



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ABBREVIATED MINUTES –

Wednesday August 13, 2025

Audio Recording Available Upon Request in the PZ Office

Meeting Commenced: 6:30 p.m. - *This meeting was streamed electronically via Zoom.*

WELCOME:

Troy Thurgood - *PZ Commission Vice Chair*

Pledge of Allegiance - *All*

Roll Attendance – *Janice Bennett*

ATTENDEES:

PZ Commission Members:

Troy Thurgood

Arlene Anderson

Eric Miller

Paul Weekes

Kelly Jenkins

Sharon Oakey

Kort Black

Planning Staff:

Gary Armstrong, *Administrator*

Janice Bennett, *P&Z Manager*

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

Arlene Anderson made a motion to approve July 23, 2025, P&Z Meeting minutes and **Paul Weekes** seconded with all present in favor and Eric Miller and Kort Black abstaining.

PZ Chair Troy Thurgood explained how the proceedings will work.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Staff confirmed that proper notice had been given. No conflicts of interest were stated by the commission.

I. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – RV & TRAILER REPAIR SHOP, Chase & Casey Russell

Staff confirmed that proper notice had been given. No conflicts of interest were stated by the commission.

Staff Report - Gary Armstrong

Application Type: Condition Use Permit

Applicant: Casey & Chase Russell

Project Description: The applicant is applying for a Conditional Use Permit to operate an automobile (RV) service station. This is allowed by Conditional Use Permit in the Transitional Agriculture Zone.

Staff Recommendation: Conditional Use Permits are JUDICIAL Permits and are DISCRETIONARY decisions.

Madison County Code allows an automobile service station to operate on lands with Transitional Agriculture Zoning, with a Conditional Use Permit. The applicants had worked at Iron Horse RV Service Center prior to its closing. Family offered to allow them to use this property as a temporary location for an RV service repair business until they can secure property in a commercial zone. The property has a Quonset that has been used for repair of farm equipment in the past, and it seemed to be a good facility for repairing RVs. The site also has ample parking for RVs in queue to be repaired.

Prior to setting up the business, the applicants consulted with the City of Rexburg Planning Office to see if any permits would be required. The person they talked to said since it was in the County, there would be no permits required. So, they went ahead and set up their business. County Planning Staff were made aware of the business and met the applicants on site to discuss the need for a Conditional Use Permit. The applicants were happy to apply and demonstrated a desire to follow the County's Code. County Staff authorized them to operate temporarily until the application could go through the process.

It should be noted that the location is about 1/3 mile north of Hibbard Elementary. Also along that road are other commercial uses that operate with CUPs or are "grandfathered" in. These include Taylor Excavation, Paradise Customs Auto Body Repair and Paint, Gunderson's Floors to Go, and Emalee's Venue. (See map to show locations).

The Planning Administrator recommends approval of the CUP with the following conditions:

- RVs to be repaired shall be parked towards the back of the property to the extent possible.
- Hours of Operation be limited to 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM
- Any RVs parked are only for repair, and not to serve as a dump for dilapidated RVs.
- Any outdoor lighting be turned off by 10:00 PM, or on motion sensors
- CUP is valid for 18 months, allowing the applicants to find a location in a commercial zone where they can move the business. If they have not secured another location in that time and wish to continue operation, they will need to re-apply for a CUP.

Administrator Gary gave an extensive overview and answered group questions.

Applicant Presentation – Casey Russell is one of the two applicants (along with Chase Russell) requesting a conditional use permit to operate an RV repair business in Madison County. Here's a summary of Casey Russell from the meeting:

Background:

- Previously worked at Iron Horse RV, which closed down
- Saw a need for RV repair services in the area after Iron Horse's closure
- Started the business to serve customers who were disappointed they couldn't get service locally and had to travel to Idaho Falls

Business Operations:

- Co-owns "Pit Stop RV and Trailer Service and Repair" with Chase Russell
- Focus is on RV service and repair, not engine work or oil changes
- Handles repairs like axles, roof repairs, awnings, AC units, and electrical work
- Averages about 2 vehicles per day (248 customers over 182 days)
- Parts typically arrive next day, with 90% in stock or available quickly

Community Impact:

- Emphasizes the business teaches kids work skills and reduces behavioral risks
- Wants to provide local service so customers don't have to travel to Idaho Falls
- Views the business as temporary while saving money for a permanent commercial location
- Takes pride in keeping the property clean and being responsive to neighbor concerns

Waste Management:

- Contracts with Pacific Recycling for metal disposal (twice monthly)
- Uses Alsco for cleaning materials and rags
- Requires customers to dump and clean black/gray tanks before bringing RVs to the site
- Takes other waste to the weigh station

Casey presented himself as community-focused and committed to addressing neighbor concerns while building a needed local business.

Chase Russell:

Background & Experience:

- Previously worked at Iron Horse RV before it closed
- He has 10 years of security background, working for Vivint Alarms
- Lives on the property where the business operates (his father-in-law Bart Rigby's land)

Business Details:

- Co-owns "Pit Stop RV and Trailer Service and Repair"
- Pulled customer data showing 248 customers over 182 days (1.36 cars per day average)
- Focuses on repair services, not engine work or dealership activities

Property & Security:

- Lives in a historic house (built by his wife's great-great grandfather) that he extensively remodeled
- Cannot sell the house due to family agreement - considers it a "family heirloom"
- Has comprehensive security system with audio/video surveillance and laser sensors
- Covers 99% of the property with security measures

Community Relations:

- Emphasizes being a good neighbor - has helped neighbors with various tasks like plowing driveways and providing security assistance
- Moved RVs away from the road when neighbors expressed concerns
- Built a privacy fence to prevent tractor headlights from disturbing neighbors
- Actively reached out to neighbors to address concerns and improve operations

Future Plans:

- Views current location as temporary while saving money for permanent commercial property
- Committed to maintaining clean, organized operations
- Expects business growth but plans to relocate to appropriate commercial zone

Chase presented himself as security-conscious, community-minded, and committed to being a responsible neighbor while operating a needed local business.

Public Comment – Lane Kilpatrick-Lives immediately south of the Russell property. Wrote a letter of opposition that was read by the commission. Expressed concerns about RVs being stored close to the shared ditch (190 feet from his front door) Asked about enforcement of conditions and who would monitor compliance. Questioned the 18-month time limit and potential for reapplication. Acknowledged Chase and Megan as "great neighbors" and stated he doesn't want the situation to be adversarial. Worried about setting precedent for future commercial development in the residential area. Concerned about property values and the visual impact of large RVs.

Mark Kilpatrick-Lives at 63 North 3000 West. He also wrote a letter of opposition. Emphasized that Chase and Casey are "fantastic neighbors" and expressed appreciation for their relationship. Has worked shoulder-to-shoulder with Chase burning ditches and maintaining the shared waterway. Concerned about RV placement not matching the original site plan - RVs are backed up against the ditch rather than 30 feet away as shown on maps. Is worried about ditch maintenance and water flow management. Cited research shows 5-20% property value reduction for properties adjacent to commercial businesses. Expects the business to grow beyond the current 1.6 cars per day. Acknowledged the community need for RV services but prefers a different location. Grateful the applicants plan to move to commercial property within 18 months. Asked for continued cooperation and communication as the business operates. Both Kilpatrick's maintained they support Chase and Casey personally while opposing the business location due to concerns about property values, visual impact, and infrastructure management.

Troy Mortensen, Cesar Torres, Lane Hemming, Cameron Saurey, Kurk Papenfuss, Dan Hanna, Bart Rigby, Pam Russell, Beth Heinz, Phill Docken, Corey Stathem, Gary Forsgren, Joe Wilcox were present, and all were in support of the business. They all gave examples of the applicants' character and customer service as well as the need for a business like this in this area verses the drive to Idaho Falls.

IN FAVOR: Troy Mortensen, Dan Hanna, Cesar Torres, Bart Rigby, Lane Hemming, Paul Russell, Camron Saurey, Beth Heinz, Kurt Papenfuss, Phil Docken, Corey Stathem and Gary Forsgren

NEUTRAL: NONE

OPPOSED: Layne and Mark Kilpatrick

WRITTEN: (OP) Layne & Angie Kilpatrick, Mark & De Ann Kilpatrick, (FAV) Austin Poole, Eric & Karen Thomas, Clint Huffman, Josh Gundersen, Clint Ball, Brian Rasmussen, Larry Rigby & Teresa Ward, Russell Luthey, Cole & Misty Odgen, Robert & Anissa Odgen, Lindsay Gundersen, Susan & Roy Gundersen, Rebecca & Kelly Nead, Lane Hemming, Joe & Erin Woodcock, Cynthia & Lynn Rigby, Lance & Emalee Wickham, Dennis Huffman, Rick Hill

PZC Discussion – Kort Black proposed changing the CUP validity from 18 months to 24 months, giving the applicants more time to establish their business and find a permanent location.

- **Sharon** asked about signage regulations - Gary Armstrong explained home-based businesses can have small on-site signs with specific dimensional limits and they are currently in compliance.
- **Paul Weekes** supported the 24-month extension, noting the business isn't busy in winter and comparing campers to farm equipment like combines.
- **Eric Miller** raised concerns about "to the extent possible" language for parking, suggesting it lacks enforcement teeth and proposing a defined spatial envelope instead

Condition Refinements:

- Hours of operation clarified as "client hours" from 7 AM to 8 PM
- Outdoor lighting conditions apply only to new/additional lighting, not existing farmyard lights
- Motion sensors should be adjustable to prevent constant activation from wildlife
- **Troy Thurgood** proposed adding a "no dealership" condition for clarity, though Gary noted this would require a different CUP anyway

Environmental Concerns:

- **Eric Miller** cautioned about proper disposal of solvents and greases due to proximity of wells and septic systems
- Chase Russell confirmed they use professional waste disposal services and don't have sinks on-site
- Noise levels discussed - determined to be minimal compared to typical farm operations

The discussion showed commissioners balancing neighbor concerns with support for the local business while ensuring proper regulatory oversight.

PZ Chair Troy closed the discussion and thanked the group, asking for a motion with the new conditions.

Motion -

Sharon Oakey—“*I move to recommend APPROVAL of the application from Chase and Casey Russell for a Conditional Use Permit to operate an automobile (RV) service station as proposed in application materials received July 8, 2025, with the following conditions:*

- RVs to be repaired shall be parked towards the back of the property to the extent possible.
- Client Hours of Operation be limited to 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM
- Any RVs parked are only for repair, and not to serve as a dump for dilapidated RVs.
- Any new outdoor lighting associated with RV repair business be turned off by 10:00 PM, or on motion sensors
- CUP is valid for 24 months (approximately through September 2027), allowing the applicants to find a location in a commercial zone where they can move the business. If they have not secured another location in that time and wish to continue operation, they will need to re-apply for a CUP.
- CUP does not authorize applicants to establish a dealership for this location.”

Paul Weekes - Seconded

Roll call vote was conducted. All present voted in favor. Motion Passed.

PZ Chair Troy explained how the process moving forward would work, thanked everyone for coming and participating and excused the public.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

I. Zone Change –TAG to RR 1.5-Kathy Moss

Motion to Approve and Accept: Paul Weekes

Abstain: Eric Miller, Kort Black

Unanimous in favor of the motion with all present. Motion Passed.

ADMINISTRATOR BUSINESS: Administrator Gary Armstrong gave an overview about the upcoming August 27th meeting items. A proposal for a commercial subdivision on the property that was just rezoned on Yellowstone Highway with a preliminary plat now ready for review. Also, a rezone for the property in Sunnydale that a comp plan amendment was done on a few months back. They want to go from AG to Transitional Agriculture. Kort also mentioned getting ahead of the Comp Plan with the Commercial zoned areas. They agreed that this would be something to discuss in the future.

ADJOURN:

Motion to Adjourn: Kort Black

Second: Paul Weekes

Unanimous in favor of the motion. Meeting Adjourned at 8:16 p.m.