

Session 13-06 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Sarno at 6:00 p.m. on June 11, 2013 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER BARTH, KRISINTU, ROSS, SARNO, WAGNER

STAFF: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR KOESTER
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Barth requested adding an agenda item to talk about improving the relationship with the Chamber. There was no objection.

WAGNER/ KRISINTU MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None

RECONSIDERATION

There was no reconsideration scheduled.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 14, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

WAGNER/BARTH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS

STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Affordable Housing: Staff Report/Update
 - i. Town Center Plan

Community and Economic Development Coordinator Koester reviewed the staff report.

The Commission recognized the need to define affordable housing. They talked about the notion that affordable housing should address people looking for rentals as well as those looking to buy a home. An issue with purchasing a home may not be the inability to make the monthly payment, but challenges with obtaining mortgage. In relation to construction, building new structures isn't necessarily an option because new construction is costly. They touched on the ideas of amending zoning to allow other types of building like cob houses, yurts or other alternative housing; and offering incentives like tax credits. Permaculture is a way to unify how a community looks at things that include safety, food, and taking care of people. They agreed to invite a builder to make a presentation at a future meeting.

Discussion transitioned to the Town Center Plan. Previous discussion included ideas of developing housing as part of the town center, an example being expanding Coast Guard housing. Another suggestion was as the town center develops, allowing development where businesses or store fronts are on the ground level and living spaces upstairs.

The Commission acknowledged the time and effort that went into the Town Center Plan and that it includes good information, but it needs to be updated. In looking at the map it seems to be more of a neighborhood experience with a mix of residential and business that is easy to navigate, more than a town square with an open air community area in the middle and buildings around it. Some sort of anchor is significant in getting it going and with CIRI as a primary land owner in the town square area it will be important to know what plans they might have with that land. They talked briefly about the benefits of a conference center in the area and the need for infrastructure in the area to get things started.

- B. City Council Meeting Sign up

The Commission agreed there is nothing to present to the City Council at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Improving City's Position with the Chamber

Commissioner Barth said he is also on the Chamber Board and in his work has seen issues with communication between the City and Chamber. An example being the the CEDs document has specific implementation items for the Chamber, which are all good things for the most part, but the communication isn't as clear as it should be. Some discussion that came up in their meetings is developing a permanent seat on the Chamber's board for the person who sits in Katie's position and he suggested this Commission have a non-voting seat for the Chamber Executive Director. The Commission agreed to add this to their next agenda for proper notice as a business item for discussion as an action item.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 11, 2013

- A. Capital Improvement Plan
- B. RV Parking Flyer
- C. City Manager's Report to City Council 6/10/13

Community and Economic Development Coordinator Koester gave a brief overview of the CIP process and advised that it will be on their next agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

None

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

Community and Economic Development Coordinator Koester said she thinks she has plenty to cogitate on for the next meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Sarno thanked the group for sharing their thoughts tonight and encouraged everyone to be ready to work on the CIP at the next meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Krisintu said she will be absent next month but will try to participate telephonically, and that she is still pushing for a railroad.

Commissioner Ross thanked everyone.

Commissioner Barth had no comment.

Commissioner Wagner said it was a good meeting and thanked everyone.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 9, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____