

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M., IN THE FLORENCE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 775 N. MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Frost called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Frost	Present
Vice-Chair DeRosa	Present
Commissioner Proulx	Absent
Commissioner Leaman	Present
Commissioner Wooley	Present

Note: Council Liaison Adam was present.

Staff: Maricella Benitez, AJ Monroe, and Cliff Mattice.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Commissioner Wooley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC/COMMISSION RESPONSE:**

Call to the Public for public comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Individual Commission members may respond to criticisms made, may ask staff to review a matter raised or may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda. However, members of the Commission shall not discuss or take action on any matter during an open call to the public unless the matters are properly noticed for discussion and legal action.

Chair Frost opened the Call to the Public. Seeing no such comment, Chair Frost closed the Call to the Public.

**MINUTES: The minutes from the September 4, 2025, meeting are not available for review yet.**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING/RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL /APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Rankin Farm Mining project (Case PZ-25-38). The request is to change the current 2022 Florence General Plan Place Types of Suburban Neighborhood, Highway Mixed Use, and Open Space Place Types to an Industry District Place Type and expand the Aggregate Resources Overlay across the site. This amendment is necessary to support the expansion of the existing sand and gravel mining operation from approximately 60 acres**

**to approximately 250 acres across several privately owned parcels. The site is located between the northern bank of the Gila River and south of Hunt Hwy and the North Side Canal, and approximately ½ mile west of Pinal Parkway.**

Chair Frost noted that this item was first heard two weeks ago and is coming back before the Commission.

Paul Gilbert, Partner at Gilbert Blilie, stated that the applicant is seeking to expand their sand and gravel mining production operation. He stated that there will be an armored berm constructed at the site to prevent 100-year floodwaters from coming into the site. He stated that the materials produced at this location will be used for local construction projects. He stated that the expansion will not bring any additional traffic to the area.

Chair Frost opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no such comment, Chair Frost closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Wooley inquired if the armored berm would divert floodwater into someone else's property and if the flow of the Gila River would be diverted by the mining operations.

Rich Brown, Client Account Manager at Haley & Aldrich, stated that there will not be construction in the floodway pushing water towards adjacent properties, and that the barrier would be to prevent floodwater from entering into the mining pit.

Commissioner Wooley inquired if the current sale of the is contingent upon this amendment passing.

Mr. Gilbert stated that he is not sure of the specifics but believes the sale is contingent upon the approval of the amendment.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about the term "armored berm" and what it meant.

Mr. Brown stated that the river-facing side of the berm will be reinforced so that it will not be washed away during a storm.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about the plan for natural vegetation to take over the berm.

Mr. Brown stated that they would let the berm re-vegetate naturally, but noted that there would be monitoring of the process for three years after mining operations.

Commissioner Leaman inquired what equipment is being used on site, specifically inquiring if the operation includes material grinding.

Mr. Brown stated that material is mined on site, crushed to the size needed, then sorted via a gravity sorter.

Commissioner Leaman inquired where the site gets its water from and if there will be a sewer expansion.

Mr. Brown stated that there are wells on-site and that the only sewer use on-site is for staff so an expansion won't be necessary.

Mr. Leaman inquired about the plans to include asphalt production at the site.

Mr. Brown stated that to produce asphalt, an additional piece of equipment will be placed on-site, but noted that it will not change the scope of materials mined.

Commissioner Leaman confirmed that the additional land will not increase the size of the operation but will only extend the life of the facility. He inquired if Poston Butte Loop would be affected by any of the changes to property boundaries.

Mr. Gilbert stated that there would be no changes to Poston Butte Loop.

Mr. Brown clarified that there are two access points to Poston Butte Loop off of Hunt Highway and that the western-most access point is the mine access, whereas the eastern-most access point is for residential access.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if there is a bond required for this project.

Mr. Gilbert stated that a bond is required for the reclamation project after the mine's lifespan.

Chair Frost expressed his desire for the applicant to have proper floodplain models and permitting, noting his concern for the project's location within the floodplain. He inquired where the overburden materials from the mining byproduct go.

Mr. Brown stated that the overburden will be stripped and placed in the armored berms.

On a motion by Vice-Chair DeRosa, seconded by Commissioner Leaman, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Rankin Farm Mining project (Case PZ-25-38).

**PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING/RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL /APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS of the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Dobson Farms East project (Case PZ-25-55). The request is to change approximately 239 acres of the existing ±1,810-acre Dobson Farms master planned community from the current Suburban Neighborhood Place Type in the 2022 Florence General Plan to the Industry District Place Type. This amendment is necessary to support a concurrent Major Planned Unit Development (PUD) amendment for a plan featuring general industrial and data center uses. The site is located at the northeast corner of Arizona Farms Road and Attaway Road.**

*Chair Frost and the Town Attorney, Cliff Mattice, confirmed that items 6b and 6c will share a presentation but will have separate public hearings.*

Julie Vermilion, Project Manager at Coe and Van Loo Consultants, stated that the parcels in question are on the northeast and northwest corners of Arizona Farms Road and Attaway Road. She stated that the

location is currently listed as a Master Planned Community in the 2022 General Plan and that this amendment would shift the designation to Industry District, and noted that the proposed use aligns with the Dobson Farms PUD. She stated that the project anticipates access from the proposed Central Arizona Parkway and includes room for the proposed Loop 505 North/South Corridor. She stated that the development will tie into the existing water mains in the area. She stated that an estimated 800 jobs will come from the industrial development in the area and will provide approximately \$3.9 million in Development Impact Fee funds along with approximately \$10 million in annual tax revenue.

Chair Frost opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no such comment, Chair Frost closed the Public Hearing.

Maricella Benitez, Senior Planner, noted that a citizen did speak during the public hearing on this item at the previous Commission meeting and voiced his concerns about traffic in the area.

Commissioner Wooley inquired whether the land will be developed as soon as possible, or if the land will be developed when things like the Loop 505 are constructed.

Ms. Vermilion stated that the property owner is currently looking for end-users of the land to come to the site as soon as possible.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if ADOT has been informed of these proposed changes and what the eminent domain value of the land in the area would be for roadways.

Ms. Vermilion stated that they have informed ADOT of the proposed changes. She stated that she is unsure what the eminent domain land valuation would be for the area with these proposed changes.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if there would be water-based cooling towers at the data centers.

Ms. Vermilion stated that data centers are one of the many potential uses for the land and that there is no specific end-user that has been chosen for the land.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about roadway improvements to Attaway Road.

Ms. Vermilion stated that the roads will be improved based on the standards set in the Town Code.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about the landscaping around the roadways and if the amendment will change the requirements.

Ms. Benitez stated that the landscaping is set by the Dobson Farms PUD and that will be discussed during the Dobson Farms PUD amendment item, and that the Major General Plan amendment will not change the landscaping requirements.

Vice-Chair DeRosa stated that this project will take a long time to fully develop, but noted that it will bring Florence in the right direction and voiced her support for the General Plan amendment.

On a motion by Commissioner Leaman, seconded by Commissioner Wooley, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Dobson Farms East project (Case PZ-25-55).

**PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING/RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL /APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS of the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Dobson Farms West project (Case PZ-25-56). The request is to change approximately 600 acres of the existing ±1,810-acre Dobson Farms master planned community from the current Suburban Neighborhood Place Type in the 2022 Florence General Plan to the Industry District Place Type. This amendment is necessary to support a concurrent Major Planned Unit Development (PUD) amendment for a plan featuring general industrial and data center uses. The site is located at the northwest corner of Arizona Farms Road and Attaway Road.**

Chair Frost opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no such comment, Chair Frost closed the Public Hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Wooley, seconded by Commissioner Leaman, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Dobson Farms West project (Case PZ-25-56).

**PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING/RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL /APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Florence Tech Park at Dobson Farms (Case PZ-25-34). The request is to change an approximately 780-acre portion of the existing ±1,810-acre Dobson Farms master planned community from the current Suburban Neighborhood Place Type in the 2022 Florence General Plan to the Industry District Place Type. The proposed site is generally located at the southeast corner of Judd Road and Attaway Road.**

Gary Hayes, Ryan Companies, stated that the proposed area for the amendment is between Judd Road and Arizona Farms Road and to the east of Attaway Road. He stated that the land is currently zoned for a single-family master planned community and that this would change to zoning for light industrial use. He stated that the land is currently undeveloped agricultural land that will be developed into local employment opportunities while reducing water usage and traffic impact on the area. He stated that the proposed industrial use will fit the land better due it being between two proposed traffic corridors.

Chair Frost opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no such comment, Chair Frost closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if the electrical lines for the area will be underground or overhead.

Mr. Hayes stated the northern connections will be above ground, with the other connections being underground. He noted that anything less than 69kV will be below ground and anything greater will be above ground as well.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about the height limitations of 60ft for buildings in the area.

Mr. Hayes stated that items such as building height or landscaping will be addressed in the proposed PUD amendment.

Vice-Chair DeRosa voiced her support for the General Plan amendment.

On a motion by Commissioner Wooley, seconded by Vice-Chair DeRosa, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for the proposed Major General Plan Amendment for the Florence Tech Park at Dobson Farms (Case PZ-25-34).

**PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING/RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL /APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS for the proposed Major Planned Unit Development Amendment to the Dobson Farms PUD for approximately 780-acre portion of the existing ±1,810 acres at the southeast corner of Judd Road and Attaway Road (PZ-25-35). This amendment is meant to create separate standards for the Florence Tech Park section of the Dobson Farms development, while the remaining 1,030 acres shall remain as-is with the opportunity to develop under the existing Dobson Farms PUD entitlements or pursue separate amendments.**

Ms. Benitez stated that this PUD amendment goes hand in hand with the General Plan amendment that was discussed in item 6d and that the proposed PUD changes will help facilitate the development of a tech park. She stated that the proposed changes include changing the Commercial-Industrial land use category to Light Industrial, changing the site's land use categories to only Light Industrial, adding additional permitted uses under the Light Industrial category, and establishing architectural and development standards for the commercial/industrial uses. She noted that these changes will only affect the 780 acres described in the narrative and that the rest of the PUD would remain unchanged. She stated that the land is bordered by an SRP solar farm and substation to the north, the CAP canal and battery storage facility to the east, and agricultural land to the south and west. She stated that staff find the proposal will increase mixed commercial-industrial development opportunities, it will not severely impact traffic in the surrounding area, and it takes into consideration architectural, landscape, and parking needs. She stated that SRP did email in and requested to be updated for developments occurring in the area. She stated that staff raised concerns regarding how the new PUD standards will be documented as separate to but included in the rest of the Dobson Farms PUD and that staff are working with the applicant on this issue. She noted that the design review process in the PUD needs to be updated in order to be compliant with state law. She stated that staff recommend forwarding a recommendation of approval with conditions.

Mr. Hayes stated that the applicant and staff have been working together regarding the staff stipulations and updates to the PUD. He stated that current landscape standards laid out in the Dobson Farms PUD will be met or exceeded and that additional conditions have been included to address safety and security of the new land use types. He stated that the current max building height for Commercial Industrial zoning is 3 stories/42 feet and that the applicant is requesting a maximum height of 60 feet, or 85 feet for Data Centers.

Commissioner Leaman inquired about the access points to the proposed development.

Mr. Hayes stated that there are no set access points yet, but noted that the developer will work with staff and other partners to ensure the best solution is found.

Commissioner Leaman inquired what the bulk fuel storage use would look like and what it would be used for.

Rich Montague, VP of Construction at Ryan Companies, stated that the bulk fuel would most likely be diesel fuel but noted that other fuel types could be stored as well. He stated that the fuel would be stored for emergency power generation.

Chair Frost inquired if the applicant will adjust the building setback requirements to match the new maximum building height and keep roadway sight lines clear.

Mr. Hayes stated that they do not like building tall buildings next to roadways and that they are open to working with staff on setbacks.

Chair Frost stated that he does not see a need for grass landscaping in industrial uses, noting that it is not usable and would be a waste of water.

Mr. Hayes stated that the PUD updates will help limit the use of grass (turf) in areas zoned for industrial/commercial use.

On a motion by Commissioner Leaman, seconded by Vice-Chair DeRosa, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for the proposed Major Planned Unit Development Amendment to the Dobson Farms PUD for the Florence Tech Park (PZ-25-35), with the following conditions:

1. The approval of the Major Planned Unit Development Amendment to the Dobson Farms PUD will be contingent on the Town Council's approval of the Florence Tech Park Major General Plan Amendment.
2. The applicant will work with staff to finalize how the Florence Tech Park overlay will be documented in the Dobson Farms PUD.
3. Clarification of "best practices" on the Architectural Guidelines on Page 28 of the narrative.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **PRESENTATION/RECOMMENDATION OF COMPLIANCE TO THE GENERAL PLAN to the Town Council for the proposed Redevelopment Plan Amendment to expand the Redevelopment boundary to include the "Gateway District."**

Larry Harmer, Consultant, stated that when the Redevelopment Plan was approved, there was a location at the south end of Town that was not included in the redevelopment area but was specifically designated as the "Gateway District" for its importance as the entryway to the Town. He stated that the proposed amendment would include the Gateway District within the boundaries of the Redevelopment Plan. He stated that the Gateway District is composed of eight properties, with two of those properties currently vacant. He noted that for this amendment to pass, the property owners of those eight properties would need to be notified. He stated that bringing the Gateway District into the full Redevelopment Plan will provide opportunities for the businesses in that area that are currently not eligible. He stated that staff recommends forwarding a recommendation for approval for this amendment.

Commissioner Leaman inquired what the benefits are to the property owner for allowing this change to occur.

Mr. Harmer stated that this would allow the property owners to be eligible for programs such as the Façade Grant. He noted that it would also allow them to be eligible for any future programs that are created as well.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if the properties on the south side of State Route 287 will be included in this program.

Mr. Harmer stated that those properties are not included in the Gateway District, and bringing those properties into the district would be a significant undertaking.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if anything new would be imposed upon the property owners if this amendment is approved.

Mr. Harmer stated there would be no differences from the current requirements.

On a motion by Commissioner Wooley, seconded by Commissioner Leaman, carried by a 4-0 vote, to forward a recommendation of compliance to the General Plan to the Town Council for the proposed Redevelopment Plan amendment to expand the Redevelopment boundary to include the "Gateway District."

**DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION to Town Council to change the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting from the first and third Thursday of each month to only the second Monday of each month.**

Ms. Benitez stated that staff evaluated the number of meetings held and noted that most other communities' Planning & Zoning Commissions only meet once per month. She noted that recent changes to state law have reduced the responsibilities of the Commission and that two meetings per month is not necessary.

Vice-Chair DeRosa expressed her support for the change to one meeting per month.

Commissioner Wooley stated that having the meeting dates before the meeting date of Town Council makes sense.

Commissioner Leaman expressed his support for changing the meeting date. He inquired if Council would have time to review the Commission's minutes before voting on items.

Vice-Chair DeRosa stated that items from the Commission that are forwarded to Council will have to have enough lead time to be placed on an agenda.

Commissioner Leaman inquired if there would be any holidays that fall on the second Monday of the month.

Ms. Benitez confirmed there would be no holidays on the second Monday of the month.

Chair Frost requested that the meeting dates be on any day other than Monday.

AJ Monroe, Community Development Director, inquired if the Commission is in support of going to one meeting per month.

The Commission expressed their support for moving to one meeting per month on a Thursday.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

### **Santan Valley Incorporation Update**

Mr. Monroe stated that seven people have been selected to serve on San Tan Valley's inaugural Town Council. He stated that the Town had anticipated the incorporation and have budgeted accordingly.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired if San Tan Valley will be a contract city for their services.

Mr. Monroe stated that he is not sure and will research the answer.

### **Landscape Code Amendment**

Mr. Monroe stated that staff are still drafting code revisions. He stated that the review of the code can be a difficult task.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired if Council can choose what is to come before the Commission.

Mr. Monroe stated that the review of the code is helping clear up vague language, including what is administrative reviews.

Chair Frost inquired if there will be enough meeting dates to review the code as a Commission and how staff will bring the code to the Commission for review.

Mr. Monroe stated that there may need to be additional special meetings held in order to cover the code fully. He stated that the code will be broken up into chunks for review.

Vice-Mayor Adam suggested the code review be done as a joint meeting with Council and the Commission.

Chair Frost suggested looking into "theming" major local roadways with specific plant palettes.

### **Development Update**

Mr. Monroe stated that a Technical Advisory Committee meeting was held recently and that three plats were reviewed as well as an amendment to the Merrill Ranch PUD. He stated that seven final plats will come before Council at the first October meeting with many more in the pipeline.

Town of Florence Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2025

Page 9 of 10

Chair Frost requested an update on the Hunt Highway project.

**CALL TO THE COMMISSION- CURRENT EVENTS ONLY:**

Commissioner Wooley noted that he will be appearing virtually at the second October meeting.

Commissioner Leaman stated that he will miss the first meeting in October.

Vice-Chair DeRosa stated that she will miss the first meeting in October.

Chair Frost invited everyone to attend Make a Difference Day.

Mr. Monroe thanked Mr. Mattice for his service as the Town Attorney.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Chairman Frost, seconded by Commissioner Wooley, carried by a 4-0 vote, to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 PM.



---

Lonnie Frost, Chairman



---

Date