

**City of Alma
Planning Commission Minutes
March 2, 2026**

Planning Commission Chairperson Heather Therrien called a regular meeting of the Alma Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum of the Planning Commission was present.

Present: Josh Cromer, Justin Fonley, Jessica Gilkins, David Justin, Greg Mapes, Michelle Pitts, Ellen Richter, and Heather Therrien.
Absent: Tim Rath.

Chairperson Therrien led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Justin, seconded by Richter, to approve the minutes of February 2, 2026, as presented. Motion carried.

**Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Rath.**

Zoning Change Discussion

Chairperson Therrien opened discussion for consideration of a zoning change to the minimum front yard setback in the southwest section of the city, from the current R1, Single Family District front yard setback of 30' to match the front yard setback in the R1a, Single Family District of 25'. The area to consider includes: Philadelphia Avenue to Purdy Drive and West Center to Mill Street, as well as the Riverview Drive and Pineview Drive neighborhoods.

City Manager Aeris Ripley explained that he had been reviewing the table of requirements for each district and suggested the easiest course could be to consider a zoning ordinance text amendment to change the 30' front yard setback requirement in the R1 District to match the 25' front yard setback requirement in the R1a District.

At a question from Commissioner Richter, Ripley clarified the differences between each district. Commissioner Mapes asked how many neighborhoods are currently R1, and the group reviewed the zoning map. Mapes noted there are neighborhoods in the R1 district that already don't meet the 30' setback, and Ripley said those neighborhoods had been built before zoning was adopted, but changing the setback could provide some consistency. Mapes offered a disclosure that the discussion was related to a request for a front yard setback variance submitted by his relative. Commissioner Justin supported the idea of providing consistency. The group spoke briefly about the current fee for filing a variance request. Ripley said the text amendment would allow for consistency and still provide for the additional options of R1a. He added a public hearing would be necessary with recommendation for approval to the City Commission, who would need to introduce the related ordinance and adopt it, if they are in agreement.

Motion by Justin, seconded by Mapes, to set a public hearing for April 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. for consideration of a zoning text amendment for the R1 zoning district to change the current front yard setback requirement from 30' to 25'. Motion carried.

**Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Rath.**

Other Business

No other business was offered.

**City of Alma
Planning Commission Minutes
March 2, 2026**

Invitation to Public

No public comments were offered.

Adjourn

Motion by Justin, seconded by Cromer, to adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m. Motion carried.

Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Rath.



Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

Date of Approval: April 6, 2026