

PLANNING AND ZONING MINUTES
MINUTES OF THE BENSON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
October 30, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Andrew Abernathy opened the meeting at 6:40pm.

2. PLEDGE

Chair Andrew Abernathy led the pledge.

3. ROLL CALL

Andrew Abernathy, David Lambert, Mark Romero and G. Tinnie Graves were present. A quorum was present.

4. WORK SESSION

Chairman Andrew Abernathy introduced Chapter 14, Parking Regulations, and engaged the Commission in a general discussion about parking and the future of transportation. He and Planner Michelle Johnson noted that the way the current parking requirements are structured, requiring X spaces for Y uses, was impractical and contrary to current trends, which is to reduce parking spaces and allow the land to be used for other purposes. They both commented that this already occurring in large cities where public and shared transportation such as Uber and Lyft is highly available and where “walkability” is being built into the cityscape. While outlying areas are expected to have a delay in transportation technologies and infrastructure, Planner Michelle Johnson noted that in the next 30 years the expectation is that about half of all vehicles will be “autonomous” and not likely to be owned by an individual, but rather operated on a car-share basis. The car share model reduces the need for parking because the vehicle is likely to be in continuous motion shuttling multiple “car-share owners” rather than parked for the 8 hour workday of any one individual owner.

On the practical side, Chair Andrew Abernathy noted that much of the parking regulations are difficult for the smaller parcels to conform to, with a strong need for shared parking in the original downtown section. He also noted that the sections requiring additional parking for additions or changes to buildings were likely to come under legal scrutiny. Chair Andrew Abernathy also have a brief history of the Americans with Disability Act and how that relates to parking in regard to distance, space size and grade (slope).

No sections of the existing document were edited, rather Commissioners were encouraged to read the section to help them identify what they see in town and gather ideas about how parking could be better planned.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner David Lambert motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mark Romero seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.