

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M., IN THE FLORENCE COMMUNITY CENTER, RUGGLES ROOMS 1 & 2, LOCATED AT 778 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	Present
Commissioner Leaman	Absent
Commissioner Wooley	Present

Note: Council Liaison Adam was present.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Proulx 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:

APPROVAL/APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS/DISAPPROVAL of the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on June 5, 2025.

Commissioner Wooley requested a review of a statement attributed to him on page nine of the minutes.

Maricella Benitez, Senior Planner, stated that Chair Frost and Commissioner Leaman had submitted corrections to the minutes and that they have been included.

On a motion by Commissioner Wooley, seconded by Commissioner Proulx, carried by a 4-0 vote, to approve with changes the minutes for the Regular Meeting held on June 5, 2025.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chair Frost noted that items 6a, 6b, 6c, and 6d will require two public hearings before the Commission per requirements for a Major General Plan Amendment, and that tonight's meeting marks the first of those public hearings.

PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING 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.

Andy Jochums, Planning Consultant for Gilbert Blilie, stated that he is presenting on behalf of Tanner Rankin Farms. He stated that the proposed Major General Plan Amendment is being proposed to expand the sand and gravel production operation, with property access remaining unchanged. He said there will not be an increase in activity, only an expansion in the mining area. He stated that the product produced will be used within the Town and the surrounding communities. He stated that applications for rezoning and a Conditional Use Permit have also been submitted and will come before the Commission following the Major General Plan Amendment. He stated that there was a community meeting held and that no opposition to the amendment was presented.

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

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired if the sand and gravel aggregate produced at Tanner Rankin Farm is sold directly to end-users.

Mr. Eric Mirs, Geologist with Aldridge, stated that the aggregate is sold directly to end-users within an approximate 10-mile radius of the production site.

Commissioner Wooley inquired about the timeline for the full mining out of the aggregate.

Mr. Mirs stated that the timeline is dependent on the buildout of the community, but noted that with current production levels, it would be 20-25 years.

Commissioner Wooley inquired if there are any plans to sunset the facility once it is mined out.

Mr. Mirs stated that the project has a reclamation plan and has an associated bond tied to the restoration of the site following the mine out. He stated that the future land use has not been determined yet.

Chair Frost inquired about whether the Commission will be able to review the reclamation plan.

Mr. Jochums stated that they will be able to review the plan and that the state should have provided the Town a copy of the plan prior to approval of the site. He stated that post-mining land uses that have been suggested include flood control, open-space areas, a wildlife habitat, or other uses.

Chair Frost noted that the plan for a perimeter barrier for flood control may conflict with the Town Code regarding flood control and the 100-year flood plain. He noted that any change to the flood plain would require FEMA approval.

Mr. Mirs stated that the Town is the floodplain administrator and that they have been in meetings with them regarding the floodplain. He stated the project will have no downstream or upstream impacts. He noted the requirements for the project regarding the floodplain and what is not allowed with construction in the floodplain. He stated that the best option would be designing the barrier so as not to alter the floodplain.

Chair Frost inquired if the site has been investigated for cultural resources such as Native American ruins or artifacts.

Mr. Mirs stated that the current site has been investigated, but noted that the proposed expansion will need to be investigated. He stated that the investigation is required to be a material supplier for ADOT.

Chair Frost noted that the Town's General Plan lays out future uses regarding the canal on the north end of the property and inquired if the owners will be working with the Town to facilitate that. He noted that their proposed plans will carry this project north of the canal.

Mr. Jochums stated that they would work with the Town regarding the plans north of the canal, noting that there would not really be mining north of the canal.

PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING 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 site is bordered by Judd Road to the north, Arizona Farms to the south, Attaway Road to the west, and Felix Road/the CAP canal to the east. He noted that this amendment will significantly reduce anticipated traffic counts that are in the current

General Plan, as well as lower expected water usage while providing upgraded water and sewer infrastructure to the area. He stated that a neighborhood meeting regarding this proposed Major General Plan Amendment was held at the Anthem Community Center, and no opposing comments were received. He stated that this amendment will help develop agricultural land into employment opportunities. He stated that this land is part of the Dobson Farms PUD and that the proposed change is coming because of the development and transportation corridors in that location. He noted that the site is currently planned for suburban residential and that it would make more sense to have it used as an employment hub. He stated that this proposal will conform to the Town's General Plan.

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

Commissioner Proulx inquired if any corporations have expressed interest in establishing their business in the area.

Mr. Hayes stated that the developer, Ryan Companies, is working with corporations to find the best fit for the area.

Vice-Chair DeRosa stated that this has the potential to serve the community well if done properly, noting the influx of residents that could be coming in the future.

Commissioner Wooley expressed his agreement with Vice-Chair DeRosa and noted that the landowners, the Dobson Family, have a track record of successful development.

Chair Frost expressed his appreciation for the developer's insight in planning this project in the transportation corridor. He inquired about the water usage for data centers that could come to this area.

Mr. Hayes stated that data centers do not use the same amount of water as they had previously needed due to technological advancements. He stated the centers are electrically cooled and that the location would be ideal as the largest substation in Pinal County is next to this site.

Chair Frost inquired if Felix Road will be built out north to the canal, or if that is just an alignment noted in the proposal.

AJ Monroe, Community Development Director, stated that it is most likely just the alignment, but noted that there have been ongoing conversations regarding the development of transportation in the area.

PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING 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)

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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.

PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING 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.

The Commission heard items 6c and 6d simultaneously.

Julie Vermilion, Project Manager at Coe & Van Loo Consultants, stated that this Major General Plan Amendment also pertains to Dobson Farms and includes an eastern and western parcel. She stated that this amendment would change the area from a Suburban Neighborhood to Industrial and that this would match the land use with what is currently in the area. She stated that the land has plenty of opportunities for interconnected industrial development. She stated that the plan fits in with the transportation development in the area and that the development will provide the Town with Development Impact Fees as well as up to 800 jobs coming from the developments in the area. She stated that the proposed amendment would lead to reduced traffic and water impact on the area.

Chair Frost opened the Public Hearing for both 6c and 6d.

Johnnie Mendoza, a Florence resident, expressed his concerns about traffic and noted that traffic infrastructure improvements are still a way away. He stated that improvements to Arizona Farms Road are needed, citing all the coming development that will have access/endpoints off Arizona Farms Road.

Chair Frost noted that Mr. Monroe brought up the ongoing discussion regarding transportation infrastructure improvements in that area.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired who Coe & Van Loo Consultants are.

Ms. Vermilion stated that they are a civil engineering and land planning firm.

Chair Frost closed the Public Hearing.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Landscape Code Update

Vice-Chair DeRosa stated that there are difficulties with landscaping and water usage in the state. She stated that she reviewed the Landscape Code and noted that there is nothing that limits developers from using invasive plant species that use a lot of water or cause erosion issues. She

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stated that she has spoken with staff on this issue and suggested using resources from places like the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) and other sources to determine what plants to limit.

Mr. Monroe stated that the Landscaping Code currently encourages the use of plants indigenous to arid regions but noted that it might need to be updated to include restrictions on non-invasive plant species. He stated that the code does reference the ADWR list of plants as well. He suggested that if the Commission would like to recommend changes to the Town Council, they include the change “indigenous, *non-invasive* species”.

Vice-Chair DeRosa suggested using the best practices that are currently in place and being used around the state.

Chair Frost stated that they would need to define what “invasive” means in the context of plants. He inquired if the updated Landscape Code should also include language regarding turf and hardscape parts that will allow for more water conservation.

Mr. Monroe stated he is open to including those items in the code change as well and suggested a thorough review of the entire Landscape Code.

Development Update

Mr. Monroe stated that there are many final plats under review and noted that there could be as many as 11 final plats presented to the Town Council in October, with the majority of them associated with Anthem Merrill Ranch east of Felix Road. He stated that there has been commercial development interest around the Hunt Highway/Merrill Ranch Parkway intersection, noting that EPCOR has been given state approval and can provide water to commercial developments in the area. He stated that Achen Gardner is currently working on the Hunt Highway/Attaway Road project and will be submitting the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the project within the next week. He stated the Public Works Department is looking at solutions for the heavy traffic in the school zones on Hunt Highway.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired if the brush clearing along Felix Road near Mesquite Trails is for development or the placement of sewer lines.

Mr. Monroe stated that it is for both development and the placement of a sewer line.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired about the status of the water system that Pulte and El Dorado are developing.

Mr. Monroe stated that the water system is still in the design phase.

Vice-Chair DeRosa inquired if Felix Road will need to be closed for the sewer line and other lines going into Mesquite Trails.

Mr. Monroe stated that Felix Road will remain open as much of the work is being done on the shoulder of the road.

CALL TO THE COMMISSION- CURRENT EVENTS ONLY:

Commissioner Wooley inquired when the next Public Hearing for the items discussed tonight would be held.

Ms. Benitez stated that the next Public Hearing would be at the next Commission meeting.

Chair Frost requested an update on the San Tan Valley incorporation timeline and what effects it will bring. He reminded everyone of the upcoming Make a Difference Day and encouraged everyone to sign up.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Commissioner Wooley, seconded by Vice-Chair DeRosa, carried by a 4-0 vote, to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM.



Lonnie Frost, Chairman



Date