

**GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 20, 2025**

The Gunnison County Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting in the Planning Commission Meeting Room in the Blackstock Government Center, 221 N. Wisconsin, Gunnison, Co. and on Zoom **Present:**

Chairperson - Roland Mason Vice-Chairperson - Eric Phillips Alt. Commissioner - Catherine McBreen Alt. Commissioner - Sean Patrick	Director of Community and Economic Development - Cathie Pagano Director of Planning - Hillary Seminick Planner II - Rachael Blondy Planning Technician – Aidan McComas Others present as listed in text
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Absent: Baca

Recused:

Zoom:

With a quorum present Chairperson Mason opened the November 20, 2025 regular meeting of the Planning Commission at 8:45 am. Mason seated Alternate Members Patrick and McBreen as Voting Commissioners

Moved by Phillips, seconded by McBreen to approve Planning Commission meeting minutes, dated November 6, 2025. The motion passed unanimously in support.

Staff announcements/ miscellaneous:

Seminick: noted January scheduling, asked Members to consider shifting January 1st and 15th meetings to January 8th and 22nd.

Public Hearing: LUC-24-00008 | Treasure Mountain Ranch | Minor Impact

Treasure Mountain Ranch, Inc. applied for a Minor Impact Land Use Change to consolidate 16 parcels into 9, complete three boundary line adjustments, and cluster new development with a 1.9-acre building envelope in the Crystal townsite. Treasure Mountain Ranch, who owns 700 acres over the 16 parcels, proposed to retire four structures, construct a 4,900 sq. ft. maintenance barn, and build four new cabins totaling approximately 5,000 sq. ft. to replace four decommissioned cabins in the townsite. The proposal included wayfinding and interpretive signage for the historic Crystal Mill site and the intention of pursuing landmark designation for six structures.

Confirmation of Adequate Public Notice

Seminick: confirmed adequate public notice has been given.

Staff Comments:

Seminick: stated written comment was received beyond the comment deadline of 5:00 p.m. on November 19th.

Board: noted no ex parte communication took place.

Applicant Presentation

Gillespie: provided background on the Treasure Mountain Ranch Company. Shared a map of the lands owned by the company, and a detailed map showing townsite locations owned by the company.

Gillespie: noted company goals through the Land Use Change application.

Gillespie: stated intention to preserve six cabins along the Main Street in Crystal, Colorado. Noted intention to retire four of the preserved cabins through the County Historical Society.

Gillespie: spoke about the Crystal Mill, noted improvements to the signage and parking areas around the mill.

Gillespie: spoke to the future developments of the TMR property, stating intention is to preserve 98-99 percent of land through conservation easements and a potential land exchange with the Forest Service.

Locke: introduced Chris Cox, the present majority owner of Treasure Mountain Ranch.

Staff Comments

Seminick: clarified that four residential units and a maintenance barn will be considered today, as well as the retiring of four cabins, converting them to accessory use. On the development parcel, Seminick noted, six residential units will be considered. Noted the application was reduced from Major Impact to Minor Impact. Noted the applicant has represented the project as residential in nature. Noted concerns from the Board over avalanche risk, which were resolved with conditions by the Colorado Geologic Survey. Noted the United States Forest Service submitted referral comments, noting boundary line adjustments and signage proposed by the applicant.

Planning Commission Questions

Phillips: noted comments concerning buffering and screening near neighboring parcels. Commented on conservation of trees which screen the adjacent parcels.

Seminick: stated buffering is required when a land use change is considered. Noted for the TMR application, there are three criteria, 1 being not obtrusive visibility, 2 utilities must be located underground, 3 reducing visibility to neighbors. (13-105, coverage)

Patrick: asked about the design of the proposed residential units noting how they are different from the character of the historic townsite.

Applicant: noted the placement of the proposed residential units will be placed behind screening to reduce visibility of the units.

Applicant: stated the intention of to not know the proposed residential units will not be visible from the road.

Phillips: noted the applicants' fire mitigation system.

Mason: asked about winter fire issues.

Applicant: noted all structures will have sprinklers, the dry hydrant system meets fire flow requirements for all structures.

Mason: asked about public comments concerning restroom facilities near the Crystal Mill.

Applicant: noted they would be open to coordinating with the USFS to meet public visitation needs for the Crystal Mill. Stated the primary goal of the proposed project is to preserve the character of the present townsite.

Phillips: asked if there is a timeline for construction on the project.

Applicant: likely starting in summer of 2026, continuing through to summer 2027.

Phillips: asked is public visitors will be impacted by the construction?

Applicant: stated their construction plan won't impact visitors to Crystal.

Public Comment

Robert Anderson: homeowner in Crystal. Stated opposition to the proposal. Noted avalanche danger, wildlife danger, waste issues. Asked about the public comment period. (Recording). Noted the ratio of opposition to the support. Questioned the intensity impacts, stated the application should be considered as a major impact review.

Judy Witche: noted the preservation of Crystal is good. Questioned parking, transportation of equipment, and the staging of commercial materials for the proposed project. Noted the imposition of violation fees on the applicant for past violations.

Richard Beamon: noted support for the proposed project. The preservation of the townsite is of great importance, stating the proposed development will take place outside of the view line along Main Street in Crystal, Colorado.

Manette Anderson: noted family connection to Crystal and is a homeowner in Crystal. Stated opposition to the proposed project due to the incompatibility of development in the area given remoteness and various hazards including avalanches and wildfires. Stated it is only likely the applicant will develop Crystal in the future into a commercial operation. Asked for the preservation of Crystal and the area be the primary goal.

Brad Baetz: asked how building materials will be brought on site. Asked what the plan for the property is if development is not approved.

Judy Witche: asked about parking at Gillespie residence on Daniel's Hill, and where construction parking for the proposed development will be.

Jim Moisson: noted a desire to preserve the area and Crystal. Noted most homeowners in Crystal are supportive of the proposed development. Stated progress will happen but asked for guidelines for future development in the Crystal area with the goal of preservation.

Nikki Pulitzer: stated the plan proposed by TMR is ethical and conscious of preservation and conservation of Crystal. Noted the applicants have stated they are open to addressing all concerns, and their plan for development is in the best interest of the townsite.

Cherry Freeman: Expressed support for the proposed development. Stated the ethical and conscious development plans of the applicant.

Reilly Anderson: property owner in Crystal. Stated concerns with the development including the buffer zone between personal residence and the TMR proposed development, defensible space, visual impact, and space for buffering between the properties. Asked about the maintenance structure proposed by the applicant, asking about the size of it and what it will contain.

Roger Neal: Crystal resident for 77 years. Stated proposal is the best option for Crystal, expressing support. Support for the preservation of historic cabins in the townsite. Cautioned against a future in which the project proposal isn't approved which will cause more issues to the townsite. Construction of new buildings is concerning.

Teri Havens: questioned the inclusion of a backcountry ski resort, asking about the risk of avalanches. Asked about winter transportation of guest.

Natasha Krasnow: asked about archaeological resources present during earth-moving work is the proposal is approved.

Mason closed public comment at 10:02 a.m.

Applicant Response

Locke: TMR wants to protect Crystal through this application. Noted the development area only concerns a small portion of the overall TMR property. All improvements through this application are meant to preserve and protect Crystal. Addressed future plans, though noted the present application is what is considered today.

Gillespie: addressed Mill ownership, the Forest Service has a prescriptive easement. Addressed comments on the ski area, noting the future may include a ski operation proposal. Addressed the staging area at Daniel's Hill, stating it is not commercial use. Addressed an off-road vehicle will be used to transport building materials into the townsite, stating 50 trips will be sufficient to bring all materials to the development parcel.

Commission Comments

Phillips: noted avalanche and wildlife concerns have largely been addressed and impacts appear minor. Asked how the applicant will dispose of waste.

Applicant: stated waste disposal will continue as currently practiced.

Phillips: noted future proposals will be vetted by the Planning Commission and Community Development. Asked if helicopter transportation is planned.

Gillespie: stated no helicopter use is planned.

Seminick: noted helicopter access to private land would require a minor impact submission.

Phillips: asked how defensible space will be managed while maintaining screening with neighboring properties.

Gillespie: stated all defensible space requirements will be met.

Phillips: asked if vegetation screening is possible with defensible space requirements.

Cox: stated screening can be provided while maintaining defensible space.

Phillips: asked about storage of building materials.

Applicant: stated all materials will be stored on the development parcel.

Phillips: asked about avalanche mitigation and associated transportation.

Gillespie: outlined the avalanche mitigation plan.

Seminick: stated all roads to Crystal are public and cannot be closed by the applicant; noted County vs. Forest Service jurisdiction and that the Forest Service would require recording.

Phillips: asked about historic designation of buildings.

Mason: asked about archaeological resources during earth-moving operations.

Seminick: stated the County has no regulations regarding archaeological resources.

McBreen: asked about a ditch near Daniel's Hill parking lot.

Gillespie: noted a plan is being developed to avoid impacts.

Phillips: asked about the commercial use of the TMR cabins and noted the commercial use has lapsed.

Locke: declined to comment.

Phillips: expressed satisfaction with the emergency mitigation and response plans.

Commissioner Deliberations

Patrick: asked Staff to draft a decision document, allowing for more consideration.

Phillips: asked Staff to draft a decision document.

McBreen: asked Staff to draft a decision document.

Mason: asked for a draft decision document.

Mason: supported the continuation of the written public comment period remain open, while closing oral public comment at the public hearing.

Phillips: supported above, asked staff if the draft decision document will be provided prior.

Seminick: noted the draft decision document would be included among the packet materials for the upcoming public hearing.

Patrick and McBreen concurred.

Seminick: asked commission to close written public comment at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3rd.

Next Steps

Moved by McBreen, seconded by Phillips to continue the public hearing to Thursday, December 4th, to close the oral public comment period, and to keep the written public comment period open until 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3rd. The motion passed unanimously in support.

Public Hearing: LUC-25-00034 | Crested Butte Fire Protection District | Location & Extent

The Crested Butte Fire Protection District (CBFPD) submitted a Location and Extent review for a 85-foot wireless telecommunications device with associated equipment shelter, back-up generator, and utility connections pursuant to Colorado Revised Statue (CRS) § 30-28-110 and Land Use Resolution (LUR) Section 1-106: H Location and Extent Review Projects on October 16, 2025. Per CRS § 30-28-110, a Location and Extent application must be submitted prior to the construction of a public facility for review by the Gunnison County Planning Commission within 30 days. We therefore concluded that **the November 20th hearing was likely the sole opportunity to receive public input and review the proposal.**

Confirmation of Adequate Public Notice

Seminick: confirmed adequate public notice has been given.

Mason: noted no ex parte communication has taken place.

Applicant Presentation

Applicant: stated the wireless communication device is proposed to be located next to CBFPD fire station 3. Several locations were considered, though due to various site conditions and other limitations, the current proposed site was decided to be the best location. Noted the current lack of reliable cellular service in Crested Butte South, therefore the location of the device in CB South will help improve connection for residents, emergency services, etc.

Staff Comments

Seminick: clarified the procedure for a Location and Extent application, which pursuant to Colorado State Statute must be reviewed within 30 days of submittal. The application can be approved, approved with conditions, or denied. However, the applicant can continue with their application regardless of the Commission's recommendation.

Planning Commission Questions

Mason: asked about the parking situation.

Applicant: noted the lost parking spaces will be used to house a tower shelter. Stated no plan to replace lost parking spaces.

McBreen: asked about the location of the tower near a park, and how children will be kept out.

Applicant: the fence surrounding the tower will act as a barrier.

Phillips: asked why this design and location was chosen.

Applicant: noted the sites initially considered became hard to access and more costly. Noted the need for fiber and utilities making more distant locations less developable.

Phillips: asked about the height of the location.

Mason: asked about the height and if the tower were to fall.

Applicant: noted a structural engineer will design to the County and Federal codes, and if the tower were to collapse it would do so onto itself.

Public Comments

Jason Hogan: resident of CB South. Expressed opposition, due to the visual impact of an 85ft high tower. Noted the towns of Crested Butte and Gunnison don't have towers within their city limits. Expressed concerns over home values with cell towers are present. Asked the County to review all alternative locations. Expressed support to expanding access to emergency services though wireless communication.

Ian Havlick: CB South homeowner. Expressed opposition to the wireless communication tower. Stated support for increased cellular service but asked for a relocation of the tower. Stated devaluation of homes adjacent to the tower is of significant concern. Asked if the CBFPD would approve this application regardless of the recommendation of the Planning Commission.

Lucy Garrec: noted the need for increased cellular service. Questioned the location of the tower among a residential neighborhood. (Recording, 11:02 am). Expressed opposition, noted the Location and Extent process and the opportunity for CBFPD to move forward regardless of the Commission's recommendation.

Peter Carey: resident of CB South. Noted the initial plan of placing a Fire Station in CB South did not contain a plan for a future cell tower. Expressed concern over the parking space loss. (Recording, 11:06 am).

Bill Sage: resident of CB South. Noted the residents near the proposed tower location are opposed to it's location. Expressed concerns over CBFPD not taking into consideration all possible locations.

Mason closed public comment was closed at 11:12 am

Applicant Response

Applicant: stated the public can access application materials on their website. Noted there are agreements for the development and operation of the tower with Western Slope Towers.

Staff Response

Seminick: addressed question about the difference between a cellular tower located in Crested Butte versus the proposed tower application. Noting the difference is who owns the land.

Commission Questions

Phillips: asked if the applicant considered other locations

Applicant: noted they did.

Phillips: asked for clarification about roof coverings and how the height of a cellular tower affects overall coverage.

Applicant: noted cellular penetration produces more coverage when the tower is projecting radio frequencies up to structures versus down to structures.

Mason: asked what the projected service radius is.

Applicant: stated the majority of CB South is expected to be served.

Phillips: asked if this is an eminent need.

Applicant: noted this is a long-standing need. Cellular access is necessary.

Mason: asked about the intended lifespan of the proposed tower. Asked about decommissioning.

Applicant: decommissioning could be a part of a conditional approval. The lifespan of a monopine tower structure would be upgraded and updated regularly. Stated the tower will provide connectivity for emergency radios even if cellular will be provided by satellites in the future.

Phillips: asked applicant to address the public's feelings about being strongarmed.

Applicant: noted public engagement and stakeholder meetings were thorough.

McBreen: asked how the CBFDP chose the current provider.

Applicant: noted they were connected with the current provider through the County.

Phillips: asked why this site was chosen over all alternatives.

Applicant: noted they had explored many locations. Stated there is no location that would be approved by everyone. Multiple design options were considered; the community was given the option to help consider the design. Applicant noted the survey they produced. Clarified the parking spaces used for the shelter building for the tower, noting the tower will take up approximately 2.5 parking spaces.

Patrick: asked why this location was chosen.

Applicant: demand for emergency service, demand from residential users, this location helps eliminate the need for additional towers and meets coverage needs.

Applicant: noted having cellular coverage is important. Addressed concerns over property values being affected by the tower.

Applicant: noted health and safety concerns due to a cellular tower. Stated cellular phones emit more than cellular towers.

Seminick: reminded Commissioners that the County does not have zoning, it has a performance-based review process.

Applicant: presented a coverage map. Explained the various types of coverage displayed on the coverage map.

McBreen: asked for clarify concerning coverage.

Applicant: provided clarification concerning coverage, explaining how terrain will affect distant coverage.

Seminick: presented a letter of recommendation for the CBFPD Location and Extent Application for a wireless communications device. Noted the set back requirement is proportional to height, and that this application does not meet that requirement. Noted the Federal Aviation Agency did not deem this project as a risk to air traffic.

Phillips: asked for the inclusion of a decommissioning clause within the draft recommendation letter.

Mason: clarified the Commission should consider all recommendations.

Patrick: noted looking at impact, the community needs the tower for cellular communication.

Phillips: noted understanding the need, expressed it is difficult to find a location which satisfies everyone.

Mason: stated the community impact this tower will have is necessary. Noted the viewshed, and the location of the tower in the middle of CB South. Questioned the height of the tower.

McBreen: asked whether the applicant can find another location for the proposed tower which would have less impact on the CB South neighborhood. Noted the importance of connectivity, however, stated an alternative location is better for the tower.

Seminick: noted the addition of a decommission clause within the letter of recommendation for the CBFPD wireless communication device.

Moved by Patrick, seconded by Phillips to approve the amended recommendation letter for approval. The motion passed with one vote against the motion.

Work Session: LUC-25-00031 | Ohio City Store | Minor Impact

The Applicant was approved for a 4-unit remodel to The Mother Lode store and bar in Ohio City in February 2025 under LUC-24-00057. As part of the building permit process under BP-25-00143, the Applicant amended their plans to add a 5th, owner occupied unit.

Applicant Presentation

Applicant: noted rental units, need for long-term rentals, using a portion of the existing space for family uses.

Staff Comments

Blondy: explained the request is to reclassify the application from a minor impact to an administrative review.

Next Steps

Moved by Phillips, seconded by Patrick to move the impact classification from a Minor Impact to an Administrative Review. The motion passed unanimously in support.

Work Session: LUC-24-00014 | Zeck Residence | Minor Impact

The applicant proposed to build a 1,497 sq. ft. secondary residence with a 920 sq. ft. garage at 720 Hidden Mine Rd., Crested Butte, CO. Currently, the existing primary residence is 4,007 sq. ft. with a 1,132 sq. ft. garage. The aggregate square footage of the existing and proposed buildings is 7,556 sq. ft., which is 556 sq. ft. over the maximum aggregate square footage of 7,000 sq. ft.

Applicant Presentation

Applicant: noted the location of the proposed residence is in Hidden Mine Ranch. Noted the application proposes aggregate square footage over the County's Land Use Resolution limits on square footage.

Staff Comments

Seminick: noted this is a work session, thus up to the Commission to allow a member of the public to speak.

Seminick: noted aspect of the application including total square footage, Colorado Geologic Survey, and engineering recommendations.

Planning Commission Questions

Mason: asked whether the application is for an impact reduction from Minor Impact to Administrative Review.

Seminick: confirmed and requested the Commission review the applicable standards.

Mason: stated no concern with the aggregate square footage exceeding the County limit and noted geological conditions restrict buildable areas on the property.

Phillips: noted the primary residence is fully screened from the highway by an aspen grove.

Applicant: confirmed adequate screening.

Mason: stated the proposed residence is compatible with neighborhood character.

Colvin: stated the road serving Hidden Mine Ranch parcels was designed for residential traffic and that the proposal is compatible with surrounding homes; expressed support for the applicant.

Mason: asked Colvin for screening preferences.

Colvin: stated existing screening is effective and additional trees would reduce visual impact, noting the significant distance between homes.

Phillips: asked whether berming is included.

Applicant: stated berming exists between the residence and the road.

Mason: opposed removing additional vegetation.

Phillips: emphasized the need for screening to prevent obtrusive visuals.

Mason: noted past conditions requiring tree screening and growth in perpetuity.

Applicant: agreed to submit to a covenant protecting planted trees.

Patrick: asked about the elevation of the building site relative to HWY 135 and its prominence, stating visibility would be minor.

Applicant: noted trees between the residence and the highway.

Board: asked whether a covenant can be added to an administrative review.

Seminick: noted a vegetated wetland depression below the residence prevents future development due to setbacks and that the Colorado Geologic Review recommended minimal tree removal.

Next Steps

Moved by Phillips, seconded by Patrick to approve an impact classification reduction from a Minor Impact to an Administrative Review. The motion passed unanimously in support.

Moved by Mason, seconded by Phillips to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously in support. The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.