

Harris Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2026

- I. **Call to Order** - Planning Commission Chair Jeff Borash called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. **Roll Call** - Commissioners present: Jeff Borash – Chair, Commissioner Shari Denny, Commissioner Al Siedow, Commissioner Tina Kolodziej, absent: Commissioner Neil Elmquist.
- IV. **Consent Agenda** - Motion made by Commissioner Siedow and seconded by Commissioner Elmquist to approve March 2nd, 2026, special meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.
- V. **Public Comment – None.**
- VI. **Regular Agenda**

A. Brenda Long – Lot Split Request

The Commission reviewed the metes and bounds lot split application submitted by Brenda Long.

Staff Report Summary:

Application, escrow, and fees were submitted and complete

Property taxes verified as paid

Title commitment provided with no identified issues

Survey documents submitted (multiple copies)

Planning consultant (Nathan Feist) provided comments:

Driveway permits will be required

Potential easement considerations noted

Discussion Highlights:

Clarification on possible easement needs (likely utility-related such as gas or power)

Easement does not appear to impact minimum lot size but may affect buildable area

Preliminary soil/perk considerations appear acceptable

Future development potential discussed for remaining acreage (~70+ acres)

Clarification that:

Metes and bounds splits proceed to City Council

Further subdivision (platting) would require additional review and infrastructure

Motion: Recommend approval of the lot split and forward to City Council Motion by:

Commissioner Siedow Second: Commissioner Elmquist, Vote: All ayes – Motion carried

B. Water & Sewer Connection Ordinance Updates (Exemptions & Triggers)

The Commission continued discussion on ordinance updates regarding mandatory connections to city water and sewer.

Proposed triggers for mandatory connection include:

Transfer of property ownership

Failure of septic or well

Availability of city utilities

Public health concerns

New construction or expansion

Discussion Highlights:

Debate over adding property split as a triggering event

Concern about:

Forcing connection when existing systems are functioning

Property owners benefiting financially from splitting land

Discussion of a 20-year mandatory connection timeline

Some support for long-term compliance deadline

Others opposed forcing replacement of functioning systems

Enforcement and tracking concerns:

Monitoring septic compliance over long periods

Administrative burden on city staff

Clarification:

Failed septic systems must connect if utilities are available

Current ordinance already restricts replacement septic when sewer is available

Suggested revisions:

Add septic inspection requirement upon lot split

Clarify “certificate of compliance” language (county-issued)

Further define well failure vs. repair scenarios

Seek additional clarification from engineer (Nathan Feist)

Action: No formal action taken. Item will return for further review.

C. Discussion – Zoning Districts & Potential Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Discussion held regarding potential use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) as a housing tool. PUD allows flexible lot sizes and layout Supports smaller homes, clustered development, and shared infrastructure Can increase tax base and housing options

Discussion Highlights:

Potential site: 2.5-acre city-owned parcel near Sunrise Road

Concept includes:

6–10 small “cottage-style” homes

Shared access (private road or HOA structure)

Integration with planned trail system

Infrastructure considerations:

Extension of water/sewer required

Costs may be assessed to benefiting properties

Housing need identified:

Starter homes

Senior/downsizing housing

Debate included:

HOA vs. City responsibility

Density concerns and neighborhood compatibility

Preference for ownership vs. rental (vs. apartments)

Realtor Bob Boyce expressed interest in assisting or developing the project

Commission discussed:

Ensuring city receives fair land value

Possibility of seeking additional developer interest

Importance of clear planning before proceeding

Consensus:

General interest in exploring PUD concept further Additional information needed:

Concept layout Infrastructure cost estimates

Development structure (ownership, HOA, etc.)

VII. Commissioner Reports - No additional reports were provided.

VIII. Adjourn - Siedow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Elmquist seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Randy Carlson – Acting City Clerk

Jeff Borash – Commission Chair

Date Approved