

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 11, 2014 @ 6:30 PM
LIBRARY MEETING ROOM
MINUTES

1. Call to order

Acting Chairman **John Greenwood** called the Planning Commission Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 PM on March 11, 2014 in the Library Meeting Room.

2. Roll Call

Present for roll call were Acting Chairman **John Greenwood** and Commissioners **David Reggiani, Tom McGann, Scott Pegau, John Baenen,** and **Allen Roemhildt**. Commissioner **Tom Bailer** was absent.

Also present was City Planner, **Samantha Greenwood**, and Assistant Planner, **Leif Stavig**.

3. Approval of Agenda

M/Reggiani S/McGann to approve the Regular Agenda.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: Reggiani, McGann, Pegau, Baenen, Greenwood, and Roemhildt.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bailer

4. Approval of Consent Calendar

Nothing for the Consent Calendar per **S. Greenwood**.

5. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Correspondence

a. Letter from Greg LoForte

b. Letter from James Mykland

7. Communications By and Petitions from Visitors

a. Guest Speakers

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Tony Schinella – Report on North Fill Ramp Area

Harbormaster Schinella was present to provide an update on lots located in the North Fill Development Park (NFDP) area legally described as Lots 3A, 4 and 5 Block 8, Lots 1 and 2 Block 6, and Lot 3 Block 5; the Harbor Department's accomplishments; and future plans for the area.

- This plan was devised last year for using this area for boat and trailer storage at the north ramp
- In the last year and a half, 6 vessels removed from Lots 3A, 4, and 5 Block 8 NFDP. The area has been cleaned up and reorganized.
- Maintenance area has 4 outlets for 110 volt. One water service installed last year. Plans include installing 2 more water service lines and filling and leveling the area to make it easier to work on boats.
- 14 vessels currently stored on Lot 3A and Lot 4 Block 8 mostly year round.
- 9 vessels stored on Lot 3 Block 5 for the last 6 months. During fishing season, had 15 vessels or trailers on this lot. This lot was previously used as a snow dump. This past year was the first year that it was opened up for storage.
- Lot 5 Block 8: barges used by Alyeska and SERVS. Twice a year, Alyeska does inspections and maintenance on these barges, and they use Lots 3A, 4, and 5.
- First year of the floating dock at the ramp. The maintenance area now gets more use in that area.
- Since opening up Lot 3 Block 5 for winter storage September 2013, has generated approximately \$4,000 for that time. In 2013 billed out about \$40,000 for storage on all of the lots combined. In 2012 billed out \$38,000 for storage. Lot 3, previously used as a snow dump, now generates some revenue and provides an area for fishermen to store their vessels.
- Photos available showing how little land available in Cordova for fishermen to store their vessels. Need to provide a service in that area to help the fishing industry to thrive in Cordova since fishing is our main industry.
- South Fill Development Park area has become occupied with businesses, and the fishermen and boaters have been pushed out of there. NFDP is the only place for them to go now since the canneries have filled up during the winter and cannot provide storage in the winter.

- Has received 11 additional letters of support for allowing the Harbor to continue managing the North Fill area described above.

J. Baenen asked where the money goes that is generated for storage fees on these lots. *T. Schinella* explained that it goes into the Harbor Enterprise fund. The sales tax portion goes to the City. *T. Schinella* will provide information for storage fees on Alyeska barges alone. He explained that the amount is not significant because they are charged based on length, and they are stacked on top of each other. There are 5 stacks at 40 feet length at \$2.50/ft.

b. Audience comments regarding items on the agenda

Robert Beedle, 609 Spruce Street: A lot of time, money, and effort to clean up the North Fill area. Would like to see a "Harbor" designation for that area and would like to see more development there. Cleaning up the area was a positive move and has generated revenue. Sport boats are also stored in this area along with commercial gillnetters. In the summertime, PWSAC uses this area for staging. AML also needs additional staging area on occasion. Businesses in the North Fill area need room for snow storage as well. If the City fills up the area with buildings, it will put more pressure on the boat ramp in the Harbor, causing a safety issue for kids in the area.

Paul Swartzbart, Eccles Lagoon: Thanked the Planning Commission for their hard work. Expressed concern for the lack of space available for boat and trailer storage and a place to work on boats or hose them off. The fishermen have a small area on the North Fill for storage and 4 spaces behind the Harbormaster's office with water and electricity. Towns all over the country are realizing that waterfront property is precious, and they need to determine a use that benefits the community.

Alexis Cooper, CDFU, 509 First Street: Has received positive feedback for the space provided to commercial fishermen in the last year. Continues to support retaining space in the North Fill area for use of commercial fleet waterfront access. Requests that the Planning Commission consider alternatives that would retain those lots for use by the Harbor Department in a longer term to let this space use grow, let the fleet's awareness of the use of this space grow, and provide useful space to facilitate the commercial fishing fleet.

Jim Kacsh, 824 Woodland Drive: Spoke to North Fill Harbor Use and Comprehensive Plan. Suggested keeping the same 4 designations but lease the land to the Harbor, then it would move from "Not Available" to "Leased". Thanked everyone for their hard work.

8. Planner's Report

S. Greenwood reported on the following: 1) introduced Leif Stavig as the new Assistant Planner; 2) Provided an update on Sawmill Avenue, street light on the corner. State DOT is working with the electric company to get the light installed at that intersection, but it probably won't happen until this summer, during their new fiscal year which begins July 1st. She has not heard back from the Police Chief regarding the other stop light ideas. 3) During Pending Calendar, need to schedule special meeting with Ocean Beauty to discuss a site plan review for some modular housing.

D. Reggiani asked regarding the status of the City lot leased to Fish and Game, located on Center Drive. **S. Greenwood** responded that the lease term is 10 years. Fish and Game wants a 20-year lease because they want to make some improvements on the lot. Reggiani was asking because of the maximum lease term imposed by the City and how close they were getting to that limit. **S. Greenwood** explained that the City cannot issue a lease for more than 30 years. The State had a lease for 5 years, and during that lease, they asked for a 10-year lease because they were making improvements. They are currently in the middle of that lease and are requesting an additional 10 years because they want to continue to make improvements. It was stated by other Commissioners that they remembered the State utilizing this site for at least the last 30 years. **S. Greenwood** indicated that the State is not interested in purchasing this property.

T. McGann asked about the snow management study. **S. Greenwood** reported that Copper River Watershed received a state grant to fund Dowl Engineering to conduct an on-site evaluation of DOT's and the City's current snow management practices including where, how, and when snow is stored. They'll also provide Copper River Watershed with some testing criteria. The end goal is to come up with better management practices, if needed, on dealing with snow piles.

9. New/Miscellaneous Business

None.

10. Old Business

a. Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Update

M/McGann S/Reggiani to approve Resolution 14-04.

T. McGann spoke against the motion. He likes the proposal from Andrew and Beck, but the community should decide what the final product should be. Doesn't feel the timeline is realistic to expect Planning staff to spend 40 hours a week, from April to September, working on the Comp Plan only. Don't think they would get genuine representative community input during the summer months.

S. Pegau spoke against the motion. He doesn't feel that the proposal is enough to accomplish what the Commission wants included in a comprehensive plan. He agrees that the Comp Plan is extremely important and needs to be done but is concerned that the cost will result in a lot of the work falling on Planning staff, and the resources are not in place. He suggested delaying the Plan for a year and then making sure the funds are available next year.

J. Baenen spoke against the motion. He would like to get organized in the meantime so that the Commission can get started again on January 1st.

D. Reggiani spoke against the motion due to the timing of the fishing season and budget concerns.

S. Greenwood agreed due to timing, budget, and staffing. She recommended that when this topic comes up again, that the Commission and staff be realistic about the cost to get it done right.

M/Reggiani S/McGann to refer Resolution 14-04 back to staff.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: Reggiani, McGann, Pegau, Baenen, Greenwood, and Roemhildt.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bailer

b. 2014 Land Disposal Maps

M/Pegau S/Reggiani to approve resolution 14-03 a resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the city of Cordova, Alaska, recommending 2014 land disposal maps to the City of Cordova's City Council.

Pegau said that all of the changes that had been requested at the last meeting had been implemented and he is satisfied. **Reggiani** referenced the North Fill area and said that the Harbormaster did a good job outlining the use and development of the area, however he thinks that the Commission should consider making the impound lot; Lot 3, Block 5; and Lot 3, Block 8 available. Land is scarce and there is need for businesses and economic development. In the past we have talked about filling the area between the North Fill and Copper River Seafoods and we need to pursue that. The Shipyard fill has also been on the docket for a while. He would like to put the three lots on the table to be considered as available. **Pegau** is definitely in opposition to making the lots available. He thinks that the City's available spaces have already been squeezed down to the minimum; there are certain functions that the City needs to be able to provide. Trailer parking is one of those critical things. The impound lot is a good function for that area. On Main Street there is a lot available for sale along with other properties in the Business District. At this point, there is business space available and we should try to maintain the City function. If there is new fill it would be worth revisiting. The best thing to do is leave it (the lots) as not available and to let it do the function that it has for the last year. That area is starting to pick up usage and in time will be used more. **Baenen** said that there are big lots that the City can use, and that there are smaller lots, including the impound lot, that should be made available. The more businesses we have, the more the town will grow. There is plenty of room if we make those lots available. There is not that much revenue in boat trailer storage for the Harbor; it does not need to be a boat storage company. **Roemhildt** does not think it is too crucial to park trailers on Lot 3, Block 5 and would like to see some development for business. **Reggiani** said that maybe one lot should be considered at a time. **Greenwood** started with the impound lot (Lot 4A, Block 5). **McGann** said that it should be considered that it is a nonconforming lot. **S. Greenwood** said that as long as the setbacks are met, you can use the lot. It's not impossible to move the impound lot, but it will take some money and effort. **Reggiani** said the impound lot is not the best use. Just because it is made available doesn't mean it will be sold tomorrow. **Randy Robertson** said he would like the impound lot to be out of that area. **Greenwood** was also in favor of making the impound lot available. General consent was made to make the impound lot available. **S. Greenwood** said that the Commission could direct the changes and approve the resolution with changes. **Greenwood** directed discussion to Lot 3, Block 5. **Schinella** said that currently there are nine trailers/boat on that lot, and last summer there were 15. **Reggiani** said that 15 might sound like a lot, but it isn't in the grand scheme of things. Is this the City function? Is this the best use of public lands? If the lot were made available, a business would move in. **Greenwood** said that he is torn, not in favor until there is more land available. **McGann** said that one lot that has not been discussed is the one by AC (Lot 10A, Block 2). That is trailer parking and no one has mentioned using that. That seems to be an underutilized lot and that can certainly take the 15 trailers. **S. Greenwood** said the strategy of North Fill was to relieve congestion in the South Fill. **Reggiani** said that if that is the case than that lot should be considered available. **Greenwood** brought discussion back to Lot 3, Block 5. **Baenen** said that Lot 2, Block 8 (meaning Block 6) could have had all of the trailers on Lot 3, Block 5. **Pegau** pointed out that "Not Available" does not really mean not available. Let's leave it the way it is, our version of not available is that if you put in a good bid than it becomes available. **Schinella** said that Lot 2, Block 6 is needed for the boat ramp. 98% of harbors in Alaska have storage spaces for trailers. **Reggiani** said he hates that "Not Available" sometimes means something else. Most people would see this as black and white and not know that it could be available. (Procedural discussion)

Pegau withdrew his motion with no objection.

M/Pegau S/Reggiani to remove Special Circumstances to the Land Disposal language so that "Not Available" is strictly, once the maps are approved by Planning and Zoning and City Council, the identified properties are not available for sale.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: **Reggiani, Greenwood, McGann, Pegau, Baenen, Roemhildt**

Nay: None

Absent: **Bailer**

M/McGann S/Baenen to approve Resolution 14-03.

Greenwood resumed discussion on Lot 3, Block 5. *Baenen* said he would like to make it available. *Pegau* said he still favored leaving it as not available.

M/Reggiani S/Baenen to amend the main motion to convert Lot 3, Block 5 from “Not Available” to “Available.”

Upon voice vote, motion to amend **failed** 3-3.

Greenwood asked if there should have been an amendment for the impound lot. *Reggiani* said that there had been no objection to making that lot available.

Yea: *Reggiani, Baenen, Roemhildt*

Nay: *Greenwood, McGann, Pegau*

Absent: *Bailer*

M/Reggiani S/Baenen to amend the main motion to convert Lot 3A, Block 8 from “Not Available” to “Available.”

Pegau said he recognized this lot as a nonconforming lot. There are few businesses that could actually use the lot because of the squeeze. Also, the location of the water and electric is close to the corner of the lot. *Schinella* confirmed. *Reggiani* said that there was an interested party last year and that it went to City Council, where there was significant debate. Council agreed to give the Harbor a year to see how the layout would go and how the use of that lot would work. He does not see a lot of use in that specific area. *McGann* said he was underwhelmed by the utilization of the land, but that he is willing to give the Harbor another year. *Roemhildt* confirmed with *Schinella* that the electric is on Lot 4, not Lot 3A, but the water is on Lot 3A. *Schinella* said that plan was to put two more water services on Lot 3A this year. *Baenen* verified with *S. Greenwood* that the setbacks are zero for the sides of the lot. *Baenen* said that lot is used mostly as a road to get to the other lots.

Upon voice vote, motion to amend **failed** 3-3.

Yea: *Reggiani, Baenen, Roemhildt*

Nay: *Greenwood, McGann, Pegau*

Absent: *Bailer*

Greenwood brought the discussion back to the lot by AC (Lot 10A, Block 2). *McGann* said that he believes the lot is designated for trailer storage, but that there are rarely trailers there. *Reggiani* asked if there was a policy that said which department or enterprise fund controls City owned land. *Schinella* said he was told by the previous City Manager what lands he was going to manage. *Robertson* said that he doesn't think documentation exists that says who manages City owned land. *Reggiani* said that having nobody managing or utilizing the property is striking. *Pegau* said that besides trailer storage, long-term parking is another need for that area. *Greenwood* said that the reason that lot was listed as “Not Available” was because of the Sawmill Extension project. He asked what the current status was. *S. Greenwood* said there was no money for it. *McGann* verified that the land under the fuel dock was owned. *Reggiani* said that he was not in favor of the main motion and that he was not satisfied that the amendments failed 3-3, we are missing our seventh commissioner. He thinks it is important that it either passes or fails with a majority rather than a split commission.

M/Reggiani S/McGann to postpone the resolution to the next meeting.

Pegau said that it may be him that is missing next month. He said that they may be changing the final vote by who the six are at the table, he would rather they just move forward. There is a process in place that does allow for them to vote as a majority of the whole. He would rather this move forward than postpone another month because all that will change is membership. *Reggiani* said that was not his intent. He assumed that everyone would be there. His worry is that he does not support the main motion; it would be discouraging to have it fail 3-3 and not have a map recommendation for City Council. *Greenwood* said that he is torn and that he would like to keep the ball rolling. There are some lots that will be posted as available. *Pegau* asked if the motion failed, would it not be available to be brought back to the next agenda? Essentially it would just be a statement of the six members that are

here. **Reggiani** said that it could be brought back, but that his understanding is that it would need to be in a substantially different form. You can't keep bringing back a failed motion until you get the right membership to pass it.

Upon voice vote, motion to postpone passed 5-1.

Yea: **Reggiani, Baenen, Roemhildt, Greenwood, McGann**

Nay: **Pegau**

Absent: **Bailer**

11. PENDING CALENDAR

S. Greenwood said that Ocean Beauty was looking to do a Site Plan Review. Special Meeting was scheduled for March 20, 2014.

12. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Schinella thanked the commission for their time, but said that he was disappointed we didn't get through this and have to go through it again. **Robertson** said that hopefully by the next time the commission meets, **Richard Rogers**, the new Public Works Director will be there.

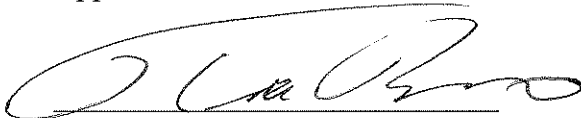
13. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Pegau said that it looks like the Harbor will remain an exciting place for a while. He looks forward to finalizing a set of plans one way or another. **Baenen** said that he understands **Tony's (Schinella)** disappointment; hopefully we'll come back again and we'll have seven people and it will end up one way or the other. **Reggiani** wanted to thank staff, in the Planning Department, welcome **Leif (Stavig)**, and **Tony (Schinella)** thank you for putting together a really good PowerPoint. **Roemhildt** thanked **Tony (Schinella)** and said he grew up fishing so he appreciates what he is doing; at the same time he thinks there is prosperity to be had outside of fishing. **McGann** said that he liked that the commission got rid of the Special Circumstances (in the Land Disposal Maps memo). He likes the notion that they will be back in a year and they can look at how the harbor has done. He is willing to give them another year. **Greenwood** welcomed **Leif (Stavig)** aboard. He wants to give the Harbor another shot with the land.

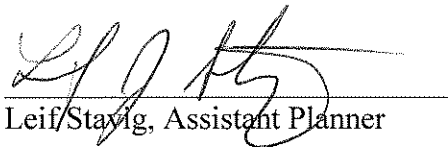
14. ADJOURNMENT

M/McGann S/Reggiani to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:15 PM; with no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved:



Tom Bailer, Chairman



Leif/Stavig, Assistant Planner