



City of Apache Junction, Arizona

Meeting Minutes Planning and Zoning Commission

City Council Chambers at
City Hall
300 E Superstition
Boulevard
Apache Junction AZ 85119

apachejunctionaz.gov
P: (480) 474-5083

*Doors are open to the public at least 15 minutes prior to the
posted meeting start time.*

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chair Hantzsche called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Hantzsche led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Present: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche
Vice Chair Barker
Commissioner Gage
Commissioner Starr
Commissioner Mykland

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Staff present:

Joel Stern, City Attorney
Rudy Esquivias, DS Director
Sidney Urias, DS Deputy Director
Emile Schmid, City Engineer
Kelsey Schattnik, Principal Planner
Nick Leftwich, Senior Planner

4. Consent Agenda

Vice Chair Barker moved to accept the agenda as presented and approve the minutes of the June 10, 2025 special meeting. Commissioner Mykland seconded the motion.

Yes: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche, Vice Chair Barker, Commissioner Gage, Commissioner Starr and Commissioner Mykland

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Chair Hantzsche called for a motion.

[25-308](#) Consideration of approval of agenda.

[25-310](#) Consideration of approval of the minutes of the June 10, 2025 special meeting.

5. Public Hearings

[25-316](#)

Presentation, discussion, public hearing and consideration of Major General Plan Amendment Case P-25-10-GPA, a request by Sundt Construction, represented by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm to amend the General Plan Land Use Map for Parcels 102-20-008A & 102-20-008C, located near the northwest corner of Cactus Road & Auto Center Drive, from Commercial to Light Industrial/Business Park and Industrial.

Vice Chair Barker moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the Apache Junction City Council the approval of the proposed Rezoning by Planned Development Case P-25-11-PZ, a request by Sundt Construction, represented by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm to rezone Parcels 102-20-008A & 102-20-008C, located near the northwest corner of Cactus Road & Auto Center Drive, from General Rural Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential ("RS-GR") to Industrial by Planned Development ("B 5/PD"), subject to the seven conditions of approval noted in the staff report dated June 10, 2025. Commissioner Gage seconded the motion.

Yes: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche, Vice Chair Barker, Commissioner Gage, Commissioner Starr and Commissioner Mykland

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Senior Planner Leftwich gave a presentation on Case P-25-10-GPA, a Major General Plan Amendment, and Case P-25-11-PZ, a Rezoning by Planned Development.

Lisa Gage representing the Ray Law firm appeared on behalf of the applicant, Sundt Construction, and gave a presentation on the Major General Plan Amendment and Rezoning by Planned Development.

Chair Hantzsche opened the public portion of the hearing on Case P-25-10-GPA, a Major General Plan Amendment.

Stephen Harshman, residing at 250 S. Tomahawk Road, stated he was in favor of the project due to the fact that it would create jobs for young people.

Chair Hantzsche closed the public portion of the hearing.

The commission read the Findings of Fact for the Planned Development Rezoning. All were in agreement.

Chair Hantzsche called for a motion.

[25-317](#) Presentation, discussion, public hearing and consideration of Rezoning by Planned Development Case P-25-11-PZ, a request by Sundt Construction, represented by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm to rezone Parcels 102-20-008A & 102-20-008C from General Rural Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential ("RS-GR") to Industrial by Planned Development ("B-5/PD").

Vice Chair Barker moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the Apache Junction City Council the approval of Major General Plan Amendment Case P-25-10-GPA, a request by Sundt Construction, represented by Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm to amend the General Plan Land Use Map for Parcels 102-20-008A & 102-20-008C, located near the northwest corner of Cactus Road & Auto Center Drive, from Commercial to Light Industrial/Business Park and Industrial. Commissioner Mykland seconded the motion.

Yes: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche, Vice Chair Barker, Commissioner Gage, Commissioner Starr and Commissioner Mykland

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Chair Hantzsche opened the public portion of the hearing on Case P-25-11-PZ, a Rezoning by Planned Development.

Having no one speak, Chair Hantzsche closed the public portion of the hearing.

The commission read the Findings of Fact for the Major General Plan Amendment. All were in agreement.

Chair Hantzsche called for a motion.

[25-318](#) Presentation, discussion, public hearing and consideration of proposed Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") P-25-28-CUP, a request by Dane Astle of Edifice Architecture, to permit an event center and venue on Parcel 100-25-043E, zoned "B-1" General Commercial, at the southeast corner of Lost Dutchman Boulevard and Apache Trail.

Commissioner Gage moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the Apache Junction City Council the approval of the proposed Conditional Use Permit Case P-25-28-CUP, a request by Dane Astle of Edifice Architecture to permit the use of an Event Center & Venue on Parcel APN 100-25-043E, located near the southeast corner of Lost Dutchman Boulevard and Apache Trail, zoned General Commercial "B-1", subject to the following eight conditions of approval. Chair Hantzsche seconded the motion.

Yes: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche, Vice Chair Barker, Commissioner Gage, Commissioner Starr and Commissioner Mykland

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Senior Planner Leftwich gave a presentation on Case P-25-28-CUP, an event center and venue.

The applicant, Miles Roberts of Edifice Architecture, reviewed the seven Findings of Fact with the commission. Commissioners raised several questions related to safety and design aspects of the proposed event center.

One concern involved noise and the lack of perimeter walls. Deputy Director Urias clarified that

Industrial zoning differs from Commercial zoning, and each has its own noise mitigation standards. Another question asked whether a deceleration lane on State Route 88 was needed to prevent traffic accidents; the City Engineer determined that a deceleration lane was not necessary.

A concern was also raised regarding the safety of having only one entrance and exit, particularly in emergency situations. In response, staff stated that the fire district had reviewed and approved the site plan in accordance with their safety requirements.

Additional questions included whether there is access to the rear parking lot from Cortez Road and whether the parking lots are dust-proof. Staff confirmed that the primary access would be from Apache Trail, and the parking areas will be dust-proof.

There was also an inquiry about the storage portion of the project. The applicant noted that the storage element has been reduced and is expected to be phased out entirely over time. When asked about the capacity of the event center, staff responded that the applicant would be best able to address that question.

Additional questions were raised about potential noise impacts on nearby residents, the architectural design of the event center, as well as the type and placement of proposed fencing. One inquiry focused on the size and occupancy of the facility. It was noted that the event center building will be just under 5,000 square feet, measuring 54 by 90 feet, with a maximum occupancy of 100 people. The outdoor, uncovered portion of the event center will be approximately 3,500 square feet, measuring 50 by 60 feet.

Mehmood Mohiuddin, residing at 2304 N. Cortez Road, owner of the Hitching Post and the proposed event center, addressed the commission regarding noise levels and restrictions at the Hitching Post, access points to the business and storage yard, and presented artist renderings of the event center, which will follow an "Old West" theme. He noted that the event center will be an upgrade from the existing storage yard and mentioned that it will also host religious activities.

Deputy Director Urias clarified that the Hitching Post operates under a separate development agreement, and therefore, its noise restrictions are not applicable to the proposed event center. The event center will be subject to the city's noise ordinance as outlined in the municipal code.

Chair Hantzsche opened the public portion of the hearing.

Hannah Nissen residing at 2273 N. Cortez Road, expressed strong concern about the potential noise from the proposed event center, which would be located directly across the street from her home. She also voiced concerns about alcohol being served at the venue, particularly because she has children and believes the project would alter the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Nissen noted that she can already hear noise from the Hitching Post inside her home on Thursday and Saturday nights and that traffic on her street has increased. The possibility of events taking place seven nights a week is especially troubling to her.

Chair Hantzsche closed the public portion of the hearing.

The commission discussed the noise concern and Deputy Director Urias mentioned that the applicant can address those concerns, but afterwards the public hearing would have to be reopened.

Mehmood Mohiuddin, residing at 2304 N. Cortez Road, addressed Ms. Nissan's concerns as well as the commissioner's concerns, noting that bull riding events have taken place since 2014. He mentioned that a legal case related to those events was initially lost in court but later appealed and the charges were dropped. He posed the question of whether the community would prefer a storage yard filled with broken-down vehicles or a new event center. Mr. Mohiuddin emphasized that the property is commercially zoned, was properly approved, and is in compliance with all applicable laws and codes. He claimed that the complaints from neighbors are unfounded and have not resulted in any action. He also stated that his businesses contribute revenue to the city and clarified that the event center will most likely not hold events seven days a week, but rather the events will take place primarily from October through April due to the high summer temperatures. He stated that the event center and the Hitching Post will operate independently, as two separate entities with separate licenses. He also mentioned that there will be no outdoor speakers at the event center and that signage is posted to indicate alcohol is not permitted in the parking lot. He emphasized that they are mindful of this policy in order to protect their liquor license.

Chair Hantzsche opened the public portion of the hearing.

Hannah Nissen, residing at 2273 N. Cortez Road, expressed confusion regarding the claim that there would be no outdoor speakers, stating that outdoor wedding event venues have speakers. Her primary concern is the potential for ongoing noise both during the day and at night. She reiterated that she would not have purchased her home had she known it would be located directly across from a wedding venue and added that she does not believe the project will increase property values. Ms. Nissen also raised questions about alcohol service, asking whether it would be limited to inside the venue or allowed outside as well. She inquired about the presence of a kitchen at the event venue. Additionally, she expressed skepticism over the claim that events wouldn't be held seven days a week, stating that based on her knowledge of wedding venues, she expects frequent activity. She concluded by saying she believes the event center will significantly alter the character of the neighborhood.

Chair Hantzsche closed the public portion of the hearing.

The commission discussed concerns related to parking. It was noted that parking and dust control requirements are addressed through the city's zoning ordinance and engineering standards, and these issues have already been reviewed and evaluated by city staff and experts.

Findings of Fact were read and discussed, and all were in agreement. The noise concern was addressed and it was noted that the CUP can be revoked if noise becomes an issue.

Chair Hantzsche called for a motion.

6. Old Business

[25-320](#)

Presentation and discussion of parking reduction requests.

Principal Planner Schattnik gave a presentation of parking reduction requests and asked for questions from the commission.

In response to Principal Planner Schattnik's comment that parking reduction requests were infrequent, Commissioner Gage observed that such requests appeared to be more common, which contributed to the broader effort to revise the parking standards.

Deputy Director Urias explained that the most recent text amendment regarding guest parking stemmed from longstanding concerns expressed by the city council, commission, and residents about potential impacts on neighboring communities. He emphasized that the city's parking requirements remain consistent with industry standards.

Director Esquivias clarified that the only modification made was the addition of a 0.3 guest parking requirement specifically for multi-family developments.

Chair Hantzsche requested clarification on the rationale behind granting the developer concessions for parking reduction requests and asked what the city is receiving in return for these concessions.

Deputy Director Urias explained that the responsibility to demonstrate the need for a parking reduction rests with the applicant, and it is up to the governing bodies to assess whether their justification is valid.

[25-319](#) Presentation and discussion of Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) 101, covering when TIAs are required, key components, how findings inform land use decisions, and guidance for Commissioners on reviewing TIA results and limitations.

Chair Hantzsche adjourned the meeting at 8:21 for a short recess.

Chair Hantzsche called the meeting back to order at 8:27 pm.

Emile Schmid, City Engineer, gave a presentation on Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA's) and stated that the traffic engineer who conducted the TIA for the Wolff development included a seasonal adjustment, which was verified. He expressed confidence in the conclusions of the traffic engineer's study. He asked for questions from the commission.

A concern was raised regarding the lack of clarity in traffic studies, specifically about how seasonal adjustments are applied in the analysis. It was noted that reports often just state when the study was conducted and present the data, without indicating whether any adjustments were made, leaving uncertainty about their inclusion. In response, Mr. Schmid stated that the city will ensure future TIAs include clearer explanations and documentation of any such adjustments.

A comment was made about the traffic studies included in the meeting packets, noting that they are often lengthy and difficult to interpret. A simplified summary was suggested; something more accessible for those without a background in traffic engineering. City Engineer Schmid agreed, stating that it would be helpful to include a summary at the beginning of the report, followed by the detailed data.

A question was raised regarding the Heavenly development on Superstition, specifically why it includes a turn lane while other nearby developments do not, and how that decision was made. City Engineer Schmid responded that turn lanes are requested of developers, but if the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) determines they are not necessary, they may not be required. He noted that some developments, such as Hamptons East, chose to install a turn lane even though it wasn't mandated.

A philosophical question was posed: Do roadways drive development, or does development

drive roadways? City Engineer Schmid reflected on his experience dating back to 1986, recalling visits to largely undeveloped areas in the valley and wondering at the time why extensive road networks had been built in seemingly empty areas. With the benefit of hindsight, he noted that building road infrastructure tends to spur development. However, he also pointed out that the ability to construct roads varies, as some cities have the resources to invest in roadways, while others do not.

A question was asked about the criteria for installing a traffic signal. City Engineer Schmid responded that the decision is made by Public Works, primarily based on increases in traffic volume and the number of accidents at a given location, but there are several factors in determining whether a location requires a traffic signal.

7. New Business

None.

8. Information and Reports

None.

9. Director's Report

None.

10. Selection of Meeting Dates, Times, Location and Purpose

[25-311](#)

Regular meeting at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, July 8, 2025 in the city council chambers located at 300 E. Superstition Boulevard.

Vice Chair Barker moved to hold a regular meeting on July 8, 2025 in the city council chambers located at 300 E. Superstition Boulevard. Commissioner Mykland seconded the motion.

Yes: 5 - Chairperson Hantzsche, Vice Chair Barker, Commissioner Gage, Commissioner Starr and Commissioner Mykland

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kalan

Chair Hantzsche called for a motion.

11. Adjournment

Chair Hantzsche adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Chair Dave Hantzsche