

TOWN OF SNOWMASS VILLAGE

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

February 18, 2026

Members Present:

Matt Dube, Chair
Brian Marshack, Vice Chair
Maggie Helmig
Jim Gustafson
David Seglin
Stan Clauson
Tom De Napoli

Staff Present:

Dave Shinneman
Jeff Conklin
Ashleigh Huff
Megan Boucher

Members Absent: None

Others Present: None

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Matt Dube, Chair. Tom De Napoli was absent at roll call and joined the meeting shortly thereafter.

Item 1: Planning Commission Member Oaths:

Megan Boucher, Town Clerk, administered the oath of office to returning and newly appointed members of the Snowmass Village Planning Commission. Commissioners affirmed their support of the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Colorado, and the ordinances of the Town of Snowmass Village, and committed to faithfully performing the duties of their office to the best of their abilities. Members then signed their oaths for official recording. Former Commissioners Jami McMannes and Doug Faurer were recognized and thanked for their service to the Planning Commission.

Item 2: Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2025:

The minutes from the December 17, 2025, meeting were presented for approval. The minutes were unanimously approved 7-0.

Item 3: Election of Chair and Vice Chair:

The Commission conducted the election of officers for the upcoming year. Matt Dube was nominated and unanimously approved to continue as Chair. Brian Marshack was nominated and unanimously approved as Vice Chair.

Item 4: Wildfire Resiliency Code Amendment:

Jeff Conklin, Town Attorney, provided an overview of recent state legislation establishing a Wildfire Resiliency Board to develop a model code regulating wildfire hazard risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Local governments with building departments and fire protection agencies are required to adopt a code meeting or exceeding the state model by the end of June. Because Snowmass Village is entirely designated as moderate or severe wildfire risk under state mapping, the Town must apply the higher “Class 2” standards community-wide.

Mr. Conklin explained the code’s two primary components: structure hardening requirements and site/area (landscaping) requirements. Structure hardening focuses on ignition-resistant construction materials, including Class A roofing, noncombustible or fire-resistant siding assemblies, fire-rated glazing, and ventilation protections. These standards primarily apply to new construction but may also be triggered during significant remodels, such as replacement of 25 percent or more of siding or roofing. Site and area requirements establish defensible space standards through three zones surrounding structures, including removal of combustible plantings in the immediate zone, pruning and spacing of trees in intermediate zones, and broader vegetation management in outer zones.

Commissioners discussed plant definitions, ignition-resistant vegetation, potential impacts on community character, and coordination with HOA landscaping guidelines. Fire Marshal John Mele noted Colorado State University maintains an approved fire-resistant plant list that Roaring Fork Fire will reference, and that the Building Official retains reasonable discretion in applying the code.

Implementation concerns were also addressed, including staffing impacts, interpretation of percentage thresholds for remodel triggers, potential insurance implications, and the need to align state requirements with existing HOA regulations. Commissioner Gustafson emphasized the importance of ensuring consistency between Town standards and HOA architectural review processes to avoid conflicting guidance for homeowners. The Commission unanimously voted to continue the item to the March 4 meeting to allow further coordination with the HOA Architectural Review Board and gather additional feedback before making a recommendation to Town Council.

Item 5: Planning Commission Training:

Community Development Director Dave Shinneman and Town Attorney Jeff Conklin conducted the Planning Commission’s annual training, focusing on legal responsibilities and procedural standards. Mr. Shinneman reviewed the Commission’s dual roles in comprehensive planning and development review. He emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan serves as a guiding policy document and is frequently referenced in land use findings. In its development review role, the Commission evaluates subdivisions, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs),

special reviews, and zoning matters, making recommendations to Town Council. Mr. Shinneman also discussed Snowmass Village's history of Specially Planned Areas and the flexibility provided through the PUD process.

Mr. Conklin explained the distinction between legislative and quasi-judicial actions. Legislative actions, such as code amendments, allow broader community engagement. Quasi-judicial matters, involving site-specific applications, require Commissioners to act impartially, avoid ex-parte communications, and base decisions solely on evidence presented at public hearings. He emphasized the importance of due process, proper notice, and maintaining a clear record.

Mr. Shinneman reviewed best practices for conducting public hearings, including maintaining decorum, focusing deliberations on adopted review criteria, managing public comment fairly, and clearly articulating motions and amendments. He stressed findings—whether for approval or denial—must be tied directly to code standards rather than personal preferences. The training concluded with a discussion of ethics and conflicts of interest. Commissioners were reminded to recuse themselves when financial or personal interests could compromise impartiality and to consult staff or the Town Attorney when in doubt. The overall emphasis was on transparency, fairness, professionalism, and legally defensible decision-making.

Item 4: Community Development Director Updates:

- Dave is retiring, Michelle Bonfils Thibeault will be the new Community Development Director
- Kevin Kiernan has been hired as the Town's newest Senior Planner.
- March 2nd – Town Council Joint Meeting: Discussion of the SRA site
- March 4th – Regular Planning Commission Meeting: Resumption of the wildfire resiliency code discussion
- March 16th – Town Council Joint Meeting: Ritz-Carlton / Viewline Pre-Sketch

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.