



Doc #: 224752 Pages: 5 Book: Page:
STATE OF MONTANA MADISON COUNTY
Recorded 3/16/2026 10:10 AM KOI: MINUTES
Paula McKenzie, CLERK & RECORDER
Fee: \$ 0.00 BY: Paula McKenzie
To: FILED, ,

MADISON COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

P.O. Box 278 • Virginia City, Montana 59755 • Phone (406) 898-4331

**MADISON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
January 26, 2026
Administration Building Public Meeting Room
Virginia City, MT**

1. **Call to Order:** 6:02 p.m. by President Laurie Schmidt.

2. **Roll Call:**

Members Present: Laurie Schmidt, Rita Owens, Darlene Tussing, John Stowe, Mike Palmer, Isaac Ingram, and Colin Threlkeld

Members Virtual: Lincoln Roberts

Members Absent: Patricia Jacobs

Staff Present: Cody Marxer (Planning Director), John Herrington (Planner), Michelle Schriock (Planner) and Ryan Wolter (IT)

Others Present: Kevin Germain (Lone Mountain Land Company) Jana Cooper (TD&H Engineering), Kyle Finch (Lone Mountain Land Company) and Charles Drimal (Greater Yellowstone Coalition)

Others Virtual: Beth Famiglietti (Lone Mountain Land Company) and Chris Vigness (Big Sky Fire Department)

3. **Opportunity for Public Comment for items not on the agenda:** None

4. **President's Comments:** Welcome to Isaac, our new member representing Sheridan. Appreciate John, Darlene, and Rita for continuing to serve and a public thank you to Steve for his service. He will be missed. Tonight's meeting will be Colin's last meeting. He has accepted another position and will no longer be with the Madison Conservation District. Schmidt thanked him for his time on the Planning Board and his presence will be missed. Schmidt also thanked the Planning Department for their hard work during the last year. A lot was accomplished and the department is running smoothly.

5. Statement of Conflict of Interest/Ex Parte Communications: None

6. Minutes: November 17, 2025

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES AS PRESENTED BY TUSSING; SECONDED BY STOWE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Subdivision: MPP-25-07 Moonlight Basin West 1 PUD Condo Lot 1

Schmidt read the Statement of Process: The review process is directed by state statute and procedural rules. Rules help guarantee the rights of all parties to be fairly heard and give the Board full opportunity to deliberate on the proposal.

Marxer provided a summary of the application and staff report, including two proposed amendments, a revised preliminary plat with a modification to the lot numbering and a modification to the wording of the staff recommendation of the staff report. Cooper provided a summary of the application and lot numbering amendment. Germain explained that insurance and market changes are the rationale for the application; more amendments to the West 1 PUD coming; thanked staff and the Board.

Open Public Comment 6:12 p.m.

Vigness explained that BSFD has no issues with this application due to no increase in density. He further discussed that construction on the subject property has begun and although the water system is not yet completed, a pressurized supply for fire suppression is in place, which is sufficient for BSFD. Vigness recommends approval of this application.

Close Public Comment 6:16 p.m.

Board Deliberation 6:17 p.m.

The Board contemplated the Findings of Fact, Conditions and Conclusions. No discussion.

MOTION TO ADOPT FINDINGS OF FACT AS PRESENTED BY STOWE; SECONDED BY TUSSING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE STANDARD CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AND SITE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL BY TUSSING; SECONDED BY STOWE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION TO RECOMMEND PRELIMINARY PLAT APPROVAL WITH AMENDMENTS ON PAGE 19 TO THE MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BY STOWE; SECONDED BY TUSSING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Close Public Hearing 6:20 p.m.

8. Guest Speaker: Charles Wolf Drimal (Greater Yellowstone Coalition) "GYREAT Act: Wild and Scenic River Designation"

Drimal provided a power point presentation of the 2025 Greater Yellowstone Recreation Enhancement and Tourism Act, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This is new legislation focused on the protection of two of southwest Montana's iconic rivers, the Gallatin and the Madison. Congressman Ryan Zinke introduced this legislation in the US House of Representatives on August 1, 2025. Madison and Gallatin counties both rely on these waters for irrigation and energy, but also for the outdoor recreation economy that fuels small businesses and draws visitors from around the world. This bill strikes the right balance between preserving what we treasure, maintaining access for recreation, and ensuring continued operation of the existing dams on the river. It will designate roughly 98 miles of new federally protected Wild and Scenic Rivers, including 42 miles of the Madison River from the confluence of Cabin Creek downstream to the point at which the river leaves the Bureau of Land Management land, roughly one mile north of the confluence of Cherry Creek Gulch, and approximately 39.5 miles of the Gallatin River from the Yellowstone National Park boundary downstream to the confluence of Spanish Creek. It also includes 4.6 miles of Hyalite Creek from the Gallatin Range downstream to the Grotto Falls Trailhead, 7.3 miles of cabin Creek from its headwaters in the Madison Range downstream to above the fish barrier, and 5.1 miles of the Middle Fork of Cabin Creek from its source in the Madison Range downstream to its confluence with Cabin Creek. When passed into law, this legislation will be Montana's largest contribution to the Wild and Scenic River system since 1976. The support for new Wild and Scenic River protections in Montana has been building momentum with endorsements from more than 1,300 businesses, multiple outfitters organizations, the Gallatin and Madison County Commissioners and many others. A complete list can be found at healthyiversmt.org or www.healthyiversmt.org/gyreatact.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects rivers in some of the following ways:

- Protects and enhances a river's outstandingly remarkable values
- Protects existing uses of the river
- Protects a river's free-flowing character and prohibits federally-licensed dams and other harmful water projects
- Establishes a ¼-mile corridor on both sides of the river representing the zone of management focus

- Requires the creation of a comprehensive river management plan developed through a public process that addresses resource protection, land development, facilities and public use
- Can often help leverage federal funding for improved recreation access and restoration projects

9. Monthly Report: No concerns or questions noted.

10. Unfinished Business: Board renewals and elections.

Schmidt- In November, when asked, John and she said they would be willing to continue to serve as President and Vice-President...If that is still the wishes of the Board we need a motion to elect,

MOTION BY OWENS TO RENEW SCHMIDT AND STOWE'S POSITIONS ON THE BOARD AS PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT RESPECTIVELY; SECONDED BY TUSSING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Schmidt again thanked the other Planning Board members that renewed their appointments to the Board and again noted that this will be Colin Threlkeld's last meeting. He is leaving his position with the Madison Conservation District and moving to another position that isn't in Madison County. The Board wished him well. A certificate of appreciation was shared with the Board for Steve Janzen. It was signed by the members of the Planning Board and will be sent to him.

11. New Business: Annual Report.

Schmidt asked board members if there were any questions or concerns with the Annual Report Draft. In discussion, it was decided that all speakers that presented to the Planning Board over the past year should be included in the report. It was discussed if it should be brought to the Commissioners. Schmidt noted that last year she e-mailed the report to them.

MOTION BY OWENS TO PRESENT THE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS EITHER BY E-MAIL OR AS AN AGENDA ITEM; SECONDED BY STOWE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Planner Update:

Marxer updated the board on the following items:

- The Sheridan Interlocal Agreement has been updated and the town has asked the Planning Department to assist them in applications that come into their office. Planning Department will administer the applications received from the town and administer zoning.
- The Ennis Interlocal Agreement has been updated. Zoning and Floodplain will be administered by the Planning Department.
- Marxer will be meeting with the Town of Twin Bridges to update Interlocal Agreement and see what services they may need from the Planning Department.
- Marxer noted that a lot of First Minor Subdivision applications have come into the Planning Department.

- The subdivision regulations will need to be updated through an ordinance.
- Marxer met with Joe Brummell and Big Sky Fire Department regarding high-risk WUI.
- The Sensitive Lands Mapping team has been meeting every two weeks. They provide updates as to where they are in the process.
- The Road and Bridge Standards document is complete and became effective January 9, 2026.
- The revised BLR (Buildings for Lease or Rent) regulations are in progress and the first reading will be in February.
- Development of County-wide road index.
- Marxer is having Herrington review and update the Code of the New West.
- Working with Powell and Beaverhead county regarding wildfire resilience. Inter-agency meetings used to happen and it's worth a collaborative conversation.

13. Planning Board Member Updates:

Tussing – We asked MRL about doing a possible trail demonstration project on their RR corridor by Sheridan in hopes that might help alleviate some of the land owners concerns next to the trail. However, at this time, MRL still has not made a decision on what they want to do with their land.

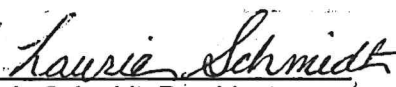
Threlkeld – He is taking a position with the Watershed Group and tonight is his last meeting.

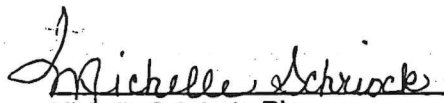
14. Board Discussion of Next Month's Agenda Items

Marxer stated that she could have a work session scheduled for minor amendments to the Subdivision Regulations. Schmidt also noted that maybe a refresher course of some type for existing board members and also function as training for new board members.

15. Adjournment:

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:15 P.M.


Laurie Schmidt, President


Michelle Schriock, Planner

The next Planning Board meeting will be February 23, 2026