

Palmyra Planning Board Public Hearing Minutes

Date: 2/17/2026

Planning Board members present: David Leavitt, Corey Dow, Katie Burrill, Gail Jones, Bill McLaren, and alternates Michael LePage and William Freudenbeger

Select Board Members present: Brian Barrows, Michael Cray, Herbert Bates, Charles Fields, Scott King

Priscilla Jones (Administrative Assistant) and Diane White (Town Clerk)

Others present: Pat White, Garth Norris, Jo-Ann Brown, Jeffrey Hardy, Claude Thornton, Kyle Halford

The public hearing began at 6 p.m.

Bill MacLaren called the meeting to order. It was determined that there is a quorum of Planning Board members.

He explained that the purpose of the hearing is to review the proposed changes to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances.

Motion made by Dave that the Planning Board has jurisdiction to hold this public hearing—second made. Passed unanimously.

Bill gave an overview of the proposed revisions:

- *The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances are tied together, so they were reviewed by the Planning Board together.*
- *Some changes are administrative only.*
- *Some revisions recommended by KVCOG.*
- *Definition changes made to be consistent with the state definitions and are the same in both ordinances.*

Proposed revisions to the Subdivision Ordinance

- *Front setback in the Subdivision Ordinance changed to 75 ft to be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.*
- *Changed requirement to submit documentation for water supply from: a hydrologist **or** a well driller to hydrologist **and** a well driller. This will be more consistent with other towns and the state.*
- *Included a requirement of 90 gallons of water per day per bedroom for adequate water supply.*

Proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance

- *District boundary – revised to refer question to the planning board instead of the board of appeals.*
- *Added a table for uses and activities for simplicity. It is also alphabetized.*
- *Changed dimensional requirements from land area per structure to maximum lot coverage.*
- *Height of structures – got rid of height—changed to 35 feet maximum height. Agricultural structures and towers are exempt. The code enforcement officer recommended this change.*
- *Minimum lot size changed from 1 acre per building to 2 acres.*
- *Commercial buildings in an agricultural/residential zone decreased from 5000 sf to 2500 sf.*

Comments:

- *Brian said that on page 7 section 4—should be left blank (not NA)*
- *Priscilla was concerned about the proposed changes to minimum lot size. To lower taxes you have to either lower the budget or increase the tax base. This change would make it harder for young people to purchase land and we get complaints about the taxes now.*
- *She stated that the state will change some laws that will require city/towns to allow for more dense housing, so this may have to be revised again. Dave explained that this new law will not kick in until next year and it was a poorly written “one size fits all” change that doesn’t fit well into rural communities. Katie added that the town does not have town water and sewer and no designated growth areas.*
- *Bill M explained that all the revisions will not affect current land/homeowners—the changes will be going forward only. Everything else will be grandfathered.*
- *Dave read from the ordinances which states that the purpose of the ordinance is to preserve and enhance the rural character of Palmyra (Subdivision Ordinance, pg.2).*
- *The Planning Board mentioned concerns with having enough space for a well and septic and enough land for a backup septic when the original septic fails.*
- *Jeff Hardy stated that the town should not be telling people what to do on their land. Dave said that the Planning Board is recommending the revisions—the residents decide at town meeting if they want the changes.*
- *Kyle Halford stated that people want larger lots—1 acre lots do not sell as well.*

Bill M thanked those who attended tonight.

7:25 Public Hearing closed.

Respectfully Submitted

Diane Whute