



CITY OF ROBINS
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 9, 2026 – 5:30 P.M.
Robins City Hall

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Tim O'Hara called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at Robins City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Roll call was taken. Present were Tim O'Hara, Matt Mitzel, Gary Petersen, AJ Hester, Todd Roberts, Jay Goodin, and CJ McDonald.

Staff present were Vance McKinnon, Zoning Administrator; Kelli Scott, City Engineer; and Lisa Goodin, City Clerk. Others present included Bryce Ricklefs (Boomerang), Kent Backen (Integrity Homes), Gary Doerrfeld (Realtor/Broker), Ken Paxton (REDI), members of the public, and City Council Members Bruce Vander Sanden and Mike Foley.

3. CHAIRPERSON AND ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Zoning Administrator Vance McKinnon asked for volunteers to serve on the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and described the anticipated commitment.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Todd Roberts, seconded by AJ Hester, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried on a roll-call vote of 7-0.

5. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 8, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Gary Petersen, seconded by Matt Mitzel, to approve the July 8, 2026 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting minutes.

Motion carried on a roll-call vote of 7-0.

6. Roundtable Discussion: Future Housing Needs and Zoning Regulations

The Commission held a roundtable discussion with local residential developers and real estate professionals about current and anticipated residential housing needs in Robins. Participants discussed housing demand and price points, development costs, lot sizes and setbacks, infrastructure, barriers to residential development, and potential zoning changes. No formal action was recorded.

Housing Demand and Anticipated Future Needs

- Gary Doerrfeld shared average home-sale prices cited for the prior year: approximately \$413,000 in Robins, \$280,000 in Marion, and \$211,000 in Cedar Rapids. He said Robins has limited variety across price points, and that 90-foot lots contribute to higher costs. He clarified that the averages included all homes sold in each community during the past year, not only new homes.
- Commission members noted that residents have expressed interest in higher-priced homes and discussed how a comprehensive plan could accommodate a range of home sizes and price points. Kent Backen noted that condominium sales could affect community-wide average prices and that mid-range sales have recently lagged.
- Participants discussed the cost of building smaller homes and the demand for townhomes, twin homes, duplexes, and condominiums. Doerrfeld said resale demand for these housing types was strong, particularly around the \$200,000



price range, and that 70- to 80-foot lots could make new construction more feasible. Backen noted that an additional 10 feet of lot width can add approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 to lot costs.

- Bryce Ricklefs discussed rising construction costs and estimated street costs at approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 per foot. He noted that lot width and setbacks affect buildable area and that developers must consider the desired community demographic, including younger families, retirees, and established professionals.
- Commission members discussed preserving Robins' character while considering whether a broader range of housing choices could serve residents at different life stages and price points.

Development Costs and Feasibility

- Ricklefs identified impact and engineering costs passed on to developers as factors that increase development costs per acre. Backen said major expenses include streets and other infrastructure.
- Participants discussed the planned extension of King's Way in relation to the Zieser property and the challenge of infrastructure costs that may not add corresponding value to a development. Ricklefs observed that community growth requires investment and that the City will face future costs to upgrade and add infrastructure.
- Ricklefs said attached and higher-density housing types may be difficult to make financially feasible without smaller lots and zoning that permits greater density; he noted that a planned unit development (PUD) approach may be preferable. Backen added that higher-density neighborhoods benefit from walkability and access to amenities and shopping.
- Doerrfeld and Backen discussed the importance of a regional detention basin for development of the Zieser land and the northwest area, noting the volume of water moving through the area and the limitations of relying solely on underground infrastructure.

Lot Sizes, Setbacks, and Zoning Regulations

- Ricklefs said Robins' 10-foot setbacks are more restrictive than Marion's cited 7-foot setbacks and can limit the use of standard builder home plans. He said 7-foot setbacks could help make 80-foot lots feasible. Participants did not identify specific zoning provisions to simplify or eliminate.
- Participants discussed whether developers are choosing other communities because of Robins' 90-foot lot requirements or misconceptions about the City's water supply. Doerrfeld said he had heard of developers avoiding Robins for these reasons and observed that competition among communities has increased.
- Backen noted that 10-foot setbacks may be less of a barrier for higher-end homes but can make lower-priced homes more difficult to build. Participants discussed demand among younger and older households for smaller, lower-maintenance lots and zero-entry homes. Backen identified the Juniper Drive area as a possible location for this market, with nearby amenities also important.
- Ricklefs said 75- to 80-foot lots with 7-foot setbacks could be beneficial. He and Backen noted that narrower lots can allow more homes per acre, while the extra width of a 90-foot lot may not add equivalent value to buyers. Participants also discussed the relationship between the number of homes, future infrastructure maintenance, and City revenue.
- Participants noted that school district, parks, trails, and nearby amenities influence residential demand. Ricklefs and others emphasized that parks and trails are important investments, and City Engineer Kelli Scott noted that Robins has limited connectivity to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail.
- Ricklefs said Cedar Rapids has introduced a program to rebate 50% of infrastructure costs to developers. In closing discussion, he stated that low taxes alone may not be sufficient to attract development and that continued growth requires investment. Backen emphasized offering housing options at different price points; Doerrfeld stated that 80-foot lots would not necessarily reduce home values significantly. Examples of developments with narrower lots mentioned included Champion Estates and the Bridge Creek Addition area near Winslow Road and Tower Terrace.



9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Jay Goodin, seconded by CJ McDonald, to adjourn. The motion passed on a vote of 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Goodin
City Clerk/Treasurer

Timothy M. O'Hara, Chairperson

Vance McKinnon, III, Zoning Administrator