

Session 12-12, a Regular Meeting of the Homer Advisory Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Erickson at 6:30 p.m. on September 19, 2012 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS BOS, DOLMA, ERICKSON, HIGHLAND, SONNEBORN, STEAD, VENUTI

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).

Lance Peterson, city resident, commented regarding the Pier One Theater site. He encouraged the Commission to consider requiring not for profit leases provide IRS form 990 which contains information about the mission of the organization, the impact, number of participants, budget, programs, affiliations, and so on. It provides a wealth of information which would give easy access to a number of things to evaluate. The bottom line for not for profits is not the dollar sign, it is the determination if this set of activities is a real benefit to the Homer community. That is what he advocates they assess.

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 September 5, 2012 minutes
2. Time Extension Requests
3. Approval of City of Homer Projects under HCC 1.76.030 g.
4. KPB Coastal Management Programs Report
5. Draft Decision and Findings for CUP 12-03, Dockside Fisheries

The consent agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. Brianna Allen, People's Garden in the Bunnell Neighborhood

Brianna Allen and Asia Freeman commented on behalf of the Old Town Neighborhood Association. They are concerned about cultivating Old Town as the gateway to our Federal Fish and Wildlife Visitor Center to Bishops Beach Park and recognizing it as a busy, up and coming neighborhood. It has some of Homer's most historic sites as well as pressing issues with traffic control and pedestrian safety. They received a \$5,000 grant from Homer Soil and Water to have a people's garden and are working to make the neighborhood more attractive and pedestrian friendly through aesthetic enhancements that have

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been shown to slow down traffic in cities that have had a surge of infilling and population where there wasn't more planned pathways. It has become a concern with all the activity from the Islands and Ocean Visitor Center and Two Sister's. Ms. Allen provided photos for the Commission to look at and commented about the street paintings that have provided a great visual introduction for Old Town, and for those concerned about where this project is going. When working on the street paintings people were slowing down and asking questions, and it was a real positive experience for this introductory project. They are hoping to have more painting, but the next "to do" on the list is gaining recreational easements from 9 property owners between Bunnell and Two Sisters, which is where they want to put the "green pathway" or at least plant some edible trees and bushes. That is what they are calling the People's Garden and it becomes a corridor for pedestrians and makes Old Town attractive. Ms. Allen said she has talked to 8 of the 9 property owners and while they have their individual concerns, they are waiting with open minds to hear more. To get the recreation easements, property owners need to see what they are signing up for. Dutch Boy Landscaping has volunteered to put together a concept map after walking the area with them, and she can take it to land owners to get feed back. If they don't get all 9 easements, they will work with what the do get. Ms. Freeman noted that this area has the same predicament as the spit and they may need to work with the City to establish a pedestrian zone in this area as well. Once a pedestrian zone is established they envision landscaping would envelop it, and with private grants add benches, planters, and some lighting to frame it.

In response to questions Ms. Allen and Ms. Freeman commented they worked with Public Works, DOT, and the City Manager's office to do the paintings on the street. They recognize that there will be seasonal upkeep on the paintings and plan to follow through as needed.

REPORTS

- A. Staff Report PL 12-52, City Planner's Report

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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.

None

PLAT CONSIDERATION

None

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Staff Report PL 12-43, Staff Report 12-43, Draft Ordinance 12-xx Amending HCC 21.28 Marine Commercial Zoning District

Chair Erickson reviewed the discussion points from the worksession as follows:

- Using term "lodging" and accepting the new definition and the 3 concepts of the 9/12 draft ordinance for occupancy.

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- Considered on page 21, approving by CUP the setback from dedicated right-of-way may be reduced and allowing staff to have the flexibility to deal with the CUP's.

City Planner Abboud said the Port and Harbor Commission will be seeing this at their next meeting and he will bring any feedback they might have regarding information in the draft ordinance.

B. Staff Report PL 12-49, Pier 1 Land Use

Chair Erickson expressed appreciation for Lance Peterson's feedback at the worksession regarding criteria for non profit consideration. She thinks it would be good to adopt some kind of criteria for dealing with non profits.

Commissioner Venuti expressed agreement with marking the access road better to the area. He added that there shouldn't be any permanent improvements regarding the kayak launch. Kayaks can be launched anywhere in that area and as opportunities come forward the launch location may need to be relocated.

Commissioner Stead commented regarding non profits, and when reviewing leasing criteria, it is important to be cognizant that non profits can make money and can provide for leases for their facilities. It happens all the time. An example of something that could occur out there and pay its way is a school. The North House Folk School in Grand Marais, MN is a school on public leased property and provides for a lot of different entities to have access to the harbor. It is a non profit that makes money and brings a lot of people to Grand Marais. There are other possibilities than just what we are talking about and he encouraged them to think even broader. He reiterated that non profits need to pay their way.

Discussion ensued regarding the lease policies, current uses on the lot, and concerns in effective dealings with non profits.

NEW BUSINESS

None

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. City Manager's Report dated September 10, 2012

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

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

None

COMMENTS OF STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen commented that invitations have been sent out for the Volunteer Appreciation party on October 5.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

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Commissioner Venuti questioned how the Bunnell group by passed the Commission on their project. What they are doing is changing the nature of the community down there. It sounds like a good idea but he thought they were part of the process in making these decisions.

There was brief discussion that it is a neighborhood association trying to better their area. They have been talking to staff and it has been an ongoing conversation. Right now it is a beautification project.

Commissioner Dolma said it was a well run meeting tonight.

Commissioner Sonneborn said she was glad to hear from everyone tonight.

Commissioner Stead and Highland had no comments.

Chair Erickson thanked everyone for a good meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____