



Town of Vienna

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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

7:30 PM

Charles Robinson Jr. Town Hall, 127 Center
St. South

The Planning Commission met for a regular meeting and public hearing at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, in the Vienna Town Hall Council Chambers. Commissioners present were Chairman Matthew Glassman, Douglas Noble, Stephen Kenney, Keith Aimone, Jessica Plowgian, David Miller, & Deepa Chakrapani. Staff members present were Director of Planning & Zoning David Levy, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning Kelly O'Brien, Zoning Administrator, Andrea West, and Clerk to the Commission Jennifer Murphy.

Roll Call

All members were called present.

Communication from Citizens and/or Commissioners

None

Public Hearings - None

Regular Business

1. Recommendations to Board of Zoning Appeals on request to amend an existing Conditional Use Permit, and to Town Council on request for modifications of site plan requirements for Green Hedges School, located at 415 Windover Ave NW, in the RS-12.5 Zoning District.

Chairman Glassman outlined the purpose of tonight's discussion, stating that the Commission's role was to develop recommendations to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), and potentially to Town Council, regarding both the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) amendment and requested site plan modifications. Although precise wordsmithing of conditions is not required at this time, recommendations should convey the Commission's views on major issues.

The applicants present representing the application were Sara Mariska of Odin Feldman Pittleman, Jessica Wadlow of the School's Board of Trustees, and Peter Barrett, Interim Head of School.

The applicants provided an overview of updated materials submitted prior to the meeting, including revised proposed CUP conditions. Key updates included:

- *Reduction in the maximum proposed enrollment request from 225 to 217 students, compared to the existing cap of 190.*

- *Expanded vegetated buffers to meet ordinance requirements for approximately 90% of the property's perimeter, with limited exceptions due to existing site constraints.*
- *Reconfiguration of parking and athletic field areas to accommodate increased buffering.*
- *Proposed installation of acoustic fencing along play areas to mitigate noise impacts.*
- *Clarification of school hours, camp hours, gym use, rentals, and special events, including advance notification commitments.*
- *Phasing language related to construction timing and enrollment increases.*

Commissioners further discussed buffer dimensions, acoustic fencing specifications, gym rentals, and enforceability of proposed conditions. Staff provided clarification on applicable zoning requirements, noting that current buffer standards were adopted after the school's original approvals and had not been codified as existing CUP conditions.

Items raised by the Commission included:

- *Noise Impacts:*

Commissioners expressed concern regarding existing and future noise impacts on adjacent residential properties. Several Commissioners noted that noise complaints were an ongoing issue, not a hypothetical concern, and emphasized the importance of enforceable, outcome-based mitigation measures. While acknowledging the applicant's proposal to install acoustic fencing and enhanced buffering, multiple commissioners stated that they lacked sufficient confidence, based on the current record, that the proposed measures would reliably achieve meaningful noise reduction over time. Some commissioners suggested additional technical analysis or expert evaluation could be helpful in establishing measurable performance expectations.
- *Buffers and Site Design:*

Commissioners recognized improvements to buffer widths and landscaping compared to earlier submissions. Questions were raised regarding vegetation type, density, and year-round effectiveness, specifically during winter months. Several Commissioners emphasized the importance of maintaining adequate separation between play areas and residential property lines to prevent activity and noise occurring directly adjacent to neighbors.
- *Enrollment Increase and Intensity of Use:*

Several Commissioners questioned whether the site could reasonably accommodate a further increase in enrollment, given its size and proximity to surrounding residences. Concerns were raised that repeated incremental increases over time could cumulatively exceed what the site and neighborhood can support. Some Commissioners suggested that modernization of facilities could be considered separately from enrollment increases, or that enrollment increases should occur only after mitigation measures are implemented and evaluated.
- *Phasing and Conditions:*

Commissioners discussed whether approvals, if recommended, should be structured to allow for reevaluation after completion of initial construction phases,

particularly before allowing enrollment increases or additional phases to proceed.

- *Gymnasium Use and Rentals:*

Commissioners expressed concern about potential impacts from expanded gym rentals, particularly for athletic leagues, citing noise, parking, and weekend activity levels. Several Commissioners indicated a preference for limiting gym use to school-related activities and limited community uses, rather than competitive athletic programming.

Commissioners acknowledged the school's longstanding presence in the town and its educational mission, emphasizing the need to balance institutional needs with the health, welfare, and quality of life of surrounding neighborhoods.

Concluding discussions, Chairman Glassman stated as there is currently no consensus the item will be deferred to the next meeting, February 11, 2026. This will allow staff time to draft a template of potential CUP conditions based on tonight's discussion. The applicant agreed to postpone their BZA hearing until March.

The deadline for additional written public comment was set for Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 4:00 PM.

2. Draft 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update - Town-Business Liaison Committee Comments and Discussion

Staff provided an overview of comments received from the Town-Business Liaison Committee (T/BLC) on December 2, 2025, and summarized how those comments related to the Draft 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Commissioners discussed the role of the TBLC, their importance of maintaining communication between the Town and business stakeholders, and how the submitted comments could inform refinement of plan policies and strategies. Further discussion followed regarding the current timeline of review and requirements for adopting the updated Comprehensive Plan.

New Business

None

Planning Director Comments

Director Levy reported the following:

- *Town Council has scheduled a work session for February 9, 2026, to discuss the Planning Commission's role in the CIP process.*

Commissioner Miller reported, related to their Comprehensive Plan discussions, that Mayor Colbert recently announced that FCPS redistricting will keep the entire town within the James Madison school district.

Commissioner Noble reported that the Tree Advocacy Committee is scheduled to meet with Town Council for work session to discuss legislative options. The work session is tentatively scheduled for March 9, 2026.

Commissioner Aimone thanked the Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation for their efforts in snow removal.

Approval of the Minutes - None

Meeting Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jennifer Murphy
Clerk to the Commission*

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