

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2011

Session 11-12, a Regular Meeting of the Homer Advisory Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Minsch at 7:03 p.m. on July 20, 2011 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS DRUHOT, HIGHLAND, MINSCH, VENUTI

ABSENT: BOS, DOLMA

STAFF: CITY PLANNER ABBOUD
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public may speak to the Planning Commission regarding matters on the agenda that are not scheduled for public hearing or plat consideration. (3 minute time limit).

There were no public comments.

RECONSIDERATION

There were no items for reconsideration.

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

All items on the consent agenda are considered routine and non-controversial by the Planning Commission and are approved in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Planning Commissioner or someone from the public, in which case the item will be moved to the regular agenda and considered in normal sequence.

1. Approval of the June 15, 2011 minutes
2. Time Extension Requests
3. Approval of City of Homer Projects under HCC 1.76.030 g
4. KPB Coastal Management Program Reports
5. Draft Decision and Findings for the Public Hearing in the Remand from the Board of Adjustment to the Homer Advisory Planning Commission to Consider New Conditions Regarding 1033 Skyline Drive

The Consent Agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations scheduled.

REPORTS

- A. Staff Report PL11-80, City Planner's Report

City Planner Abboud reviewed his staff report.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2011

Testimony limited to 3 minutes per speaker. The Commission conducts Public Hearings by hearing a staff report, presentation by the applicant, hearing public testimony and then acting on the Public Hearing items. The Commission may question the public. Once the public hearing is closed the Commission cannot hear additional comments on the topic. The applicant is not held to the 3 minute time limit.

- A. Staff Report PL 11-75, A Request for a Partial Vacation of a Public Right-of-way Adjacent to Spruce Lane at Cooper Subdivision No. 4, Lots 1-5

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

There was no applicant presentation.

Chair Minsch opened the public hearing. There was no one to testify regarding this action. Chair Minch closed the public hearing.

VENUTI/HIGHLAND MOVED TO ADOPT A PARTIAL VACATION OF THE RIGHT-OF-WAY AS DESCRIBED IN THE PRELIMINARY PLAT DATED 6/24/01 COOPER SUBDIVISION 2011 ADDITION WITH STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINDINGS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PLAT CONSIDERATION

- A. Staff Report PL 11-74, Cooper Subdivision 2011 Addition Preliminary Plat

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

There was no applicant presentation, no public testimony, and no question for staff.

HIGHLAND/DRUHOT MOVED TO ADOPT STAFF REPORT PL 11-74 COOPER SUBDIVISION 2011 ADDITION PRELIMINARY PLAT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Staff Report PL 11-77, Draft Ordinance 11-xx East End Mixed Use District

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

HIGHLAND/DRUHOT MOVED TO DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE EAST END MIXED USE DISTRICT.

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2011

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Highland commented in support of a buffer requirement along East End Road and also suggest the notion to existing businesses to improve the visual impact. She would like to see a buffer for all new development of businesses. When you drive through Wasilla you see what happened without buffers and anything to make visual improvement is a very good concept. She feels very strongly that buffers should be required, it might be different if it pure industrial and commercial, but this is an access into town.

Chair Minsch questioned what would be accomplished by planting a spruce tree for new businesses requiring direct motor vehicle access. They need direct access and need to be seen from the road. If it is a small building that is a permitted use they can exist, we are trying to encourage them and they need to be seen from the road. Larger buildings will require a CUP. She noted the City Hall sign that is covered by bushes and no one can see it. Little signs don't do much.

Commissioner Venuti questioned the purpose behind the rule when the existing properties should meet the same standard. He doesn't see where much improvement is gained by a buffer requirement for new development.

There was discussion about the phase 1 and phase 2 requirements and about issues that trigger the site development standards.

HIGHLAND/VENUTI MOVED TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION TO THE NEXT MEETING.

Chair Minsch asked that it be included on the worksession since buffers haven't been part of the conversation until tonight.

Commissioner Venuti asked staff to consider that buffer could be based on road frontage and bring suggestions back.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Staff Report PL 11-68, Draft Ordinance 11-xx Sign Code Ordinance

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

HIGHLAND/DRUHOT MOVED TO DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE DRAFT SIGN ORDINANCE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

The Commission discussed banners and when they are and are not temporary signs. Question was raised whether a banner tied at all four corners to two permanent poles constitutes a rigid structure along the entire circumference. Staff encouraged that if it is encased or mounted on a separate frame, then it is no longer a banner. When it is attached without a frame then it's a banner. The conversation transitioned to whether there would be an allowance for advertising civic events and if that is even appropriate to restrict a temporary sign based on the message.

On page 2 of the staff report there was a note about signage on churches and B&B's along the Sterling Highway. Chair Minsch encouraged the Commissioners to read the gateway overlay information as there are specific rules for that area.

The discussion carried over to political signs. Because there is no definition of a temporary sign and how long it can be displayed, it is challenging. Election signs have a purpose and they have a time they can be up before elections and a time they need to come down. In the draft the attorney argues that they are temporary sign and should be addressed like any other. Point was raised that in our town it isn't something that will be enforced as a temporary sign.

HIGHLAND/VENUTI MOVED TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION TO THE NEXT WORKSESSION AND ASK THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PARTICIPATE.

City Planner Abboud said it will be included on the regular meeting agenda as well.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Staff Report PL 11-76, Bylaws Change to Amend the Meeting Time

This item was postponed to the next meeting due to notice requirements for the second notice of the amendment.

The Commission took a short recess at 8:47 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 8:50 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Staff Report PL 11-79 Hostels Permitted as "Permitted" and "Conditional" Housing Use

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report. He recommended eliminating GC2 from the ordinance and including it in the Marine Commercial district to accommodate workers on the spit.

HIGHLAND/VENUTI MOVED TO DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING HOSTELS AS PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES IN ZONING DISTRICTS.

Commissioner Highland noted a typographical error on staff recommendation 1.

City Planner Abboud explained that hostel isn't listed as a permitted or conditional use in any district, so it would be an "other" use that would have to be addressed through a CUP process. It is a bit of a quandary.

MINSCH/VENUTI MOVED TO DELETE ORDINANCE LINES 58 AND 59 THAT REFERENCE GC1, LINES 63 AND 64 THAT REFERENCE GC2, LINES 68 AND 69 THAT REFERENCE MARINE COMMERCIAL AS WELL AS NOT ALLOWING HOSTELS IN THE MARINE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.

There was discussion that hostels would be allowed where rooming house and B&B type uses are. The use is not appropriate in the marine and general commercial districts as there is limited space for those districts and hostels are not a compatible use.

There was brief discussion for clarification on the purpose of the ordinance and the districts where they would be allowed.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

HIGHLAND/VENUTI MOVED TO ADOPT STAFF REPORT PL 11-79 HOSTELS AND SEND IT TO PUBLIC HEARING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. City Manager's Report June 27, 2011

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Members of the audience may address the Commission on any subject. (3 minute time limit)

There were no audience comments.

COMMENTS OF STAFF

City Planner Abboud commented that he would work to improve future packets.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Highland commented that she would still like the Commission to discuss the idea of no further residential development on the Spit. She provided an informational piece for them to review. She said she wished Commissioner Druhot well and thanked her for her service.

Commissioner Druhot said it has been good to work with everyone but it is time for her to move on.

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2011

Commissioner Venuti wished Commissioner Druhot well.

Chair Minsch said they will miss Commissioner Druhot. There should be two new Commissioners at the next meeting and keep up the good work.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____