal of trees and particularly healthy non-evasive trees.

h. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R43 - Fences Amend Section 11.3.

The consultant reviewed the minor updates to the Fence Regulations to make the Regulations more effective and easier to read. Mr. Gomes specified that safety fences had to be removed if there was no activity for construction. The consultant stated the Zoning Permit would be changed to a Fence Permit.

i. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R44 - Average Finished Grade Amend Definition and Provide Guidance for Compliance.

Mr. Gomes overviewed the modifications to the Average Finished Grade that controls the height of buildings. The consultant reviewed the new process for measuring from the exterior walls, structures and the perimeter around the building. Staff's view was this would improve the applicants understanding of the Regulations.

j. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R45 - Animal Grooming Add as a Permitted Use.

The City Planner said the reason for these Regulations were that there were several phone calls of residents that wanted to provide this service. Mr. Gomes noted this was a new use and there was no natural fit for Animal Grooming in the existing Regulations. The consultant said the Regulation may not fit in with an adaptive reuse of a building but may fit in the BN, BG and BHC Zones with requirements.

k. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R46 - Data Centers Add as a Permitted Use.

Mr. Gomes indicated Data Centers would be a new use. The consultant reviewed the minimum and maximum square footage requirements of the buildings. Mr. Gomes stated the data centers would be allowed in the zones of the I, IP-1, IP-3, IP-5 and the BHC with requirements. The consultant pointed out the concern with data centers is noise levels. Mr. Gomes noted there would only be a few properties that may be used for the data center use. The consultant noted that noise emitting reports were required for the use. Mr. Gomes overviewed the parking requirements for this use.

l. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R47 - Posting of Properties Amend Requirements.

The consultant detailed the posting of property updates for the Regulations.

Commission inquiries: Staff said he would calculate 2 ft. X 2 ft. signage and 4 ft. X 4 ft. signage to be distributed evenly across the frontages of properties for the next September 2025 regular meeting.

m. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R48 - Text Amendments Various Miscellaneous Amendments.

Mr. Gomes indicated this item was a list for many various minor updates to the Regulations. The consultant said the Regulations would be revised to include the clarification of the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission with the approval requirements. Mr. Gomes indicated Section 16.2.2.E. would make the Regulations define that the Zoning

Commission would determine if a Site Plan would be required for a Special Permit and to have a basis for waiving the Site Plan requirement.

Commission inquiries: Staff noted the Commission would be overburdened with determining if a Site Plan was required for a Special Permit. The City Planner described the difficulties the applicants had to overcome with their applications.

Mr. Gomes did not think the Commission would be overburdened with determining if a Site Plan was required with a Special Permit because there are now criteria in place for in making the determination. The consultant noted the next steps were to continue reviewing the Site Plan and Special Permit requirements. Mr. Gomes stated the amendments will be shared with the NVCOG and various agencies.

Staff recommended the application amendments be accepted at the September 15, 2025, regular meeting of the Zoning Commission and scheduled for public hearing in October 2025.

4. Staff Reports

Staff said he would schedule a dinner for the consultant and the Commission when everyone is available to congratulate Mr. Gomes for all his efforts.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Gomes, the Commission and the Staff for all their efforts and for attending the Zoom meeting.

5. Adjournment

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

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:06 P.M.

By: White

Seconded: Harlow.

For: Harlow, Mangiafico, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

This meeting was recorded.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy King
Recording Secretary

David White, Chairman

Richard Goodwin, Secretary