



Yellowstone County Zoning Commission

Monday, September 8, 2025

Commission		01/13/2025	02/10/2025	03/10/2025	04/14/2025	05/12/2025	06/09/2025	07/14/2025	08/11/2025	09/08/2025	10/13/2025	11/10/2025	12/08/2025
Tyler Bush	Commission member Chairman	-	1	1	-	-	1	V	-	V			
Todd Hewett	Commission member Co-Chair	-	1	1	-	-	A	1	-	V			
Pam Ellis	Commission member	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1			
Vacant	Expired Term 6/30/25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
Vacant	Expired Term 6/30/25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			

Please note: "A" stands for excused absence, "1" stands for present, "V" stands for Zoom participation, "C" stands for Canceled

Chairman Bush opened the meeting at 4:00 PM and introduced the County Zoning Commission members and Planning Division staff.

Staff Present: Karen Husman, Zoning Coordinator; Brenda Berns, Planning Clerk; Makayla Paul, Planner; Ben Jackson, Planner

Participants: Shawn Thorson, IMEG; Jeff Wollschlager,

Members of the Public: Cathy Consani; Justin & Brandie Logan; James Rock

Public Comment

Chairman Bush asked if there was anyone wishing to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting. There was no public comment.



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Approval of Minutes: July 14, 2025

The Board discussed approval of the July 14, 2025 minutes; however, as not all members present attended that meeting, staff recommended postponing action. The Board agreed to defer approval to the next meeting.

No conflicts of interest were disclosed by Commission members or staff.

No ex parte communications were disclosed by Commission members or staff.

Karen Husman, Zoning Coordinator read the rules and procedures for a Public Hearing.

Regular Business:

- a. **Zone Change – 730 – 406 Johnson Lane** – A zone change request from Rural Residential (RR1) to Residential Manufactured Home (RMH), on S30, T01, N, R27 E, S2S2SEW4 a 10-acre parcel of land. A preapplication meeting was held July 2, 2025 at 5:00pm at the Lockwood Fire Station Tax ID: D06595

Karen Husman gave an overview of the requested zone change. Ms. Husman stated the applicant requested to change approximately 6 acres of property from Rural Residential 3 (RR-3) to Residential Manufactured Home (RMH) zoning. The eastern 4 acres of the property were previously rezoned for commercial development to Heavy Commercial (CX). Surrounding zoning includes RMH to the north, RR-3 to the south, CX to the east, and N-2 to the west.

Staff recommended approval of the zone change, noting that it meets the growth policy and 11 review criteria, maintains consistency with surrounding land uses (particularly to the north), and promotes efficient land use through compatible infill. Staff presented site photos showing the subject property, existing commercial development, and surrounding areas.

Question

Commission members sought clarification on the definition of a residential manufactured home. Staff explained that these are factory-built homes constructed off-site and transported to the property.



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Staff further noted that Senate Bill 252, effective December 1, modifies the classification: any factory-built home, whether manufactured or modular, placed on a permanent fixed foundation is included. Previously, manufactured homes retained a chassis and could be moved, but under the new classification, The new bill will allow a factory assembled structure intended for residential use that: is equipped with necessary service connections but not made to be readily movable and is designed and placed on a permanent foundation.

Applicant's Agent: Jeff Wolschlager, representing the property owner of 406 Johnson Lane, stated that he supports the proposed zone change. He agrees with staff's recommendation that the change aligns with the growth policy and noted that it could help provide more affordable housing in the Lockwood area. He also confirmed that any future development of the property would follow all required permitting processes, including fire, utilities, and traffic considerations, and that site and off-site improvements would be coordinated with the local engineering department.

Discussion

The Board asked about the general tone of the public meeting. Mr. Wolschlager reported that the public meeting for the proposed zone change was attended by approximately six to seven people. General concerns expressed included growth in the area, potential loss of wildlife habitat, increased traffic, crime, and effects on existing properties and neighborhood access.

Chairman Bush opened the Public Hearing.

No members of the public spoke in support of the proposed zone change.

Opposition

James Rock 432 Johnson Lane; Mr. Rock owns 1.37 acres at the corner of the subject property, expressed concern regarding the proposed residential manufactured home zoning. He asked about the number of homes that would be allowed and potential access to the property. Staff clarified that, based on 3,000-square-foot lot sizes, up to approximately 87 homes could be placed on the property, but the number of homes would be determined by what can be accommodated by Lockwood water and sewer approval. Staff further explained that access to



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the property would be determined during development and is not addressed by the zone change itself.

Cathy Consani 2545 Sterling; Ms. Consani expressed concern about the privacy between the two developments.

Chairman Bush asked to see the aerial view of the subject property to address questions about access.



Staff clarified that access would be determined and established when the development went into planning stages. It would either be a reciprocal access easement or some other type of agreement with the easterly portion of the property.

Justin Logan 2541 Sterling St; Mr. Logan spoke in opposition to the proposed zone change. He expressed concern that issues such as access, traffic flow, and roadway connectivity are frequently deferred to later review stages, limiting opportunities for public input. He noted that Sherwood Road does not currently exist as shown on some maps, and Sterling Street has long been a dead-end, raising concerns about how additional traffic from the potential development would be accommodated. Mr. Logan also expressed concern about the density of manufactured homes potentially affecting existing neighborhood character and nearby property values, particularly if there are no restrictions on the age or foundation standards of homes placed on the



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site. He further commented on the financial impacts to the Lockwood School District and questioned how additional development of manufactured home communities aligns with long-term planning for Lockwood. He encouraged consideration of future growth and community needs when evaluating the request.

Rebuttal:

Applicant's Agent; Mr. Wolschlagler addressed questions regarding traffic and the number of units. He noted that the specific number of units and detailed site layouts cannot be determined at this time and will require further coordination with the fire and engineering departments, as well as Lockwood water and sewer services. Access, roadways, distances between fire hydrants, and other infrastructure considerations will be addressed during development review.

Mr. Wolschlagler emphasized that while growth presents challenges, the proposed residential manufactured home zoning provides opportunities for more affordable housing, and preliminary planning will help determine the best site layout in alignment with community growth and permitting requirements. He indicated the development would be similar in density to the RMH development to the north.

The Commissioners inquired about property ownership, specifically whether the applicant also owned adjacent subdivisions or manufactured home communities to the north. The Agent clarified that the subject property, consisting of 10 acres, is solely owned by another party and is not associated with any neighboring properties.

The Commissioners asked whether any green space or parks were planned for the development. The Agent responded that this has not yet been determined and will be addressed during development review in accordance with applicable Lockwood zoning requirements.

Chairman Bush closed the public hearing.



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Discussion

Commissioners discussed the proposed development in relation to affordable housing, neighborhood compatibility, and school capacity. Concerns were raised regarding staff's findings of the Review Criteria #1, # 3, 9:

- Compatibility with the existing neighborhood, noting the southern adjacent properties are currently rural residential.
- Adequacy of support for schools, given the potential influx of children from up to 87 new units and existing capacity constraints.
- Potential impact on the value of surrounding properties, with concern that the development could reduce property values in the area.

Motion

Motion made by Commission member Ellis, seconded by Commission member Hewett to forward a recommendation of **Denial** of Zone Change 730 to the County Commissioners, based on Zoning Commission recommended findings of Review Criteria #1, # 3, 9. The motion passed 2:1 for recommendation of Denial.

The Board of County Commissioners public hearing for these applications will be held on September 30, 2025 at 9:00 AM.

- b. **County Zone Change 731 – 2142 Bitterroot Dr.** - from RR3 to RR1 - A zone change request from Rural Residential 3, 3 to 9.99 Acres (RR3) to Rural Residential 1- 1 to 2.99 acres (RR1), on S30, T01 N, R27 E, S2S2SEW4, a 5-acre parcel of land. A pre-application neighborhood meeting was held on July 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at 900 Bitterroot Road. Tax ID: D05106.



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Karen Husman stated this is a request made to change the zoning from Rural Residential 3 (RR-3) to Rural Residential 1 (RR-1) for a 5-acre unplatted parcel at 2142 Bitterroot Drive. The purpose of the request is to create a smaller parcel for a family transfer. The property is adjacent to the city limits to the south.

Surrounding Zoning:

- North: RR-3
- South: RR-3
- West: RR-3
- East: Agricultural

The proposed change is consistent with the County Growth Policy and maintains consistency with surrounding land uses. No more than one additional division is intended, and future land use would remain residential.

Staff is recommending approval based on the 11 review criteria.

Applicant's Agent: Shawn Thorson stated that the requested zone change from Rural Residential 3 (RR3) to Rural Residential 1 (RR1) is intended to allow a future family transfer. The existing parcel is approximately five acres, and zoning must permit smaller lot sizes before a division can occur. The representative clarified that no new water or sewer extensions are proposed, and the property is not being annexed. The existing residence is permitted, and any future residential development would be subject to sanitation review and permitting at that time. The goal of the zone change is to allow the property owners to eventually transfer a portion of the land to family members.

Staff noted that Rural Residential 3 allows parcels of 3 to 9.99 acres, while Rural Residential 1 allows parcels of 1 to 2.99 acres, which aligns with the applicant's stated intent.



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Questions

A question was raised regarding proximity to existing sewer infrastructure and whether state law would require connection. It was clarified that connection would be required only if a new sanitation application or new residential development is proposed. Since the existing septic system is already permitted, no immediate connection is required. If the property is further developed in the future, connection requirements will be addressed at that time.

A question was also raised regarding the water supply. It was confirmed that the property receives water service through the Heights Water District, which obtains its water supply from the City of Billings.

Chairman Bush opened the Public Hearing.

The Applicant stated that the property was purchased several years ago and there are no plans to change its current use. The existing home and well will remain as they are, and no new construction is proposed. The applicant noted that the intent is to divide approximately two acres for a family transfer.

The property includes a barn and irrigation water, and the Applicant mentioned the possibility of running a small number of livestock. The purpose of the division is to place the two-acre portion into a family member's name and ensure that the property is properly recorded.

There were no members of the public speaking in opposition.

Chairman Bush closed Public Hearing.

Discussion

Commission members Hewett and Ellis stated they are in favor of the request.



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Motion

Motion made by Commission member Hewett, seconded by Commission member Ellis to forward a recommendation of approval of Zone Change 731 to the County Commissioners. The motion passes unanimously.

Other Business/Announcements.

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Resolution of Intent to consolidate the Yellowstone County Zoning Commission and the Yellowstone County Board of Adjustment into one commission, which will be held 2nd Thursday of the month at 4:00 PM.

Adjourned: 4:47PM

Brenda J Berns, Planning Clerk