



City of Homer

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Planning

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Memorandum

Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II
DATE: SEPTEMBER 3, 2025
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL

9. PLAT CONSIDERATION

9. A. BARNETT LOT 1-A 2025 RESUB, Staff Report 25-42

1. Public Comment Received

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9. B. RAW BIRCH 2025 REPLAT, Staff Report 25-43

1. Public Comment Received

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11. NEW BUSINESS

11. A. Ordinance 25-54, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending Homer City Code Title 8 Permits, Licenses and Regulations by Adding Chapter 8.13 Temporary Retail Services, Memorandum PL 25-44

1. Public Comment Received

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Homer Planning Commission
FROM: Janette Keiser, PE
DATE: September 2, 2025
RE: Plat Considerations for meeting of September 3, 2025

I have reviewed the materials in the packet regarding the two plats that will be under consideration at the meeting of September 3, 2025, and have the following comments and recommendations:

1. RE: Barnett Lot 1-A Resubdivision

- a. Accessing Lot 1-A-2 directly from East Hill Road will exacerbate traffic safety issues, because the lot fronts on the edge of a curve with limited sight distance. I recommend you specify that access to Lot 1-A-2 must be from Barnett Place, as access to Lot 1-A-1 already is. This will send a message to the ADOT/PF that you are concerned about traffic safety on East Hill Road in the even the developer applies for a driveway permit for East Hill Road.

2. RE: Raw Birch 2025 Replat

- a. The plat Notes say there are two drainage easements, one recorded on Book 312, Page 139, HRD and one recorded on Book 312, page 147, HRD. Neither one of these is shown on the plat. I recommend you require both easements to be shown.
- b. I recommend the easement on the west side of Tract A be enlarged to encompass the little wetland that is shown on the plat. This wetland serves as a small, natural “sponge” for storm water that flows off the high school property and across East End Road. The area is currently outside the limits of the filled area on the lot and should stay that way so it can continue to serve its purpose. If the area is filled, it will concentrate flow and exacerbate erosion. One of the strategies in the new Comprehensive Plan is to *“encourage the use of green infrastructure and site-responsive design solutions to improve drainage and reduce hazard exposure.”* Preserving this little wetland is a textbook example of how this can be done.
- c. This property is served with City sewer; thus, the note about Wastewater Disposal is no longer applicable and should be deleted in the interests of clarity.

Dear Council Members, Planning Commissioners, and members of the Economic Development Committee,

As owners of The Homer Bookstore on Pioneer Avenue, we have some concerns about the proposed ordinance 25-54 addressing temporary and movable small retail shops in the central business district.

To start, please note that we are not voicing these concerns from a fear of competition. Homer is beloved by many locals and tourists from inside and outside Alaska for its diverse and interesting shops which makes it unlike many towns now populated with big chains and franchises. More small shops are better. Ask any business owner in the CBD, and I believe you will receive the same answer- Amazon has been our biggest competitor for more than 10 years and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. (Requiring them to collect sales tax was a huge step in the right direction to even this imbalance.)

However, we are concerned about the appearance of the CBD, and Pioneer Avenue in particular. In the last 25 years, since we bought our building at the corner of Pioneer and Svedlund, many buildings have been remodeled and improved and the street looks much different than it did in the 1980s and 1990s. Among the improvements just on Pioneer: The Classic Cook, the building housing Hospice and the Independent Living Center, Cycleological, and most recently The Porcupine Theater have received major upgrades. Nomar, North Wind, The Twisted Goat, and Zen Den have repainted and spruced up their facades. The murals and Peonies on Pioneer have added local color and flavor. We'd like to see this trend continue!

Our concerns about this proposed ordinance focus on 3 areas:

- 1) Generators: These would be allowed as a power source. Our town is already getting noisier from increased air and street traffic. Generators seem like a potential source of a LOT of noise and air pollution.
- 2) Parking: As it stands, there doesn't seem to be a parking requirement for these shops. While nowhere near the chaos on the Spit, parking on Pioneer is also becoming a problem. We understand that the city is interested in promoting walkability and we completely support that. But the large majority of those shopping on Pioneer do not live or stay within walking distance of the CBD. The reality is that they are arriving in the CBD by car. It would be great if a central city parking area was established - perhaps in conjunction with the proposed rec center? If customers ask us at the bookstore if they can leave their car in our lot while they browse up and down Pioneer, the answer is almost always "of course." The exception is large motor homes or trailers that take up a significant part of the lot. But if there are 10 or 20 small shops added to the browsing time, it would be helpful if those shops bore some of the parking burden.
- 3) Seasonality: Homer has for a very long time had a Spit and town split. Businesses on the Spit open for only the summer season, and are closed and often boarded up the rest of the year. The CBD has been the home for year round business. Galleries and restaurants downtown sometimes close for a month or two in the winter, but generally we are all open year round. We are not in favor of small shops in town that will be only open for the tourist season, and dark, empty, and possibly boarded up for more than half the year. We're also not clear what sort of structure will be required- will it be ok to have a booth that sits on the ground with sides that flip up, like a booth at the State Fair? That doesn't seem like something that will be sustainable in the colder months.

There are two temporary business clusters off the Spit- one at the corner of the bypass and Main Street, and one on the curve on Ocean Drive. One food trucks, one mostly retail. It would be interesting to talk to the owners of those businesses and see if they would consider their business viable for year-round sales or are they only interested in the tourist season. Maybe

having a similar cluster somewhere on Pioneer or Main Street would allow small businesses a place to start while not having temporary businesses scattered throughout the CBD?

In 2014, there was a conflict between Cosmic Kitchen and The Juicy Bus food truck. In the resolution of that Walt Wrede, then City Manager, said “We felt like we had a duty to protect permanent businesses that are here year round and have made a lot of investment in their buildings.” We’re not looking to ban or forbid new businesses but we and many others in the CBD have done exactly that. If we want to continue to have a thriving and viable year-round business district, please consider how temporary and mobile businesses will fit into that.

Lee Post, Sue Post, Jenny Stroyeck
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