

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

*West Virginia Wood Technology Center/RCDA
10 Eleventh Street
May 14, 2026
4:00 p.m.*

Present were Commissioners, E. Armstrong, A. Carroll, D. Smith, K. Somers, and S. Evick.

Commissioners J. Marco (Mayor) and P. Kolsun (Chair) were absent.

Also present: S. Stokes (City Clerk and Recording Secretary), G. Roberts (City Attorney, attending via Teams), and C. DeMuth (WVU LUSD Law Clinic, attending via Teams).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hope Crites spoke in favor of the development of workforce housing for new staff at Davis Medical Center and the WVU Medicine Elkins Corridor Medical Center.

MINUTES

Armstrong **MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF APRIL 9, 2026.** The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Review, discuss, and consider draft comprehensive plan

With reference to the draft version of the Comprehensive Plan presented at its March 12 meeting, the Commission reviewed the document “Options for Incorporating Public Input.” This document presented options for incorporating informal input received from city officials and the public.

Armstrong **MOVED APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGES.**

- Addition of the following text on page 42, immediately after the “Downtown Elkins” subsection and before “Medical Centers.”

“Commercial Corridors and Neighborhood Business Areas

In addition to downtown revitalization, the City recognizes the importance of commercial corridors such as Randolph Avenue, Harrison Avenue, Beverly Pike, and related gateway areas as major centers of commerce, employment, and daily activity. These corridors support retail, service, healthcare, lodging, and transportation-oriented businesses and represent important opportunities for

reinvestment, beautification, redevelopment, traffic management, pedestrian safety improvements, and coordinated signage and gateway enhancements.”

- Addition of the following text on Page 25, immediately after the current list of recent water system improvements.

“A significant portion of Elkins’ water line infrastructure is between 40 and 60 years old, with some sections exceeding 80 years in age. The City’s water distribution system includes approximately 80 miles of pipeline. While this level of aging infrastructure requires attention, it is not uncommon across West Virginia. In fact, much of the state’s water and sewer infrastructure has received a D rating from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

“The City is currently working with an engineering firm to design and implement a phased replacement plan. Priority areas will be identified based on factors such as historical break frequency, infrastructure age, and capacity for future growth. One of the primary challenges associated with this effort is funding. Any major capital improvements will likely require rate adjustments, as existing revenues primarily cover operations and maintenance costs, along with debt obligations from the 2015–2018 water treatment plant project.

“In addition, the City must prepare for increasingly stringent regulatory requirements from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These may include new treatment standards or infrastructure upgrades with firm compliance deadlines. At the national level, current regulatory focus is centered on PFAS and lead service lines. While we have not detected PFAS and have not identified any lead service lines to date, future changes in testing sensitivity or regulatory thresholds could alter this status and potentially result in significant costs for compliance.”

- Addition of the following text and action item on Page 23, immediately following the existing discussion of assistance for removing dead or dying trees, with classification as a “high” priority on an “immediate” timeframe.

“The City should explore the feasibility of a hazardous tree mitigation assistance or voucher program to assist homeowners, particularly low- and moderate-income residents, in addressing unsafe or dying trees that pose threats to public safety, sidewalks, streets, or neighboring properties.”

“Evaluate partnerships, grant opportunities, or local funding mechanisms that could support hazardous tree mitigation assistance programs.”

- Addition of the following text on Page 73:

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Adoption Schedule

Date	Action
Thursday, May 14	Planning Commission recommends approval to move forward with adoption process
Monday, June 1	Order legal ad advising of public hearing, to be published on June 3
Wednesday, June 3	<p>Begin 30-day public-hearing notice period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal ad advising of public hearing must appear in newspaper • Hard copy available at town hall • Digital copy available on town website <p>Mail letters to incorporated communities</p>
Thursday, July 2	<p>30-day public-hearing notice period ends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action to be taken
Thursday, July 30	<p>Planning Commission public hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review comments received during public-hearing notice period • Receive comments submitted at hearing • After hearing, planning commission holds regular meeting to decide whether to make any changes in response to comments or otherwise
Thursday, August 6	<p>Planning Commission presentation to Governing body</p> <p>A member of the planning commission will need to present the plan to governing body, at the next regularly scheduled governing body meeting. Usually the governing body member that sits on the planning commission makes the presentation. The presentation can be a brief summary of the plan's highlights or can be detailed.</p>
Monday, August 10	Order legal ad advising of public hearing, to be published on Aug 12
Wednesday, August 12	<p>Begin 15 day public hearing notice period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal ad must appear in newspaper • Hard copy available at town hall • Digital copy on website
Wednesday, August 26	15-day public hearing notice period ends
Thursday, September 3	<p>Council public hearing</p> <p>Review comments received during public-hearing notice period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Receive comments submitted at hearing ☐ After hearing, council holds regular meeting to decide whether to make any changes in response to comments or otherwise