

## Planning and Community Development

**Meggan Herington, AICP, Executive Director**  
Planning and Community Development  
2880 International Circle, Ste. 110  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910  
[PLNWEB@EIPasoCO.com](mailto:PLNWEB@EIPasoCO.com)  
[PlanningDevelopment.EIPasoCO.com](http://PlanningDevelopment.EIPasoCO.com)

**Board of County Commissioners**  
Holly Williams, District 1  
Carrie Geitner, District 2  
Bill Wysong, District 3  
Cory Applegate, District 4  
Cami Bremer, District 5

## EL PASO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

### MEETING RESULTS (UNOFFICIAL RESULTS)

Planning Commission (PC) Meeting  
Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department  
2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, Colorado – Second Floor Hearing Room

#### **REGULAR HEARING at 9:00 A.M.**

**PC MEMBERS PRESENT AND VOTING:** Sarah Brittain Jack, Jay Carlson, Becky Fuller, Jeffrey Markewich, Eric Moraes, Bryce Schuettpelz, Jim Byers, Tim Trowbridge, and Christopher Whitney.

**PC MEMBERS PRESENT AND NOT VOTING:** (None)

**PC MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tom Bailey and Wayne Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:** Meggan Herington, Justin Kilgore, Kari Parsons, Kylie Bagley, Joe Letke, Joe Sandstrom, Charlene Durham, Jeff Rice, Christina Prete, Lori Seago (El Paso County Attorney), Marcella Maes and Jessica Merriam.

**OTHERS PRESENT AND SPEAKING:** Nina Ruiz, John Watts, Essy Sund, Tara Porter, Dave Elliott, Dan Jacquot, Mike Barr and Blair Greimann (Virtual).

### **1. REPORT ITEMS**

**Ms. Herington** introduced Jessica Merriam, the new Board Support Specialist, to the Planning Commissioners. Ms. Herington updated the Planning Commissioners that the new Board of County Commissioner liaison for Planning Commission is Carrie Geitner, District 2 and Holly Williams, District 1 is the Board of Adjustment liaison. Ms. Herington noted that the PC Hearing on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, has been cancelled and the next PC Hearing will be February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 9:00 A.M.

**Mr. Kilgore** had no announcements.

**Mr. Markewich** inquired about the status of a group meeting with the Board of County Commissioners. **Ms. Herington** responded that there has been no movement on scheduling the joint meeting, but suggested setting up a meeting with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Board Liaison if needed. **Mr. Carlson** shared that he and **Mr. Bailey** had met with **Mr. VanderWerf**. **Mr. Markewich** mentioned that a past

joint session with the City Council was helpful in clarifying expectations. **Mr. Carlson** added that when meeting with **Mr. VanderWerf**, they learned that the Board of County Commissioners wanted to hear any opposition to votes. **Ms. Herington** will schedule a meeting between **Mr. Carlson, Mr. Bailey**, and the new Board of County Commissioners.

---

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE HEARING AGENDA

---

There were none.

---

## 3. CONSENT ITEMS

---

**A. Adoption of Minutes** for meeting held on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**PC ACTION: THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS PRESENTED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT (9-0).**

**B. Sunshine Law Statement** – Mr. Trowbridge read the Sunshine Law Statement. **Mr. Whitney** moved; Mr. Moraes seconded. The Planning Commissioners voted unanimously to approve. **(9-0)**.

**C. VR2321**

**BAGLEY**

### VACATION AND REPLAT OWL MARKETPLACE FILING NO. 1

A request by Drexel, Barrell and Co. for approval of a 4.604-acre Vacation and Replat creating four commercial lots. The property is zoned CS (Commercial Service), and is located at 7550 North Meridian Road and is directly southwest of the intersection of Meridian Road and Owl Place Parcel No. 5301001015) (Commissioner District No. 2).

### NO PUBLIC COMMENT OR DISCUSSION

**PC ACTION: SCHUETTELZ MOVED / BRITAIN JACK SECONDED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEM 3C, FILE NUMBER VR2321 FOR A VACATION AND REPLAT, OWL MARKETPLACE FILING NO. 1, UTILIZING THE RESOLUTION ATTACHED TO THE STAFF REPORT WITH TEN (10) CONDITIONS AND THREE (3) NOTATIONS, AND A RECOMMENDED FINDING OF SUFFICIENCY WITH REGARD TO WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY, AND DEPENDABILITY, THAT THIS ITEM BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL PASSED (9-0).**

**IN FAVOR:** Markewich, Schuettpelz, Trowbridge, Fuller, Brittain Jack, Whitney, Byers, Moraes and Carlson.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** None.

**D. MS244**

**LETKE**

### MINOR SUBDIVISION VOLLMER ROAD STIMPLE FAMILY MINOR SUBDIVISION

A request by Stimple Family LLLP for approval of a Minor Subdivision creating one single-family residential lot. The 7.58-acre property is zoned RR-5 (Residential Rural) and is located directly southwest of the intersection of Vollmer Road and Arroya Lane. (Parcel No. 5221400002) (Commissioner District No. 1).

**NO PUBLIC COMMENT OR DISCUSSION**

**PC ACTION: FULLER MOVED / BYERS SECONDED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEM 3D, FILE NUMBER MS244 FOR A MINOR SUBDIVISION, VOLLMER ROAD STIMPLE FAMILY MINOR SUBDIVISION, UTILIZING THE RESOLUTION ATTACHED TO THE STAFF REPORT WITH FIVE (5) CONDITIONS AND FOUR (4) NOTATIONS, AND A RECOMMENDED FINDING OF SUFFICIENCY WITH REGARD TO WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY, AND DEPENDABILITY, THAT THIS ITEM BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL PASSED (9-0).**

**IN FAVOR:** Moraes, Byers, Whitney, Brittain Jack, Fuller, Trowbridge, Schuettpelz, Markewich and Carlson.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** None.

**E. P2415**

**PARSONS**

**MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING)  
STERLING RANCH EAST FILING NO. 7 RS-5000**

A request by Classic SRJ Land, LLC for approval of a Map Amendment (Rezoning) of 106.6 acres from RR-5 (Residential Rural) to RS-5000 (Residential Suburban). The property is located within the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan, north of Woodmen Road, west of Raygor Road, and east of Sterling Ranch Road. (Parcel Nos. 5200000533 and 5200000573) (Commissioner District No. 2).

**NO PUBLIC COMMENT OR DISCUSSION**

**PC ACTION: BRITTAIN JACK MOVED / SCHUETTPELZ SECONDED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEM 3E, FILE NUMBER P2415 FOR A MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) , STERLING RANCH EAST FILING NO. 7 RS-5000, UTILIZING THE RESOLUTION ATTACHED TO THE STAFF REPORT WITH TWO (2) CONDITIONS AND TWO (2) NOTATIONS, AND A FINDING OF SUFFICIENCY WILL BE REQUIRED TO OCCUR WITH SUBSEQUENT FINAL PLAT (S), THAT THIS ITEM BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL PASSED (9-0).**

**IN FAVOR:** Markewich, Schuettpelz, Trowbridge, Fuller, Brittain Jack, Whitney, Byers, Moraes and Carlson.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None.

**COMMENTS:** None.

---

**4. CALLED-UP CONSENT ITEMS:**

There were none.

---

**5. REGULAR ITEMS**

---

**VARIANCE OF USE  
WATTS VARIANCE OF USE**

A request by TTW Properties, LLC, for approval of a Variance of Use to allow a commercial vehicle repair garage in the R-4 (Planned Development) Zoning District. The property is located within Meadow Lake Airport, is within the GA-O (General Aviation Overlay District) and is south of Judge Orr Road and east of Highway 24. (Parcel Nos. 4304002047 and 4304002189) (Commissioner District No. 2).

**STAFF AND APPLICANT PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION**

**Mr. Carlson** inquired if the GA-O overlay applies to the entire airport area. **Ms. Parsons** confirmed that the GA-O overlay is over the entire airport property and within the property there are sections with R-4 and PUD zoning. **Mr. Carlson** then asked if there is another way to access the fleet building besides the taxiway, to which **Ms. Parsons** indicated the applicant would address that. **Mr. Moraes** asked about the small red text near the fleet building by bays 4 and 7. **Ms. Parsons** clarified that the text refers to employee parking and resumed her presentation.

**Mr. Markewich** referenced a previous case at the airport where a Variance was granted for repair on government-contracted vehicles, noting the similarity to the current case. He asked if that decision set a precedent. **Ms. Parsons** responded that while the previous Variance was similar and approved, each case must be evaluated at its own merits according to the Land Development Code. She emphasized that the approval of one case does not necessarily set a precedent for another, and the impacts of the current proposal should be considered. **Ms. Parsons** resumed her presentation.

**Ms. Fuller** asked about the leased parking spaces and what would happen if the lease ended, leaving the property without enough parking. **Ms. Parsons** explained that if parking is lost, the applicant must revise their Variance of Use. **Ms. Fuller** also asked about protections for neighbors if the lease terms change. **Ms. Parsons** clarified that the approval resolution requires specific parking, and any changes would require the applicant to return to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. **Ms. Fuller** requested a copy of the lease, and **Ms. Parsons** agreed to provide it. **Mr. Carlson** asked if the Planning Commission approves the Variance for the adjacent property as well. **Ms. Parsons** confirmed that the Planning Commission approves the Variance for employee parking on that property, which is included in the resolution.

**Mr. Whitney** asked **Ms. Ruiz** for clarification, noting that the property seems to be in use with the current capacity since 2021, and asked if the Variance of Use was needed. **Ms. Ruiz** confirmed that it is correct and there have been no code violations. She then introduced the owner, **Mr. John Watts**, who then gave a presentation about his company.

**Mr. Whitney** asked **Mr. Watts** if he leased the property in 2018 and purchased it in 2021. **Mr. Watts** confirmed. **Mr. Whitney** then asked if the upfitting was done between 2018 and 2021 or if it was the previous setup. **Mr. Watts** stated they were doing upfitting. **Mr. Whitney** clarified, asking if the work had been done in the building since 2018, to which **Mr. Watts** confirmed his business has been operating for seven years.

**Mr. Carlson** asked **Mr. Watts** about the Variance, suggesting it might be limited to government and military vehicles. **Ms. Ruiz** confirmed that the site plan includes a limitation specifying only government vehicles. **Mr. Carlson** initially thought the restriction only applied to RVs and large trucks. **Ms. Ruiz**

clarified that the note, as included in the resolution, limits the service to government businesses only. **Ms. Parsons** confirmed that the site plan restricts repairs to government contract vehicles, excluding private customers.

**Mr. Watts** and Ryan Schnider (adjacent property owner) reached an agreement regarding the lease. If the lease changes, **Mr. Watts** will need to reduce the number of cars on site to accommodate employee parking. **Mr. Whitney** suggested **Mr. Watts** should formalize the agreement with Mr. Schnider as the current informal arrangement could lead to non-compliance if the lease ends.

**Ms. Fuller** inquired about the number of parking spaces on site, considering 50 spaces are leased for employees. **Ms. Ruiz** explained that there are 11 spaces shown on the plan, with additional unutilized spaces between the metal and main buildings. The Land Development Code requires 55 spaces, but Mr. Watts only needs 24 for his employees. The leased parking counts towards the total, but if the lease ends, Mr. Watts would need a Variance. Mr. Watts confirmed he could adjust parking on his property if needed, including moving vehicles off-site.

**Mr. Carlson** questioned the access to the fleet building, noting that using taxiways for access might not be ideal. **Mr. Watts** explained that the taxiway was the only way to reach their hangars, but they give right of way to airplanes, and it's treated like a regular road. **Ms. Ruiz** presented the site plan, which included notes about vehicle types allowed. **Mr. Markewich** raised concern about passenger vehicles, asking if police cars not fitting the "SUV" category would be covered. The Commissioners discussed the wording of the notes, and **Ms. Ruiz** continued her presentation.

**Mr. Whitney** asked about the compatibility of R-4 and GA-O zoning for commercial and airport maintenance uses, questioning the difference between "airport supported" and "airport related." **Ms. Ruiz** responded that she didn't see a distinction, explaining that she referred to the GA-O section on airport-related uses but viewed safety and security as supporting the airport. She then continued her presentation.

**Mr. Moraes** referenced a September 2001 County letter regarding EW Systems' permitted uses, which included conditions such as all materials being stored inside a building. He pointed out that Mr. Watts was requesting a Variance due to this condition. **Ms. Ruiz** clarified that the Variance was needed because the property owner had assumed the previous determination applied, but it no longer did.

**Mr. Moraes** then raised concerns about outdoor storage guidelines, specifically the requirement for a solid fence or wall. **Ms. Ruiz** responded that this was part of the site development review and not the Variance. He also questioned whether the site plan complied with the Land Development Code, to which **Ms. Ruiz** explained that a site development plan would be submitted for review within 45 days, to include screening for outdoor storage. **Mr. Moraes** asked why vehicles needed to use taxiways when they could enter through a gate on Cessna Drive. **Ms. Ruiz** showed the site plan and explained that vehicles entered through the taxiways, while customers accessed the fleet building via Cessna Drive.

**Ms. Parsons** clarified that the El Paso County Planning Staff had added the requested language to the site plan, and the applicant verbally agreed that the revisions were acceptable. This revised site plan will move forward without needing additional conditions. The plan will be attached to the memorandum for the Board of County Commissioners and the resolution. **Ms. Fuller** asked if this site plan would change in the future, and **Ms. Parsons** explained that a more detailed site development plan would be submitted later, including elements like landscaping, fencing, and parking. **Mr. Byers**

inquired about the need for defined storage and parking spaces, and **Ms. Parsons** confirmed that the site development plan would show proper circulation, ADA compliance, and parking lines.

**Mr. Moraes** asked about the front and rear of the property, and **Ms. Parsons** clarified that Cessna Drive is considered the front, while the rear will be the outdoor storage area that must be screened.

**Ms. Parsons** also addressed concerns regarding the height of vehicles in relation to fencing, stating that the Variance of Use permits the outdoor storage location and allows for a seven-foot fence. **Mr. Carlson** raised a concern about language on the site plan regarding repair vehicles, specifically whether the wording restricted repairs to only government contracts. **Ms. Seago** explained that the language was fine as it is, but if it made **Mr. Carlson** more comfortable, they could move the word "only" to after "permitted." The applicant agreed with the proposed language change.

**Ms. Parsons** clarified the size of the property is approximately 3 acres. **Ms. Parsons** also showed on the site plan where the language was corrected.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Ms. Sund** expressed support, highlighting that their business is a successful, locally owned family business that supports the City, County, State, and large government entities. **Ms. Porter** also spoke in favor, noting that she owns a home near the airport on Cessna Drive with an attached hanger for their airplane. She mentioned that her husband is a pilot, and they use the nearby taxiway, and they have never experienced issues with the taxiway or with Mr. Watts' business.

**Mr. Elliott**, president of the Meadow Lake Association board, opposed the proposed variance and presented a PowerPoint. He explained that the FAA requires an airport layout plan (ALP) for Meadow Lake Airport, which can include non-aeronautical uses if they directly support aviation. He argued that adding lights, sirens, and radios to vehicles, while useful for the airport, does not support aircraft operations. He also raised concerns about outdated zoning information (R-4 and GA-O), suggesting the Variance decision be delayed until the Land Development Code is updated. During the discussion, **Mr. Markewich** asked whether the property in question was under airport jurisdiction, and **Mr. Elliott** clarified that all properties with airport access are considered part of the airport. **Ms. Brittain Jack** inquired about private ownership of the area, and **Mr. Elliott** confirmed that 445 hangar units and 43 residential lots have airport access. **Ms. Brittain Jack** also asked if there were any complaints about the business. **Mr. Elliott** answered there were some.

**Mr. Jacquot** spoke in opposition. Mr. Jacquot is a hangar owner at Meadow Lake Airport. He acknowledged Mr. Watts' successful business but raised concerns about the impact of parking 60-80 vehicles at the airport. He agreed with Mr. Elliott's point about taxiways being blocked, which causes inconvenience for airplane owners. He mentioned that Mr. Watts had evicted several people from their hangars when acquiring property for his business and noted that while Mr. Watts claims to have outgrown his space, the issue remains unresolved.

**Mr. Barr**, a hangar owner at Meadow Lake Airport, spoke in opposition to Mr. Watts' business plans. He highlighted the role of government in aviation, particularly how funding and resources depend on airplane usage. Barr noted that the seven hangars Mr. Watts has converted to no longer housing airplanes, reducing airport usage and potentially impacting funding. He also criticized the large number of cars at Watts' facility, stating that the actual count is closer to 80-83 cars, not the proposed 40-60. Barr shared an incident where he was blocked while towing an airplane, unable to pass due to cars at Watts' facility, further illustrating the negative impact on airport operations.

### **APPLICANT REBUTTAL:**

**Ms. Ruiz** responded to Mr. Elliott's concerns, confirming that the current zoning is applicable. She clarified FAA restrictions, noting that residences are allowed at the airport, and discussed CRS14 Part 77, which protects airspace and ensures no new structures would violate height limits. She addressed business growth, mentioning no specific issues except an old taxiway incident, and assured that parking conflicts would only arise if vehicles were in taxiway areas. **Ms. Ruiz** also mentioned Mr. Watts had offered hangar space to those on the waiting list, though demand was for custom hangars rather than general space.

**Mr. Whitney** asked about rules and **Ms. Parsons** explained that overlays do not override underlying zoning, citing examples like the GA overlay and commercial district overlay at the Colorado Springs airport, where zoning can remain the same, or variances and special uses can be approved. **Mr. Whitney** inquired about what happens when the underlying zoning and overlay conflict. **Mr. Carlson** referenced language indicating that the overlay would take precedence in such cases. **Ms. Parsons** clarified that the property is zoned R-4, a designation used in several areas of the county, and that development could proceed under those original R-4 guidelines. She also mentioned that the state adopted PUD (Planned Unit Development) zoning, which effectively replaced R-4, but the objectives of both are similar in allowing customized zoning. **Mr. Carlson** then asked if the Variance were granted, wouldn't this apply to the GA-O overlay as well? **Ms. Seago** stated the Variance is a Variance to both the requirements of the R-4 and GA-O. It is a Variance from the zoning requirements as they apply to the property and in this case, it is R-4 and GA-O.

**Ms. Fuller** asked about the hangar space availability. She thinks that there is a good public policy that we want to have airports and supporting uses for airports and this does pull away from land that is available. **Ms. Ruiz** pointed out available land at Meadow Lake by showing a map of the airport.

**Mr. Trowbridge** asked **Ms. Ruiz** if she had compiled the list of business usages shown in the applicant's letter of intent. **Ms. Ruiz** confirmed that she did and explained that the list was created by researching businesses on Google and verifying their existence, though she acknowledged that it might not be a full comprehensive list since she doesn't live or work at the airport. **Mr. Trowbridge** pointed out that of the 22 businesses listed, only half were related to the airport, mentioning commercial shops and contractor equipment yards. He suggested that the proposed Variance would likely be compatible with the airport's surrounding area. **Ms. Ruiz** agreed with his assessment.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Moraes** referenced the Land Development Code and the GA-O overlay district, noting that while it applies to various private airports, Meadow Lake is specifically called out with use restrictions. He expressed concerns that the proposed Variance doesn't meet the necessary hardship criteria and that offsite impacts aren't adequately addressed. He also pointed out that the site plan for the Variance doesn't yet meet requirements for parking, traffic circulation, open space, fencing, screening, and landscaping. As a result, Mr. Moraes stated he would be against the Variance of Use.

**Mr. Whitney** expressed concerns about compatibility, questioning how many businesses that don't meet the criteria might be operating under a Variance or haven't been addressed due to lack of complaints or visibility. He wondered if it made sense to continue allowing use that might not be appropriate just because other similar businesses exist in the area. He emphasized that the issue wasn't necessarily about the use itself, but about the location and whether continuing with the current approach was the right decision.

**Mr. Schuettpelz** stated that he echoed Mr. Whitney and Mr. Moraes concerns. The compatibility is not really airport supported use. He stated he would not support this.

**Ms. Fuller** agreed with Mr. Schuettpelz and the other speakers as well that this is really a long stretch to call this aviation-related business. She agrees this is great and important business for the community. She agrees with not seeing the hardship and compatibility.

**Mr. Markewich** discussed the ongoing revision of the Code, which aims to provide more flexibility and predictability regarding land use in certain areas. He pointed out that the current situation at the airport, with non-airport-related businesses, is an example of what should have been avoided. He believes these businesses are causing additional issues and that granting further Variances for non-airport uses would only exacerbate the problems. He expressed hope that the revised Code will offer a better solution and stated that the business in question should be relocated. As a result, he said he would not support the proposed Variance.

**Mr. Trowbridge** challenged his fellow commissioners with the hardship aspect of the proposed Variance. He pointed out that the business has been operating in its current location for six years and has grown, making a move to a different location extremely difficult and time-consuming. He emphasized that relocating the business would be a significant hardship, requiring extensive planning, equipment, and supplies to be moved. Mr. Trowbridge noted that no complaints had been made about the business during its six years of operation, and while there were occasional parking issues, they were addressed by the tenant, Mr. Watts. He argued that the application should be considered based on the current Code and the plans presented, and he believed the Variance should be approved.

**Mr. Carlson** stated that if the business were a new arrival at the airport, he might agree with some of his fellow commissioners. However, given that the business has been operating for six years with no complaints, he saw it differently. He acknowledged issues with other uses on the property that are not technically allowed but believed the current situation qualified as exceptional hardship. He felt it would be unreasonable to ask the property owner to close the business and relocate. Mr. Carlson supported the Variance, particularly with the restriction to only military vehicles, which he believed would reduce vehicle traffic and align with the airport's goals.

**PC ACTION: BRITAIN JACK MOVED / TROWBRIDGE SECONDED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF REGULAR ITEM 5A, FILE NUMBER VA247 FOR VARIANCE OF USE, WATTS VARIANCE OF USE, UTILIZING THE RESOLUTION ATTACHED TO THE STAFF REPORT WITH FOUR (4) CONDITIONS AND TWO (2) NOTATIONS, THAT THIS ITEM BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL FAILED (5-4) TO MOVE RESULTING IN A RECOMMENDATION FOR DISAPPROVAL.**

**Ms. Brittain Jack** moved. **Mr. Carlson** asked if we are making that motion with the updated language and conditions and notations on the site plan. **Ms. Brittain Jack** confirmed with a yes.

**IN FAVOR: (4)** Trowbridge, Fuller, Brittain Jack and Carlson.

**IN OPPOSITION: (5)** Markewich, Schuettpelz, Whitney, Byers and Moraes.

---

**6. NON-ACTION ITEMS – MP232 – Jimmy Camp Creek – Drainage Basin Planning Study (DBPS)**

---

Presented by: Blair Greimann and Jeff Rice

**MEETING ADJOURNED** at 12:10 P.M.

**Minutes Prepared By: MM**