

**STILLWATER PLANNING COMMISSION SUMMARY
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 6TH, 2025
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OKLAHOMA OPEN MEETING
LAW, THE AGENDA WAS POSTED May 2nd, 2025 IN THE
MUNICIPAL BUILDING AT 723 SOUTH LEWIS STREET**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jana Phillips, Chair
Riley Williams, Vice Chair
Mark Prather, Member
Mike Shanahan, Member
David Peters, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Kim Payne, City Attorney
David Barth, Development Services Director
Henry Bibelheimer, Senior City Planner
Joshua Brown, Development Coordinator
Alexandria Maged, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER.

Chair Phillips called the meeting of the Stillwater Planning Commission to order at 5:30 p.m. and introduction and welcome for the new City Senior Planner, Mr. Henry Bibleheimer. Mr. Bibelheimer introduces himself as the City's new Senior Planner; has a degree in sustainable development; has built a shipping container home; and has been the Planner for Broken Arrow.

2. GENERAL ORDERS

- a. Consider a Form Based Code Alternative Compliance request for a material design alternative use of cement board for siding, in the Form Based Code Transect 5 (T5) zoning at property addressed as 231 N. Husband Street.

Chair Phillips introduces the item and invites staff up to present.

Mr. Joshua Brown, Development Coordinator, presents the staff's report; and explains the property and location; that the applicant is requesting to use fiber cement board siding as a facade material for the buildings; and shows example images of the surrounding properties facades.

Vice Chair Williams asks for clarification that this material was allowed on the 2015 code but was taken off on the 2019 code update but was not put as a prohibited material and asks if staff knows why it was taken off.

Mrs. Kim Payne, Sr. Assistant City Attorney, states that he was correct regauging the timeline but they were unable to locate minutes that showed the reason it was removed.

Chair Phillips asks for the applicant or their representative to come forward.

Mr. Stephen Gose of Gose & Associates, 113 E 8th Ave., comes to speak on the following:

- Referenced points from the Alternative Compliance Letter included in the Agenda Packet.
- Explained challenges faced are limited access to materials, labor shortages and tight time frames

- Shared findings from personal research regarding removal of specific building materials (fiber cement siding) from the approved list. Changes were approved in title only during one meeting; full text was brought back and accepted at a subsequent meeting; his notes from a Builder Relations Committee Meeting (before the Planning Commission) still listed fiber cement siding as allowed. Could not determine the reason for its removal.
- Pointed out that none of the current planning staff or commissioners were involved at that time, making clarification difficult.
- Justified the request for the material by described fiber cement siding as a durable material.
- Material complied with previous code.
- Stated its use would allow construction to continue without delay.

Commissioner Prather asked Mr. Gose, if he had to speculate why a city might choose to remove a material from the approved list. Mr. Gose responded that it could be due to a variety of reasons, such as an effort to control the appearance of building facades or desire to build to a specific standard as well as the aesthetic preferences based on the city's goals at that time.

Mr. Gose mentioned that the builder was present if the Commissioners had any questions for them.

Commissioner Prather then asked Mr. Gose to explain how using the requested material would be beneficial.

Mr. Gose explained that, due to the number of major projects currently underway in Stillwater, the largest bricklayer in town, who is capable of handling a project of this scale, is currently backed up; and added that ongoing weather issues have further delayed construction timelines, making alternative materials like fiber cement siding more practical for keeping the project on track.

Commissioner Prather summarized that the requested material would be easier and faster to install. Mr. Gose confirmed this, adding that they have contacted local bricklayers as well as those in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and northwest Arkansas, and no one is currently available to complete the amount of brickwork required within the next several months.

Commissioner Prather also noted that many residents still have not begun rebuilding homes damaged in the Stillwater fires.

Mr. Gose acknowledged that permits may have been submitted, but agreed that rebuilding has not yet begun and further emphasized that the volume of brick required to cover all four sides of the proposed buildings is significant.

Vice Chair Williams asked why they are requesting a material not currently allowed by code when other siding option, besides brick are permitted.

Mr. Gose explained that materials like stone or cast stone would still require the same skilled masons, who are currently unavailable; added that the client does not want to use EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) or stucco; and does not believe those materials would complement the neighborhood or match the residential aesthetic that siding provides. Mr. Gose continues by referencing staff photos showing surrounding homes, pointing out that siding is a common material in the area; and added that architectural metal would present a much more modern and contrasting look, which they feel would be out of place.

Chair Phillips noted that the current code allows for "other high-quality, long-lasting masonry materials" while acknowledging that calling fiber cement board "masonry" may be a stretch, she emphasized that it is very long-lasting and extremely durable.

Chair Phillips added that if the goal is durability, fiber cement siding aligns more closely with the intent of the code than materials like EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) or stucco.

Chair Phillips listed materials that are explicitly prohibited by the code, such as plain concrete block and corrugated fiberglass, and noted that these materials appear to be much further removed in quality and appearance from fiber cement board and emphasized that fiber cement siding is more in aligned with the intent of the code due to its durability and visual appeal.

Chair Phillips commented that the images of the proposed building design appear to be more in character with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Mr. Gose agreed, noting that the design helps to break up the building's façade and visually reduce the scale of the structures. Chair Phillips added that, since the buildings are slightly taller than surrounding structures, the chosen materials contribute to a more pedestrian-friendly feel and help maintain the spirit of the neighborhood.

David Barth, Development Services Director, provided clarification on the 2019 code update; explained that the update was not specifically focused on building materials, but rather on revising the form-based code to address public realm improvements, such as streetscapes and sidewalks; the removal of certain materials was likely a minor part of a broader update; and acknowledged that the reason for removing fiber cement siding is unclear.

Commissioner Prather asked whether there would be any benefit to adding fiber cement siding back into the code. Mr. Barth responded that this is a great question and suggested it's worth considering whether the code should be updated to avoid specifying materials altogether; explained that under the current code, if a building owner needs to repair or replace siding, they are required to bring the exterior up to code; however, many buildings do not have a foundation capable of supporting brick, limiting their options; and emphasized that, if the City plans to reassess the Form-Based Code more broadly, they will take a comprehensive look at what materials should and should not be included.

Joshua Brown, Developmental Coordinator, comes back up to present findings and alternatives, which are:

Findings:

1. Section 23-449 allows the planning commission to allow alternative materials in the Form Based Code area.
2. The original Form Based Codes adopted in 2015 allowed cement fiber board as façade material. The Form Based Code update in 2019 no longer included cement fiber board in the list of approved façade materials.
3. Cement fiber board is not listed in the code as a prohibited material.
4. Buildings adjacent to this project include various facade materials including brick, wood siding, and EIFS.

Alternatives:

1. Accept findings and approve the use of fiber cement board siding as presented for alternative compliance to the Form Based Code.
2. Deny the request to use fiber cement siding.
3. Table the request to a future meeting.

Commissioner Prather asks if this process has slowed the builder down.

Mr. Dakota Riggins, Riggins Development, comes to the podium and responds that yes, they have been ready to put up siding and are waiting for the decision from this meeting tonight.

Commissioner Prather says given that he would advise that the City do something to modify the code so this does not happen in the future.

Commissioner Prather motions to approve as presented, Commissioner Shanahan seconds.

Roll Call:	Phillips	Williams	Prather	Shanahan	Peters
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Time: 15 minutes

3. MEETING SUMMARY FOR REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- a. Regular meeting Summary of April 15, 2025

Legal notes that 'advises' should be changed to 'requested' on the first item.

Commissioner Prather notes that he should not be listed in the attendance as he was absent.

Vice Chair Williams motions to approve the minutes with the modification, Commissioner Peters seconds.

Roll Call:	Phillips	Williams	Prather	Shanahan	Peters
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Time: 15 minutes

2. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FROM STAFF, PLANNING COMMISSIONERS OR CITY ATTORNEY FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

- a. Next Regular Meeting is May 20th 2025
- b. Chair Phillips invites Henry Bibelheimer to come up and introduce himself to the Commission.

3. ADJOURN

ADJOURNMENT. This regular meeting of the Stillwater Planning Commission was called for adjournment by Vice Chair Williams, seconded by Commissioner Prather at approximately 5:52 PM on May 6th, 2025

the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held Tuesday, May 20th 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Commission Hearing Room, Municipal Building, 723 South Lewis Street.

Prepared by – Alexandria Holle Maged, Administrative Assistant
Reviewed by – Cindy Gibson, Administrative Services Manager

Approved by -  _____
Stillwater Planning Commission