

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
February 14, 2023 AT 7:00 PM
CORDOVA CENTER COMMUNITY ROOMS A & B
MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair *Tania Harrison* called the Planning Commission Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM on February 14, 2023 in Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B.

2. ROLL CALL

Present for roll call were Commissioners *Tania Harrison, Mark Hall, Tom McGann, Sarah Trumblee, Trae Lohse, and Kris Ranney*

Chris Bolin was absent.

Staff present was City Planner *Kevin Johnson*.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

M/McGann S/Trumblee to approve the agenda.
With no objections, the agenda was approved

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Record unexcused absence for Trae Lohse from the January 10, 2023 Regular meeting

M/Trumblee S/Hall to approve the Consent Calendar
With no objections, the agenda was approved

5. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

McGann disclosed that he is Jeff and Drone's neighbor who are requesting the variance tonight. He explained that besides being neighbors he has no financial interest in the decision.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Bolin provided written comments regarding the land disposal maps since he was not able to be at the meeting in person. These comments were printed for the commission and the public.

7. COMMUNICATIONS BY AND PETITIONS FROM VISITORS

- a. Guest Speakers - None**
- b. Audience comments regarding agenda items - None**

8. PLANNER'S REPORT

Johnson informed the commission that the City Manager has approved staff to move forward with applying for the 2023 PIDP grant. Work with the Harbor Commission has begun, and a concept will be coming by planning commission later in March.

Additionally, *Johnson* let the commission know that Facility Contractors has exercised their option to purchase the old museum which they have a Lease with Option to Purchase agreement. Staff has begun the process to close on that sale and is expecting to be finalized by the end of April.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Conditional Use Permit -Sales Not Associated With a Permanent Building - Lots 3 & 4, Block 6, OTS

M/McGann S/Hall Move to nominate *Tania Harrison* as Chair of the 2023 Planning Commission

M/McGann S/Hall Move that the Planning Commission grant the Conditional Use Permit request by Charity Schandel to run a Co-Op style business trailer for the purpose of selling non-food goods, and to adopt and incorporate the findings within the staff report.

McGann said he agrees with staffs finding and is in favor of granting the conditional use permit.

Ranney said he did not believe that the approval of the conditional use permit would increase sales tax as staff's memo says it will since these types of items are already sold at places like the museum gift shop and other stores and at the bazaars. *Johnson* said that this is just a staff assumption and that there could be a potential increase as the bazaars are only a few times a year and this trailer could be open whenever they want to be. *Ranney* does intend to vote in favor but wanted to point out that he feels this was to concrete language.

Hall pointed out that the application indicates that the trailer would also be selling food. *Johnson* explained that the City Council had already approved the food sales portion through the food truck code process.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: Hall, McGann, Trumblee, Lohse, Harrison, Ranney

Absent: Bolin

b. Variance Request – Lot Width – Lot 14A, Block 10, USS 2981 Jeff Guard & Dorne Hawxhurst

M/Trumblee S/McGann Move that the Planning Commission grant the variance request by Jeff Guard & Dorne Hawxhurst and to adopt and incorporate the findings within the staff report.

Trumblee said she agrees with staffs finding and is in favor of granting the variance.

McGann said he believes that this approval is a benefit to the city and that the zoning code cannot always work in every situation and so a variance is appropriate in this case.

Hall said that he is in favor of this and that the main issue of meeting all setbacks will be met.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: Hall, McGann, Trumblee, Lohse, Harrison, Ranney

Absent: Bolin

c. Variance Request - On-Site Parking - Lots 2 & 3, Block 26, Original Townsite

M/McGann S/Lohse Move that the Planning Commission grant the variance request by Michael Schumm and to adopt and incorporate the findings within the staff report.

McGann said that he is in favor of this but does have concerns about allowing parking on Davis especially during the winter months. He is also concerned if neighbors have actually damaged the ROW of not and thinks staff should look into this.

Lohse said that he is in favor especially if there is a condition that restricts parking on Davis during the snow season. We should be encouraging building when possible.

Hall pointed out that the staff memo does say that a recorded document regarding the parking restriction will be required. He also said that this makes sense as the city blocked access along the Davis ROW with the gabions. He is concerned that this begins to set a precedent for future lots with access issues however he is currently in favor of this.

Ranney said that he is not concerned with setting a precedent as this lot is well within walking distance of downtown and that not everyone lives a car dependent life. **Hall** responded that this is why having the recorded document is important so future owners are aware that owning this lot and owning a vehicle will be difficult.

Trumblee said she is worried about them parking on the street and blocking neighbors across the street. **McGann** pointed out that there is a pull out towards the top of Davis which can be used for parking during the non-snow months.

Lohse wanted to make sure that approving this is not designating a specific spot on the street for this lot to park on. **Johnson** explained that this approval would only do two things, first is it is approving exemption from the two onsite parking space requirement and second, it is restricting the lot owner from parking on the Davis ROW during the snow months.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 6-0.

Yea: Hall, McGann, Trumblee, Lohse, Harrison, Ranney

Absent: Bolin

d. 2023 Land Disposal Map Update Discussion

Johnson gave a brief introduction explain his memo and explaining that none of the lots identified are currently being pursued by anyone for development. Staff reviewed the Land Disposal Maps looking specifically at lots identified as "Not Available" and trying to determine if that was still an appropriate designation. Staff has presented the properties in the memo to the commission tonight just to have a general conversation and to determine if these changes are of interest to the commission.

McGann asked that they go through each page of the current Land Disposal Maps and discuss them individually, the other commissioners agreed.

- New England Cannery Road

Ranney informed the commission that a portion of the city lot near Orca Lot is the location of a Chinese cemetery. **Johnson** said that we could carve off a portion of that lot and change it to “Not Available” to protect that area.

- Ocean Dock Subdivision

McGann said he agrees with the staff’s recommendations in the memo

- North Fill Development Park

Harrison read **Bolin’s** written comments which explained that he supports disposing of the “impound lot” only if a suitable alternative can be identified.

Ranney asked why the vehicles cannot be stored at the land fill at 17 mile. **Johnson** explained that the cars must be scrapped to Alaska DEC standards and that work is done at the city shop on Whitshed so that would involve transporting the cars back and forth multiple times. Also cars that are part of active police investigation are stored in front of the police station so that they can be monitored.

McGann thinks that the Bailer facility would be a great location for the impound lot. **Johnson** added on that changing this status does not mean the property will sold tomorrow. A proposal would need to be reviewed and if the city does not have a plan they would most likely not move forward with the sale.

- Tidewater Development Park

McGann asked what the status of the old PWSSC building was and if it was going to be rented out again once they are out? **Johnson** explained that the Science Center was almost moved out, but the city has no intentions of renting it out moving forward. The long-term plan is for it to be demolished or relocated for harbor upgrades.

Ranney asked about the harbor parking lot and said that we could consider converting parking lots into developable lots as people used to walk when we had less parking lots. **Lohse** said that if you drive by in the summer there is absolutely no parking and we cannot be losing what we have. **Trumblee** agreed that there is such a lack of parking that we cannot take that away and expect people to walk with tier supplies to their fishing boats.

- Old Town

Harrison read **Bolin’s** written comments which explained that he does not support disposing of the Second Street lots as they are important snow dump lots for the downtown area.

Lohse said that there used to be a playground on those lots when he was a child and they had to have done something with the snow back then.

McGann supports this change and thinks we need to understand there are trade offs with development. Yes it may increase snow removal costs but the city will benefit from the increased development. **Ranney** said that he would expect the taxes that would come in from those properties to easily cover the increased snow removal costs.

McGann asked **Johnson** if he would explain what his thoughts were on the suggested changes to the lots on Ski Hill Road. **Johnson** explained that there is currently a city road, Ski Hill Road, that is going through multiple city owned lots and not in its own dedicated ROW. Staffs thoughts

are that we could make these lots available and require they be replatted so the the road is in a ROW and the lots reconfigured better to match the topography and create a few buildable lots.

- South Fill Development Park

McGann said he is in favor of the change to the lot on Harbor Loop road where the city recycling bins are located, **Trumblee** and **Lohse** agreed.

Ranney asked what it would take to continue filling the tidelands to expand the South Fill. **Johnson** explained that there have been discussions and plans for this in the past but the cost of doing such a project is prohibitively expensive, but it is something that can be done.

McGann wanted to bring up Bolin's comments on this that the Harbor Commission weigh in on this. **Johnson** said that he will be bringing this by the Harbor Commission and will bring their comments back when the Planning Commission makes their recommendation at a later meeting.

- Odiak Slough
No comments

- Whitshed Road

McGann asked for clarification on why what was identified as city owned land around the reservoir is being removed. **Johnson** explained that it was discovered that when the City had requested a municipal entitlement from the State, we had requested the the larger area of land shown on the disposal map. During that entitlement process the city was granted a smaller portion of that requested area. It appears that this was never cleaned up on city maps and so we have been showing the full requested area and not the smaller area that was actually granted to the city.

Johnson went on to explain that this does not mean that this land cannot still be developed. It means that interested individuals would need to go through the State's disposal process to try to acquire the land from the State.

- South Fill Development Park

McGann said he is in favor of the change to the lot on Harbor Loop road where the city recycling bins are located, **Trumblee** and **Lohse** agreed.

- Odiak Park
No Comments

- Power Creek Road

Trumblee asked about the cemetery before the airport and if that should be changed to "Not Available". **Johnson** explained that if the land around it was developed, we would still need to subdivide the cemetery to create a lot for it.

Trumblee asked about the "Not Available" lot on Cedar Street and if that should be changed. **Johnson** said that if the commission wants to recommend changing that they are welcome to. Staff did not include that since the neighborhood is a dead end and the snow dump seemed appropriate in that situation.

- Eyak Lake

No comments

- Five Mile Loop
McGann said he is in favor of the change to the lot on Harbor Loop road where the city recycling bins are located, *Trumblee* and *Lohse* agreed.

11. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

No Comments

12. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Trumblee appreciated the discussion on Land Disposal.

McGann congratulated *Harrison* on her first meeting as Chair

13. ADJOURNMENT

M/McGann S/Hall to adjourn the Regular Meeting.
With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved:



for Tania Harrison, Chair



Kevin Johnson, City Planner