

Session 15-17, a Regular Meeting of the Homer Advisory Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Stead at 6:30 p.m. on November 4, 2015 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS BRADLEY, ERICKSON, HIGHLAND, STEAD STROOZAS, VENUTI

ABSENT: BOS

STAFF: CITY PLANNER ABBOUD  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

### **Approval of Agenda**

Chair Stead called for a motion to approve the agenda.

HIGHLAND/STROOZAS SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

### **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).

### **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.

- A. Approval of Minutes of October 21, 2015
- B. Decision and Findings CUP 15-05 KHLT

Chair Stead called for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

HIGHLAND/BRADLEY SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

## **Presentations**

### **Reports**

#### A. Staff Report PL 15-74, City Planner's Report

City Planner Abboud reviewed his 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.

#### A. Staff Report PL 15-75 Zoning for Marijuana

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

Chair Stead opened the public hearing.

Jackie Dentz, city resident, commented in opposition to allowing retail sales on the spit because it's a recreational area. She owns Frosty Bear Ice Cream parlor which draws kids, families, and elderly visitors. She also noted visitors from cruise ships are not allowed to bring marijuana on the ship. She doesn't think a retail establishment for marijuana belongs on the spit. She is fine if locals want to buy it and if it's done safely, but encouraged the Commission to think about where they recommend putting retail.

Crisi Mathews, city resident, owns a boardwalk on the spit and real estate in town with her husband Chad. She commented that a CUP is warranted for any grow or retail facility in a residential area, she thinks they will hurt residential property values. She also expressed opposition to allowing retail for marijuana on the spit. She noted several recreational venues that draw youth and families throughout the summer including Islands and Ocean, Alaska Coastal Studies, and HOWL which conduct many of their outings on the beaches, trails, docks, and campgrounds, as well as the Kevin Bell arena in the winter. She added that if retail is allowed and is available year round, there will be minimal oversight as a majority of the area shuts down off season. With a business in Homer and rental cabins in Anchor Point, as well as raising four children here, they have a lot of vested interest in seeing this continue to be a family community.

Chad Mathews, city resident, added that there are buildings on their boardwalk. The way it is worded now, the people who own those buildings, don't have to their permission as the boardwalk owner, to open a dispensary. He encouraged that be readdressed. He thinks with the amount of accidents and almost accidents they see on the spit and impaired drivers could be an issue, as well as the potation for increased break in attempts.

Garth Bradshaw had a business on the spit for many years and his preference is no sales at all within the community, as other communities in Alaska have done. He encourages them to follow suit. That being said, if they allow one person to sell it, how will they restrict others? He suspects there will need

to be limits on licenses, like with alcohol. He supports not selling it in Homer at all, his adult kids and his grandchildren are here and he doesn't like the exposure, and doesn't think it's the thing to do to our community.

Megan Murphy attempted to comment regarding the Waddell Park 2016 Replat Preliminary Plat. It was explained that topic would be addressed under Plat Consideration and if she was unable to stay, she could contact the planning staff for more information regarding the preliminary plat.

Shlomo Gherman commented that if the recreational sale of marijuana in town is done right it could be really effective, specifically bringing in more taxable revenue to the city. We could have a PFD type situation for many of the people living here. Colorado school district received \$6 million in additional funding from sales. No matter where you place a dispensary, once it's known the town has one, there is no stopping purchasing it. Whether it's on the spit or in town, it won't really make a difference, the real concern is managing how it's sold and who is able to purchase. It's very accessible now. If the issue is stoned people on the spit, they are already there.

There were no further public comments.

City Planner Abboud said limiting the number of establishments will be in the code under licensing and not zoning. He will have something on the next agenda for the Commission to make a recommendation.

VENUTI/STROOZAS MOVED THAT EAST END MIXED USE AREA BE ALLOWED TO HAVE SMALL VOLUME CULTIVATION.

There was brief discussion to clarify small grow operations would be allowed anywhere in the district with this motion. Other comments were that this should be more restrictive to begin with.

VOTE: YES: STEAD, VENUTI, STROOZAS, BRADLEY  
NO: HIGHLAND, ERICKSON

Motion carried.

HIGHLAND/VENUTI MOVED TO ADD A CUP FOR ALL SMALL CULTIVATION IN RURAL RESIDENTIAL.

Commissioner Highland commented that rural residential is the largest district, it is family oriented, and there are a lot of lots over 40,000 square feet. Allowing it outright doesn't give the residents the opportunity to speak about small grow operations in their neighborhood. Lighting is also an issue, as well as security, in rural residential.

It was noted that currently no small cultivation is allowed on lots under 20,000, and this motion allows it in all of rural residential with a CUP. It would include the smaller lots if approved as presented.

ERICKSON/HIGHLAND MOVED TO AMEND THAT A CUP BE REQUIRED ON LOTS OVER 20,000 SQUARE FEET.

There was brief discussion.

VOTE (Amendment): NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

There was brief discussion.

VOTE (Main motion as amended): NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

There was discussion about buffers that are outlined by the state. City Planner Abboud said he would bring that back with information along with the license restrictions.

Discussion ensued regarding allowing retail on the spit and the comments from the public tonight.

HIGHLAND/ERICKSON MOVED TO DISALLOW RETAIL FOR MARIJUANA IN MARINE COMMERCIAL.

Commissioner Highland said tonight's public comments included good reasons to be concerned about retail sales out there.

Commissioner Venuti noted there are bars and liquor stores on the spit now that sell cheap liquor which he thinks is more dangerous.

Commissioner Erickson agrees with the public comments about not allowing retail in marine commercial.

Commissioner Bradley commented that a CUP is required for retail in marine commercial which is fairly restrictive.

Commissioner Stroozas expressed his thought that the fishing hole is a recreational facility for families with kids and youth based fishing events that are held there. Based on state buffers, that could justify disallowing retail on the spit. If the CUP remains in place, then an applicant complies with all the regulations, the Commission would have to allow it.

VOTE: YES: ERICKSON, STROOZAS, HIGHLAND  
NO: STEAD, BRADLEY, VENUTI

Motion failed for lack of a majority.

No further amendments were proposed and another public hearing is scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Plat Consideration**

A. Staff Report PL 15-76 Waddell Park 2016 Replat Preliminary Plat

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report.

Public Works Director Meyer had no presentation and was available for questions.

There were no public comments.

Chair Stead asked if the connections and other improvements associated with Lake Street are okay with the state. Public Works Director Meyer said the state is aware of the proposed improvements and will be issuing a formal permit soon.

HIGHLAND/BRADLEY MOVED TO APPROVE STAFF REPORT PL 15-76 AND WADDELL PARK 2016 REPLAT PRELIMINARY PLAT WITH STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**Pending Business**

**New Business**

A. 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

ERICKSON/BRADLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2016 MEETING SCHEDULE.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**Informational Materials**

A. City Manager's Report October 26, 2015

B. 2015 Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings

**Comments of the Audience**

**Comments of Staff**

City Planner Abboud commented that there is one more meeting this year. Marijuana zoning is a priority to move forward so the city will be ready when the permit filing period opens on February 24<sup>th</sup>

and applicants have 90 days to act up on the license. He noted retail places won't likely have product to sell right away because cultivators would have to have a license before they could grow. He predicts the scenario would likely be the end of summer at best before product would be available.

He is working on a manageable schedule for the Comp Plan review.

**Comments of the Commission**

Commissioner Highland and Erickson had no comment.

Commissioner Bradley commented she is looking forward to speaking at the city council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be getting ahold of the City Planner for assistance with talking points. She thought the comments tonight were interesting.

Commissioner Stroozas said he expected standing room only tonight for the public hearing. It's nice to get done early. It was a well conducted meeting and thanked Chair Stead for moving things along.

Commissioner Venuti agreed it was interesting discussion tonight. He thinks that for what it will cost to get licensed and into operation on the spit for a three month season, doesn't make economic sense. He doesn't think there will be a lot of people jumping at that opportunity. Regarding commissioner comments at council meetings he encouraged that speakers work with staff to get a script or talking points to ensure they aren't giving personal feedback.

Chair Stead said he thinks they did good tonight.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers. A worksession will be held at 5:30 p.m.

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_