

Heather Hanover
Chair

James Eshelman
Vice-Chair

Commissioners

Scott Dzurka, *Mayor*
Eric Hufnagel, *Commissioner*
Mark Holden
Eric Harger
Brian Mills
Todd Krajniak
Vacant



PLANNING COMMISSION

AUGUST 13, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the St. Johns Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Hanover at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Heather Hanover, Mark Holden, Eric Hufnagel, Brian Mills, Scott Dzurka, Eric Harger
Members Absent: James Eshelman, Todd Krajniak
Staff Present: Chad Gamble, City Manager; Kristina Kinde, City Treasurer; Jake VanBoxel, McKenna

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel to approve the agenda as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 9, 2025 MEETING

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Mills to approve the minutes as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any public comments.

There were no public comments.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Zoning Amendment: Outdoor Seating as Special Land Use

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Holden that the planning commission open the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:32 p.m.

There was no one present in the audience for comment during the public hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Holden that the planning commission close the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 5:33 p.m.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of Outdoor Seating Amendment

The commission discussed a step one process that permits sidewalk cafes and outdoor seating subject to administrative approval by the zoning administrator, with specific language revisions including changing the title to "Sidewalk Cafe and Outdoor Seating Areas" and removing 'normal' from subsection C in section 155.446. Detailed aesthetic and technical regulations will be addressed in a subsequent step two process.

There was a discussion of:

- Simplify permit process.
- Discussion centered on a two-step process: Step one involves revising the ordinance to remove special use permit language and to allow sidewalk cafes/outdoor seating under administrative approval by the zoning administrator, including changing the title to "Sidewalk Cafe and Outdoor Seating Areas" and removing the word 'normal' from subsection C in section 155.446.
- Removal of subsection E in section 155.446.
- The language should state that sidewalk cafes and outdoor seating areas are permitted subject to administrative approval to ensure active use aligns with business operating hours and does not block pedestrian traffic or access to the restaurant or adjacent businesses.
- There was concern over whether the term 'approval' might create a rigid permitting process compared to 'review', with a preference to retain 'approval' due to liability considerations in the public right-of-way.
- A consistent fee structure was discussed, with a one-time fee of \$40 mentioned to cover administrative costs and maintain consistency with similar permits, though some suggested saving the fee debate for phase two.
- Emphasis was placed on ensuring that outdoor seating does not block pedestrian traffic or create hazards, with aesthetic details and safety (including fire safety) to be regulated under DDA guidelines.

Next Steps:

- Finalize the revised language for the ordinance.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting to elaborate the step two process focusing on detailed aesthetic regulations and coordination with the DDA.

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the planning commission move this to the City Commission with the noted change.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

7. OLD BUSINESS: None

8. COMMITTEE SITE PLAN APPROVALS: None

9. CITY COMMISSION UPDATE – MAYOR DZURKA:

Mayor Dzurka discussed: the golf cart ordinance amendments have passed the first reading and are scheduled for a second reading on August 25th, followed by a 60-day waiting period as required by state law. He discussed the few changes:

- The ordinance now permits golf cart use beyond the fixed period of March to November if the weather is good, even in early December.
- A minimum age of 18 is now required to operate the golf cart along with a valid driver's license.
- Insurance requirements were clarified, and the inspection timeline was extended from 2 years to 3 years.

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Holden discussed the old Federal Mogul property status.

Commissioner Hufnagel discussed his disappointment in seeing a golf cart with a 14-year-old driving.

Commissioner Mills said he enjoyed the Mint Festival.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Harger that the Planning Commission adjourn the meeting.

YEA: Hanover, Harger, Holden, Hufnagel, Mills, Dzurka

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.