

September 2, 2025, Zoning Commission Public Hearing (210 E. Crofoot)

Board Members in attendance were Jan Bowey, Tom Roberts, Ann Good, and Charlie Rossiter. Anne Wentz was absent. Mike Walter resigned from the commission as he moved to Twin Bridges and is now out of district.

Guests: Curtis Green, Clerk/Treasurer Kristi Millhouse, Brandy Tudor, Dave and Stephanie Haag, Michael Douglas, Chris Roberts, Janis Hansen, Doris Fischer, Tammy Todd, Colleen Guinnane, Rose and Larry Keller, Ruth Laurin, Barrie Crandall, Rease Burk, Luke Schlabach

Charlie Rossiter called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Dylan Pipinich (WGM Consulting): Dylan provided a brief presentation of the zoning ordinance and how the process works. The ordinance is basic and as boiler plate as it can be. Sheridan is a Town and is governed by Zoning MCA 76-2-301. The commission looked at building height, lot sizes, space, population density, location, and use of buildings (residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and agriculture). The general focus was on health and safety.

Zoning aligns with the Town's growth policy. It is how the growth policy is implemented. Zoning makes the growth policy regulatory and protects community values. It also manages growth, integrates other compliances, protects building values, quality of life, promotes public health and safety, supports infrastructure and resource management and promotes community involvement. The zoning commission looked at areas where new housing could go. Where is important because of where the current roads and infrastructure are currently at.

The Town of Sheridan zoning commission has had more meetings open to the public than any other jurisdiction that Dylan has worked with. The zoning commission and public will continue to be involved with zoning after it is implemented because zoning is always changing.

The process of zoning starts with the zoning commission formation. A workshop was held in 2024 to explain zoning. The commission then launched a community survey and had approximately 60 to 70 responses. For a community of this size, 60 to 70 is a good return of surveys. After the surveys were received back the commission started on the zoning ordinance. Their next step after the public hearing is for the ordinance to be presented to the council with an explanation of what the zoning commission did and why they did it.

There are ten articles to the zoning document. These include general provisions, definitions, zoning districts, use regulations, development standards, special exceptions,

nonconformities, administration and enforcement, board and review bodies, and amendments.

Dylan continued to discuss various items of the document including the different districts.

Non-conforming standards is the grandfather clause which allows current structures to stay where they are at.

Use classes in use table are (P) permitted by Right (E) Special exceptions, and (T) temporary uses (Food beverage carts).

Residential classifications are districts R1 Lower Density, R2 Medium Density, R3 High Density. These are designed to support various living options. There is not a lot of space in the town to build. Building that could occur in the future are on the outskirts of Town.

Commercial districts include retail, services, employment, light industrial, housing.

Public District are government buildings.

Open space means the parks in town.

Industrial District Economic Base, bigger impacts. Designated that northwest corner of the town as industrial. There are more stringent building requirements. Examples are auto mechanic shops, slaughterhouses, etc.

Ag District is agricultural use in Town limits.

Once the zoning template is built it can be changed with a public hearing and should be reviewed minimum every two years because of legislation meeting every two years and they amend zoning requirements.

Special exception review criteria are items that could be built in an area, and the zoning commission looks at the impact on the neighbors. Can set hours of operation for a business.

Variances – Special items that cannot meet setback requirements. They are not getting special treatment. It is a unique situation that does not affect the neighbors.

Ordinance Change Procedures – ability to adjust for the benefit of the town. The zoning ordinance cannot really be seen how it is going to work until it is implemented.

Enforcement – Some builders you need to make sure that they are meeting the requirements. Require approval of plans before construction begins. Needs to be reviewed by a designated person.

The next step is for the zoning commission to incorporate comments from the public into the draft and then present it to the Town Council for adoption.

Discussion occurred.

Janis Hansen asked about sidewalks. Jan explained that there were some things that were left out at this time such as lighting and sidewalks. They wanted to get basic zoning plan implemented first and then can add these items later. Janis asked about new construction in subdivisions. Jan stated that it would be part of the subdivision regulations. As the Town we need to decide if we keep with the county sub regulations or develop our own.

John asked about enforcement. Ann commented that the enforcement has been looked at, but it is up to the council to make that decision. They will present their ideas to the council. Charlie commented that they are an advisor board only.

Discussion occurred.

Jan made a motion to have a work meeting on September 5, 2025, at 10:00 am at the Public Health Department Building. Ann seconded the motion. Motion passed with unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm. Ann made a motion to adjourn. Tom seconded the motion. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.