CITY OF FRANKLIN
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES

FRANKLIN CITY PLAN COMMISSION

July 15, 2025

Members Present

Bill Carson	Secretary
Suzanne Findley	Member
Norm Gabehart	President
Georganna Haltom	Vice President
John Kempski	Member
Matt McElroy	Member
Irene Nalley	Member
Michelle Stringer	Member

Others Present

Lynn Gray	Legal Counsel
Joanna Tennell	Planning Director

Members Not Present

Michael Spongberg	Member

Call to Order

President Norm Gabehart called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

June 17, 2025 – Ms. Gray noted to change the word "affect" to "effect" on page two. Bill Carson made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Irene Nalley seconded. Passed unanimously, 8-0.

Swearing In

City Attorney Lynn Gray swore en masse all intending to speak during the proceedings.

Report of Officers and Committees: June 19, 2025 – Joanna Tennell reported on three items on the Technical Review Committee agenda. The first item was for Wawa subdivision and site improvements, located at the northeast corner of Earlywood Drive and US 31. It is under review, pending resubmittal, and moving forward. The second item was a site development plan review for Patriot Defense, located at 2011 Earlywood Drive. Patriot Defense proposes to construct an additional building (for maintenance) south of their main building. The third item was for the Franklin Community High School Outdoor Project, located at 2600 Cumberland Drive. FCSC would like to create a new band practice field, an agricultural building and outdoor area for Agricultural Education, an

accessory structure for the Theater Department, and additional structures with restrooms and locker rooms for soccer and baseball. Finally, FCSC will be installing turf on fields that are currently grass. It has been resubmitted for review and is pending approval for construction.

Old Business

PC-25-15 (A) & PC-25-16 (R): Umbarger Lane Annexation & Rezoning – Eric Prime of Van Valer Law Firm, represented on behalf of Arbor Homes. Mr. Prime also introduced Tony Bagato and Dominic Dreyer from Arbor Homes and project designer Joe Heck from Projects Plus. Mr. Prime brought forth two discussion points.

First, the voluntary annexation of this property, although it is located on the west side of I-65 and immediately south of the Armory, it is in the county's jurisdiction. Mr. Prime's second point after the annexation is the rezoning of the 130 acres with the Armory being the north boundary, Umbarger Lane the west boundary, I-65 the east boundary, and County Road 75 South the south boundary. Mr. Prime noted that 53 of the 130 acres contain woods, a pond, and wetlands, which are separate and requested to be zoned as Agriculture (A), leaving 77 acres open for development, to be zoned Residential: Suburban Three (RS-3) with substantial commitments: 49% of the lots will have to comply with RS-2 sizing but will be interspersed within the development as opposed to having an RS-2 section and an RS-3 section. Referring to the map, Mr. Prime said there are 106 RS-2 sites (yellow) and 110 RS-3 sites (pink). In addition, this ground has sufficient contiguity with existing city limits at 38.5%. It would also be necessary to remove this area from the Needham Fire Protection District and reassign it to the Franklin Fire Dept. A resolution has been passed to remove it by the Needham Fire Protection District and is awaiting the Commissioners' signatures to ratify this resolution.

Mr. Prime presented the statutory criteria for rezoning:

1. Consideration with reasonable regard to the Comprehensive Plan
    a. Mr. Prime stated he believes they meet the criteria and pointed out staff findings agreed.
2. Consideration of the current conditions and character of current structures and uses in the district
    a. Mr. Prime stated staff findings show that single-family residential development would be a good use for this ground with larger lot sizes being a plus.
3. Consideration of whether this is the most desirable use for the land
    a. Mr. Prime stated staff findings said that since the Homesteads at Hillview were completed in 2017, almost all residential development has occurred west of US 31, so new residential development in this area is desirable.
4. Consideration of property values and conservation of property values throughout the city
    a. Mr. Prime stated that it is their opinion, and the staff report agreed, that the price points and types of these homes, plus the lot sizes, will help raise the value of the neighboring properties.
5. Consideration for responsible growth.
    a. Mr. Prime shared that the staff's findings stated that as long as it's RS-3 with commitments, this combination of first-time move-up homes and some next-step home reflects responsible growth.

Mr. Prime referenced the five pages of 18 extensive and detailed commitments that Arbor Homes are agreeing to be responsible for upholding. Mr. Prime shared presentation photos of homes and noted the following commitments:

1. An asphalt trail system to connect to the Greenways Trail and internal sidewalk system running from Umbarger Lane to County Road 75 South and along County Road 75 South
2. Four distinct green space amenities: two playgrounds, two pocket parks
3. Minimum lot widths
4. Minimum 49% of the whole development will have homesites with larger lot sizes
5. Minimum 45% of the whole development will feature the upscale Silverthorne Homes
6. Adherence to listed exterior finishes, colors, and materials (Items #14 and #15)

Mr. Prime showed examples of some elevations (not examples for every elevation they have) for traditional single-family homes by Arbor, ranging from 1200-3200 square feet and with options for the buyer such as sunrooms, flex

spaces, & 3rd car garages. The smaller lots would cost in the mid to upper $300,000 range, the larger lots would cost around mid $400,000 range.

Ms. Gray asked Mr. Prime to address for the commission steps being taken for this proposed neighborhood in regard to concerns the city has had in the past about monotony with homes in subdivisions. Mr. Prime refers the commission to view item #17 which deals with anti-monotony. Per Mr. Prime what they have are a substantial number of floor plans and within those floor plans multiple elevations. The way they will handle this is the same floor plan can be next to each other but not the same elevation on either side or across the street, there are enough combinations and they have worked this out with staff to have an enforceable anti-monotony.

Mr. Gabehart asks if there are any questions for the commission or for the petitioner. Ms. Haltom requests to know how Arbor will market the lots and available house plans to address the anti-monotony requirements. Mr. Prime states that will be up to the sales team to know how the anti-monotony works. Ms. Gray adds that staff will review the plans for compliance with all commitments, including anti-monotony, when they pull the building permit. Ms. Tennell adds that the when the building permit comes in and Mr. Alex Getchell (Senior Planner I) reviews it for the planning review, he will pull up the recorded plat, and as permits are issued, he will list model name and elevation. As additional permits come in staff can pull up that plat and review incoming permits and handle checks and balances.

Ms. Haltom asks will this be open completely with signs up of lots for sale or will this be phased. Mr. Bagato says yes to phasing sections.

A member of the commission asked if mixing the homes styles has ever been done before in one of their subdivisions. Mr. Bagato states they have not done this mixing before on the same block, this is the 1st time. From a marketing side they may have to market them all as Silverthorne and then buyers will know what they can buy depending on which lot they pick. Ms. Tennell points out Franklin Lakes as an example, there are 2 different standards of homes built, a number of years ago there was an option that 20% of the lots could be 20% smaller than what the minimum standards were. This allowed for intermixing size and cost of homes.

Ms. Haltom asks when a person comes in how will they know what their section will look like or what will be beside them. Mr. Prime answers, they might, depends on if they are some of the first to build or build later after many others have built.

Ms. Haltom asks if curb appeal has been addressed. Ms. Gray states that are what the elevations were. Ms. Tennell adds she will go through some of the commitments and conversations staff has had with legal counsel and Arbor, those were considerations that were taken into effect. Also, Umbarger Lane & County Road 75 S in this design will be the rear of the homes. In the commitments, they break up the monotony of the rear of the homes adjacent to these thoroughfares so there are some projections and diversity. On the internal streets the requirements for the front elevations come into effect. The point system is new for the City and has not been done in other subdivisions, so this took time to work through to make sure we get this right. Based on these criteria it appears there are about 16 of 18 models that will meet the standards and little over 100 different elevations, so there should be plenty of diversity. Taken into consideration also were garages, and 1 of the commitments were no detached structures (i.e., sheds), so garages have enough interior area to serve kind-of like a pseudo shed (item #16). Ms. Tennell stated that staff, Arbor and their legal counsel was very thorough and worked well on this. Ms. Haltom agrees they have done a great job with details and being specific.

Ms. Gray stated that the actual subdivision will be reviewed again when plats are submitted. However, when we are annexing a property into the municipality it can come in within certain zoning and no commitments made and all they have to do is qualify for minimum requirements for our zoning ordinance. Therefore, working with a developer maybe means we can give it a little more density in exchange for higher level commitments we would not normally get, and the time to do that is with the rezoning and they become recorded commitments.

Ms. Tennell points out that the commitments are written in a fashion not specific to a builder, they are universally applied. Therefore, if something should go awry and it is already annexed and rezoned, these same commitments would apply to any future development and builder at this location.

Ms. Haltom asks Mr. Prime if the minimum living space is 1200 sq ft. for RS-3 and he confirms he believes that is correct. Mr. Prime also confirms to Ms. Haltom prices start in the $300,000 range.

Mr. Gabehart states he has a couple questions. He asks staff how many single-family residential zoning classifications are there in the City of Franklin. Ms. Tennell pulls up standard residential zoning districts and lists these.

1. Rural Residential (2 or 1 acre on sewer)
2. Residential: Suburban Neighborhood (mainly all of the existing subdivisions in Franklin)
3. RS-1, RS-2, & RS-3 (all residential suburban; 1 is the largest lot size, going down in size from there)
4. Residential Traditional Neighborhood/RTN (typically homes downtown)
5. RT-1, RT-2, & RT-3 (residential traditional lot standards ranging from 9.000-5,000 sq ft. & difference between RT and RS are different architectural requirements on placement of garage and porches that apply to zoning districts)

Mr. Gabehart continues speaking with Ms. Tennell regarding difference between RT-1 thru RT-3 and RS-1 thru RS-3. He continues this proposal fits well for an interstate corridor. He asks if there are existing architectural standards for the City of Franklin for residential project; Ms. Tennell advises we do not. They continue speaking about the number of the commitments for this subdivision. Ms. Haltom asked if there are any covenants. Mr. Prime advises they will have CCRs like all subdivisions that govern within the subdivision. They have already covered some things though with the commitments such as no sheds/detached structures, above ground pools, etc. Mr. Prime confirms there will be an HOA and HOA fees. Ms. Gray states we don't become a party to the HOA.

Mr. Gabehart asks if anyone has any other questions or comments. A woman from the audience asked about stones and monuments saved upon the survey layout and wants to know if Arbor will keep some of the trees. Mr. Prime states they will not do anything with the woods and the current owner will keep the trees. Ms. Gray states the woods are pretty wet and there are restrictions.

Mr.Gabehart again asks if there are any more questions or comments before they get to consideration for a motion. There were no other questions or comments.

Bill Carson moves to forward a favorable recommendation to the Franklin City Council for annexation. Ms. Haltom seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously, 8-0.

Ms. Tennell says the 2nd request will be for **PC-25-16 (A)** rezoning the north 53 acres to AG and staff recommends a favorable motion be forwarded to the Franklin City Council. Irene Nalley makes a motion to forward a favorable recommendation with John Kempski seconding the motion. Motion passes unanimously, 8-0.

Ms. Tennell says for **PC-25-16 (B)** request is for rezoning the south 77 acres to RS-3 with commitments, staff recommends a favorable recommendation be forwarded to the Franklin City Council to rezone the 77 acres to RS-3 subject to the commitments as outlined in the Cambry Hill zoning commitments dated July 9, 2025. Ms. Haltom makes a motion to forward a favorable recommendation with the noted commitments to the City Council. Suzanne Findley seconds the motion. Everyone in favors says I, this passes unanimously, 8-0.

Ms. Tennell states in speaking with legal council before the meeting the timeframe anticipated to introduce the requests to Council will be at the August 4th, 2025 meeting, with public hearing on the annexation, the fiscal plan, and rezoning August 18th, 2025, and official action September 2nd, 2025. That is the preliminary schedule for these items moving forward.

New Business
No new business

Other Business
Ms. Tennell shares with everyone with Julie's retirement a new Administrative Assistant, Rachael Thompson will be joining the department on July 28th, 2025.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion for adjournment was made by Ms. Haltom with a second by Mr. Carson. Passed unanimously, 8-0.

Respectfully submitted this 21st day of October, 2025.

Norm Gabehart, President

Bill Carson, Secretary