

Session 13-02 a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 5:00 p.m. on February 27, 2013 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER CARROLL, HARTLEY (telephonic), STOCKBURGER, ULMER, WEDIN, ZIMMERMAN

ABSENT: HOWARD

STAFF: PORT AND HARBOR DIRECTOR HAWKINS
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR MEYER
PROJECT MANAGER NELSON
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Larry Slone, city resident, commented regarding the Land Allocation Plan, specifically Tract 1-A, the Pier 1 lot. He asked the commission to support the Wooden Boat Society. He understands the decision is in the hands of the City Council, and there are some options that can be considered. Mr. Slone said it would be beneficial for the commission to address this because they are most familiar with the nautical affairs and should initiate the action. He asked they make a determination similar to "The Homer Port and Harbor Commission finds that the Wooden Boat Society provides a benefit to the City. And secondly the Port and Harbor Commission finds that the northwest portion of Tract 1-A would be an appropriate and suitable location for basing activities of the Wooden Boat Society."

Bumpo Bremicker, city resident, commented as a member of the Wooden Boat Society, and said there have been changes along the way and sometimes it's hard to keep up with the latest and greatest. He urged the commission to support the Wooden Boat Society. There have been some different ideas put out there. He knows there has been a recommendation they use the corner of the lot south of where the barge is pulled out. There was some concern with the barges and their potential need for more space. The Society is open to working with what the City wants to do. He is looking at the northwest corner at the other end of the beach where there are no campsites, but appears to be a day parking area. While they are a nonprofit and don't have a lot of money, they are willing to negotiate with the City. The location along the spit road would work, but it would be a better location for retail. The group would benefit more with a location near the water for boat launching. They have talked with the Yacht Club and the Water Trail group and could work with them on a joint effort.

RECONSIDERATION

There was no reconsideration scheduled.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 23, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 27, 2013

It was pointed out that Commissioner Wedin was present but does not appear in the attendance.

WEDIN/STOCKBURGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS

A. Carey Meyer, Public Works Director- Current Port and Harbor Projects

Public Works Director Meyer introduced Dan Nelson who recently came on board as Project Manager. Mr. Meyer provided the commission with an aerial photo that delineates the 2013 Spit Improvements. He gave an overview of projects, focusing primarily on the spit trail, cruise ship improvements, and float improvements. Regarding trail improvements there will be efforts to contact business owners and lessees, and have public meetings to provide opportunities for public input. Mr. Meyer noted they will be working with Kinney Engineering as they worked on the Anchorage Coastal Trail and have experience with designing multi-user trails.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Mr. Meyer explained the current trail plan is that boardwalk will only be installed where there is boardwalk currently. The rest of the trail will be 10 foot wide asphalt trail. Gravel trails are more costly to maintain in the long run, and asphalt is more stable for stroller's, wheel chairs, and offers more stable footing for all ages. The trail will be at an elevation to follow the natural drainage of the area, whether it is toward the harbor or toward the road. They will be careful not to create any drainage problems and will install "dry wells" in several of the paved areas that will allow water to be infiltrated into the ground. There was some discussion about dry wells at other problem locations.

STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Port and Harbor Director's Report for February 2013

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his staff report.

Commissioner Carroll commented that the rotary brush the harbor staff is using to clean the dock is a great improvement.

Question was raised about the tug assist and Harbormaster Hawkins explained the circumstances that lead to approving the assist.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 27, 2013

- A. Staff Report from Harbormaster
 - a. PND Engineers, Inc. Alternative Float Layouts
 - b. Harbor Float Replacement

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed the staff report and information provided by PND regarding the float replacement project. Staff is recommending J float have 4 foot wide fingers and 32 foot spacing between stalls to mirror the G and H float design. Eliminating Transient space on the end of J would allow them to have 34 slips. Currently they are leasing all of their 32 foot stalls, so it makes sense to create as many stalls as they can. Turning the south side of S float into 32's is a bold step, but from a revenue side it makes sense.

There was discussion about the transient moorage. Harbormaster Hawkins explained that they don't allow transient to fill the empty stalls because it discourages annual leasing the spaces. They did that when system four was built it was challenging to move it away from being a transient float. A 32 foot class stall vessel is more difficult to get out of the harbor and trailer, where the 24 foot vessel can be trailered and taken home or home the storage yard. Although they are losing some 24 foot stalls, they anticipate more leases on long term moorage. The new 24 foot stalls will be wider, have water, and they don't expect to have to displace any lessee's on the R and S floats. It is a positive thing.

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed the timeline, noting that the earliest the municipal harbor grant program funds would be available, if they are approved, is July, 2013. The earliest it could get underway is spring of 2014, but due to the seasonal traffic, after Labor Day of 2014 is the most realistic timeframe. They hope to be able to do the system 5 project in the fall. He is unsure about the method that will be used to bring in new floats and remove the old floats, but believes that there is adequate space to move the vessels around while work is being done.

- B. Land Allocation Plan
 - a. Memorandum from Staff Re: Recommendations for 2013 LAP

The commission reviewed the laydown memorandum provided by Planning Technician Engebretsen.

STOCKBURGER/ZIMMERMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS END OF THE ROAD PARK BE DESIGNATED AS A CITY PARK RATHER THAN UNDESIGNATED.

There was some discussion about improvements to the park area.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

The commission discussed the area recommended for short term leases on lot 12-A. Staff had suggested in the memo that the area be reconsidered as the spit trail will go through the area. It was suggested that there may be room left to do a small seasonal kiosk even after the trail is put in.

ZIMMERMAN/CARROLL MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE SHORT TERM KIOSK RENTAL AREA REMAIN WHERE IT IS, TO BE RENTED AT THE HARBORMASTER'S DISCRESSION, AND LEAVE ROOM FOR THE TRAIL.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

It was noted that the City Manager and Harbormaster are working to determine a site for the Wooden Boat Society and the commission has weighed in on that issue. There isn't a need for discussion at this point. Harbormaster Hawkins will report progress back to this group.

There was brief discussion of the status of pending leases on the east side. Commissioner Stockburger recounted previous discussion about a potential haul out area being across from ramp 7 and asked if leasing some of those lots would create an issue for that. Harbormaster Hawkins explained that Lot 19 is being considered for a lease, lot 21 has been leased, lot 22 was recommended for a harbor office, it leaves lot 20 for a thoroughfare for a travel lift, if we are lucky enough to pull all that together.

STOCKBURGER/ZIMMERMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THEY PULL LOT 20 FROM THE LEASE POOL IN ANTICIPATION OF A FUTURE TRAVEL LIFT OPERATION.

There was discussion that the lot would be wide enough for a larger travel lift. It would be an aisle way to get boats in and out, not an area for staging. It was noted that on the outside of the harbor, around lot 6 there is a ramp with deep water access, but an issue with that area is that wind and waves are more of an issue on that side of the harbor.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Ulmer and Commissioner Stockburger confirmed they would attend the Committee of the Whole on March 26 for Council's discussion of the Land Allocation Plan.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Monthly Statistical & Performance Report December 2012
- B. Weekly Crane and Ice Report
- C. Deep Water Dock Report
- D. Pioneer Dock Report & Ferry Landings Report
- E. Water Usage Report
- F. 2013 Council Meeting Attendance Schedule
- G. Seattle Times News Article "State in deep water over derelict boats" dated January 26, 2013

Harbormaster Hawkins commented briefly on the need to keep focusing on the derelict vessel issue for the State. He also provided an update on the load and launch improvements, noting that Fish and Game is working on an RFP for design and hope to get it out this year, bid the project next fall, and plan construction around our season. He doesn't foresee any construction until 2015.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Lu Lovelace, employee at Coal Point read a letter from Nancy Hillstrand that urges the City to slow down on the proposed continuation of the Homer Spit Bike Trail. There is no urgency on the project, and they must take time to gain comprehensive input and understanding from citizens and businesses intimate with the area of impact. She expressed concern about the upheaval from a 10 foot wide asphalt trail packed up against buildings. They need to consider things like harbor use patterns, safety, local residents, visitors, economy, aesthetics, open space, erosion caused by runoff, long term maintenance cost and repair, and our Alaskan freedom of expression. A copy of her letter and draft recommendations was provided for the record.

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

None

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

None

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ulmer thanked everyone for coming.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Wedin commented that a solution to concerns about bikes on the spit would be to have signage to walk bikes in areas where there is high pedestrian traffic. He hopes they can discuss it further when it is appropriate.

Commissioner Zimmerman agrees with Mr. Wedin, and noted that bikes can ride on the side of the road rather than the side of the harbor in the high pedestrian traffic area. He also thinks the End of the Road Park should be called the Trail's End Park. Homer used to be where the trail ends and the sea begins, he doesn't know when it was changed to where the road ends.

Commissioner Stockburger thanked Public Works Director Meyer for coming in and giving a presentation and acknowledging that the public will have some say in the matter. Possibly they could rename the bike trail to bike/walk trail. On the other end it would be nice if some of the walkers on the road would move to the trail, especially when people are hauling boats around. It's good to see these things happening out there, and it will make things look a little more organized. One thing he likes about Seward is that they have things organized so you know where to walk.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____