

Town of Walden
Walden Planning Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 26, 2026
5:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly meeting of the Walden Planning Commission (WPC) was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Tom Bartoo. Ms. Mary Aho was the only citizen in attendance.

II. ROLL CALL

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott called the roll, noting the presence of Tom Bartoo, Angela Cassidy, Tim Hilvers, Joe Robbins, Jr., Werner Slabber, and Bill Trohanis. Commissioner (Comm) Dawson Wheeler was absent. Ashley Gates, Walden's consultant from Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD) and Town Attorney Sam Elliott were also present.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

COMMISSIONER ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO ADOPT THE AGENDA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BILL TROHANIS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

A. AUGUST 13, 2025

COMMISSIONER BILL TROHANIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 13, 2025, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WERNER SLABBER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

B. NOVEMBER 19, 2025

COMMISSIONER WERNER SLABBER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2025, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BILL TROHANIS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott suggested a footnote that the minutes from this meeting were reviewed at the February meeting due to the cancellation of the January WPC meeting because of inclement weather.

C. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

There is no report as there have been no recent meetings of the WPC.

D. COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Tom Bartoo opened the floor for communications. Comm Bill Trohanis thanked the Walden staff for the excellent response during the recent ice storm.

E. HEARING OF PERSONS HAVING BUSINESS WITH THE COMMISSION

There are no citizens having business with the WPC.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

Ashley Gates summarized this draft ordinance, which is attached as an exhibit (Appendix A) to these minutes. Chairman Tom Bartoo stressed that this ordinance will initially apply only to new Town Center, Commercial, and Manufacturing properties. There is much discussion among the members of the WPC, including but not limited to the following comments:

- Town Attorney Sam Elliott asked where the term of three years (page 7, #8) was decided upon. Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that this came from the consultant with whom we worked to complete this draft ordinance. Attorney Elliott suggested seeking clarification.
- Ashley Gates emphasized that publicly owned lighting is exempt from this ordinance.
- Comm Joe Robbins, Jr. is concerned about who will take complaints regarding this ordinance and how violations will be enforced.
- Comm Tim Hilvers agreed with enforcement of this ordinance in Town Center, Commercial, and Manufacturing zones, but disagrees with enforcement in Residential zones.
- Attorney Sam Elliott suggested only requiring compliance with this ordinance for new construction or lighting installation in Residential zones.
- Comm Bill Trohanis stated his agreement with the comments from Comm Hilvers and Town Attorney Elliott.
- Comm Angela Cassidy suggested public workshops be held to educate citizens once this ordinance is completed and adopted.
- Joe Robbins, Jr. stated his concern about the requirement to darken commercial parking lots after closing, possibly giving an advantage to criminals to hide or escape.

COMMISSIONER ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO DEFER ACTION ON THIS AGENDA ITEM TO THE NEXT WPC MEETING, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TIM HILVERS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

b. Zoning Ordinance Updates – Articles 1 through 5

Ashley Gates summarized the draft document, noting that her goals are to streamline this document to state law compliance. Articles 1 through 5 were provided for review only. This draft document is attached as an exhibit (Appendix B) to these minutes.

COMMISSIONER ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO DEFER ACTION ON THIS AGENDA ITEM TO THE NEXT WPC MEETING, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TIM HILVERS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

G. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

H. ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER WERNER SLABBER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BILL TROHANIS.

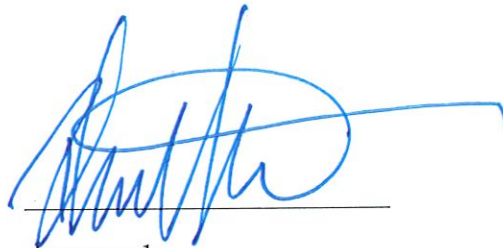
Chairman Tom Bartoo adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.



Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart



Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator



Approved:
Tom Bartoo, Chairman