

Session 19-16, a Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Venuti at 6:34 p.m. on October 16, 2019 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS DAVIS, BOS, VENUTI, BENTZ, PETSKA-RUBALCAVA AND
HIGHLAND

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS SMITH (EXCUSED)

STAFF: CITY PLANNER ABBOUD
DEPUTY CITY PLANNER ENGBRETSSEN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

The Commission met for a joint worksession at 5:30 p.m. with members of the Parks, Art recreation & Culture Advisory Commission and Economic Development Advisory Commission. On the agenda was a discussion on Next Steps for the proposed Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Venuti called for a motion to approve the agenda.

HIGHLAND/BENTZ – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of minutes of October 2, 2019
- B. Time Extension Request for Marley Subdivision Preliminary Plat

Chair Venuti requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

HIGHLAND/BENTZ – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

REPORTS

A. Staff Report 19-86, City Planner's Report

City Planner Abboud provided a summary of Staff Report 19-86. He provided comment on the following items:

- Public Hearing at the next meeting on the ordinance placing a moratorium on Profession Offices and Medical Clinics in Residential Office District
- Received the decision notice this afternoon that the City has prevailed on the appeal hearing for the Remand
If nothing further comes about they will be able to start talking about creation of a medical district at the December meeting.
- They have prevailed on the Windjammer CUP appeal on all counts

Commissioner Rubalcava volunteered for the December 9, 2019 City Council meeting

Commissioner Highland requested clarification from the chair to speak on the City Manager's Report.

Chair Venuti responded that it was on the agenda under informational items and that comments or questions should be done at that time.

A brief discussion was entertained on the basis and reasoning to place a moratorium on applications for Medical Clinics.

City Planner Abboud provided clarification on the appeal process remaining for the Windjammer CUP 14-05.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

PLAT CONSIDERATION

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Staff Report 19-87, Sign Code

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title into the record.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen reviewed Staff Report 19-87 using visual components on the overhead monitors as samples of the proposed code changes. She noted some of the previous work done on the sign code in 2012 that applied to businesses on the Spit. She reviewed the three recommendations from staff and requested input from the Commission.

Large Businesses (buildings) on Corner Lots with multiple entrances – Example used was Kachemak Center

The Commission recommended that if additional free standing signage is permitted that there should be a specific distance between the signs.

Adding the staff recommendation of 75 sf was acceptable to the Commission

Corner Lots, Smaller Buildings, two stories

Staff recommended allowing 50% of existing to a maximum of 225sf that a building owner would be responsible for dividing among tenants.

Parking lot Entrance or exit signage with logo or colors

The Commission agreed that they would like further information on this concept. It was agreed that it would not be a widely used signage but could be implemented for businesses that may have multiple accesses referring to the Kachemak Center as an example.

Commissioner Highland offered comments on the controversy experienced during the previous sign code amendments and that every business owner wanted the biggest sign possible.

City Planner Abboud responded to Commissioner Davis' inquiry about Sign Design review and the recommendations made to applicants regarding signage design.

Staff will provide specifics for the commission to review at the next meeting.

B. Staff Report 19-88, Permitting

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title into the record.

City Planner Abboud reviewed Staff Report 19-88 for the Commission. He requested the Commission to amend the draft ordinance to remove Lines 44-47 for the following reasons:

- Driveways are permitted by Public Works Department
- Entrances are self-explanatory
- Asbuilt survey shows the site plan and parking areas are quite easily figured
- Proof of compliance with applicable building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and other such codes are governed by the State and the planning staff is not trained to enforce this. A building inspector would be required as well as developing building codes. He is not sure who the legitimate authority is to provide this information.

- Additionally the State Fire Marshal would sign off on commercial projects and that information would be required to be submitted with the application.
- It would be another sheet a paper that is retained by the Planning Department but have no use to the department
- This ordinance has not been reviewed at this time.
- The Permit Application is not finalized

Chair Venuti recommended that lines 44-45 should be amended to add the word “commercial” to reflect the wording in lines 39-30 to make sense.

City Planner Abboud stated that the request to remove those requirements would still apply. He further advocated for their removal since their office cannot verify anything, they do not know the regulations, and he does not have the knowledge that commercial buildings are inspected. The applicant does not get a permit until they have a Fire Marshal approval.

Discussion ensued on asbuilt showing placement with a five foot discrepancy, enforcement steps and current policy, existing closeout process for current permits.

Commissioner Bentz commented that it appeared the language in lines 44-47 would not be beneficial for the planning department’s use and should amend the ordinance to reflect that change.

BENTZ/HIGHLAND MOVED TO AMEND ORDINANCE 19-XX TO REMOVE LINE 44-47 AND ALTER LINE 38, ANY ZONING PERMIT FOR A BUILDING OR STRUCTURE SHALL REQUIRE THE APPLICANT TO SUBMIT TO THE CITY PLANNER AN ASBUILT SURVEY COMPLETED BY A LICENSED SURVEYOR, OF THE LOCATION, FOUNDATION, DIMENSIONS, AND PROXIMITY TO ALL LOT LINES OF ALL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES COVERED BY THE PERMIT.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Highland noted that on the Zoning Permit Application, the page for the “Additional Approvals for All Projects” under Wetlands Permit second sentence, the contact phone number is missing.

Commissioner Bentz recommended checking the web address for the same since she believed it has changed.

Commissioner Bentz recommended inserting a statement something to the effect that a good site plan will assure that you are in compliance with the new asbuilt requirement.

Further discussion on developing a form to be submitted during Close out procedures, that the asbuilt will have all the information required, requesting the asbuilt come directly from the Surveyor and the authorized copies should come from the Surveyor.

NEW BUSINESS

Memorandum from Jenny Carroll re: Wayfinding, Next Steps

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading the title into the record.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen requested a motion of support from the Commission to forward to City Council.

BENTZ/BOS MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE PLANNING COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE INITIATIVE TO CREATE WAYFINDING AND STREETScape PLAN AND FORWARD TO CITY COUNCIL.

Commissioner Bentz provided a recap of the joint worksession between members of the Economic Development Advisory Commission, Parks Art Recreation & Cultures Advisory Commission and the Planning Commission. She noted the following was discussed and reviewed:

- Work product on the initiative
- Draft ordinance and outline of work efforts
- Timeline
- Consultant to develop wayfinding and streetscape plan
- Possibility of Updated map of the city
- Interest in working together to achieve multiple goals such as marketing , non-motorized transportation

Further comments from the Commission on the goals of the plan, interest from business owners, not getting bogged down in the color palette and not addressing technical design, meshing with current plans and that it will be more of a technical planning document.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Memo from the City Clerk, Meeting Schedule for 2020

Chair Venuti introduced the item into the record by reading of the title.

City planner Abboud noted that the only item of note was that the first Wednesday in January was January 1st so the meeting is on the second which is a Thursday.

Commissioner Bentz asked about reducing the number of meetings held by the Commission.

The Commission did not object to the 2020 meeting schedule as presented.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. City Manager Report for October 14, 2019 City Council Meeting

Commissioner Highland requested clarification on the process of addressing the extraterritorial water as she believed that the Commission should create a policy.

City Planner Abboud responded that direction from Council would be preferred since this is outside the purview of the commission as it is not planning and Zoning.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Krause commented that it was an interesting meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Bos commented that he would not be at the meetings for November and December and added that he will not be seeking reappointment to the Commission when his term expires. He encouraged the staff and Commission to locate someone else to fill his spot but he would not be resigning before his term expires. He believed 11 years was long enough.

Commissioner Bentz did note that she may be missing meetings in the next two months and will let the Clerk know.

Chair Venuti commented that Commissioner Davis indicated that he will be absent over the winter so brought forth comments on filling Commissioner Bos' seat since it may affect the obtaining a quorum.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers. There is a worksession scheduled at 5:30 p.m. prior to the meeting.

RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____