

**CITY OF UNALASKA, ALASKA
PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016, 6:00 P.M.
UNALASKA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Earnshaw called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Physically Present

Billie Jo Gehring

Lottie Roll

Jessica Earnshaw

Travis Swangel

Commissioners Excused

Vicki Williams

Staff Present

Erin Reinders, Acting Planning Director

Thomas Roufos, Associate Planner

REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA: Chair Earnshaw asked if there were any revisions to the Agenda, Mrs. Erin Reinders announced that there was a revision needed.

Mrs. Reinders announced that the new Planning Commissioner, Mr. Travis Swangel, needed to be sworn in. She also announced that this would come after the appearance requests and before the announcements.

APPEARANCE REQUESTS: None

MR. TRAVIS SWANGEL WAS SWORN INTO OFFICE ON DECEMBER 15, 2016 AT 6:04 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chair Earnshaw asked if there were any announcements.

Mrs. Reinders said that there are a few announcements. The first item was that there is a new schedule for the 2017 Planning Commission/Platting Board Meetings. Next was that the January 19th meeting would be for both Planning Commission as well as Historical Preservation Commission.

Mrs. Reinders gave an update on the search for a new Planning Director, there were 6 applicants, 3 were interviewed. Staff had extended a site visit offer to two of the applicants, however only one candidate accepted and will be coming out next month. That individual will be able to attend the Planning Commission Meeting next month.

She also thanked Commissioner Swangel for applying to and for joining the Commission.

Chair Earnshaw thanked Staff for including the Commissioners in the City Christmas Party.

MINUTES: Chair Earnshaw asked if there were any revisions to the minutes from November 17th.

Commissioner Roll announced she noticed two grammatical errors in the November 17, 2016 minutes. The two errors were the word sewer in New Business and 'requires' needed changed to 'required' in New Business.

Chair Earnshaw asked for a motion to approve the minutes as revised. Commissioner Roll motioned to approve the minutes; Commissioner Gehring Seconded the motion passes 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **RESOLUTION 2016-19:** A RESOLUTION TO THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION APPROVAL OF THE ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO REZONE THE PROPERTY AT LOT 2, BLOCK 5, JESSE LEE SUBDIVISION, P-93-13, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS RECORDING DISTRICT, LOCATED AT 180 EAST BROADWAY AVENUE FROM HOLDING ZONE TO GENERAL COMMERCIAL.

Chair Earnshaw announced that there was a conflict of interest on her part and she would be stepping down from Commission Chair for this item will be and turning the proceedings over to Commissioner Gehring. Commissioner Swangel announced that he worked for Mr. Glenn Olson, the applicant, about 10 years ago; however the Commission decided there was no conflict of interest.

Acting Chair Gehring opened the Public Hearing and asked if any member of the public would like to testify. Ms. Bobbie Lekanoff stated that she would like to read a letter that she wrote to the Commission. In Ms. Lekanoff's letter she stated that she will be using 'we' instead of 'I' because she, her husband and son are co-owners of a neighboring lot. She stated that they are opposed to the zone change to general commercial given the log list of permitted uses and potential conditional uses within a General Commercial District and because of the surrounding residential neighborhoods, schools, churches, and a playing field. Ms. Lekanoff explained that this is not personal to the landowner. They also asked that the Commission not allow anything more intense than residential now or in the future.

Mrs. Reinders announced that the Planning Commission received a letter in objection to this zone change. Mr. Roufos then read the letter sent in by Ms. Katherine Grimnes. In her letter, Ms. Grimnes stated that she will be out of town for the meeting but she was opposed to the zone change to General Commercial because of Mr. Olson's original wetland fill permit. In her letter she explains that the request to the Army COE stated that Mr. Olson needed to fill the land for a building pad for an 8-plex, which from her perspective provided more sorely needed housing. She believes that rezoning to General Commercial would be detrimental to this residential area with a school and the two churches nearby. She also stated she is opposed because of all the children walking and playing adjacent to the area.

Acting Chair Gehring asked if there were any more members of the public wanting to testify. Hearing none, Acting Chair Gehring closed public hearing for Resolution 2016-19.

OLD BUSINESS

No Items

NEW BUSINESS

2. **RESOLUTION 2016-19:** A RESOLUTION TO THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION APPROVAL OF THE ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO REZONE THE PROPERTY AT LOT 2, BLOCK 5, JESSE LEE SUBDIVISION, P-93-13, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS RECORDING DISTRICT, LOCATED AT 180 EAST BROADWAY AVENUE FROM HOLDING ZONE TO GENERAL COMMERCIAL.

Acting Chair Gehring stated that the declaration of ex-parte communications or conflict of interest had already been addressed. Hearing no others, Acting Chair Gehring asked for the staff report.

Mr. Roufos began the staff report with explaining that in 2012 Mr. Olson had turned in an Army COE permit to fill in the lot to construct an 8-plex, the nationwide permit 29 was granted by the Corps to fill in the lot. Mr. Roufos clarified that a Holding Zone is a zone that is held without any uses attached for it for future planning. Now in order to make use of the lot Mr. Olson is requesting a zone change to General Commercial.

Mr. Roufos stated that in Staff's research there is no reason to reject General Commercial because of its location and our Comprehensive Plan. Also staff finds that a lot up against the road with main access to the street allows for good traffic flow. Mr. Roufos stated that any use not identified in a General Commercial zone Mr. Olson would have to apply for a conditional use. Mr. Roufos showed the original Army COE Permit and described that in our discussion with the Corps that Mr. Olson is planning on doing a multi-use building which includes a business on the bottom floor and residential on the top.

Acting Chair Gehring asked if Mr. Tyler Zimmerman, the applicant's representative, would like to speak. Mr. Zimmerman agreed to speak and he stated that the packet does a good job with summarizing the lot and the intentions as well. He asked if there were any questions for him.

Acting Chair Gehring asked Mr. Zimmerman if he knows what the commercial property will be. Mr. Zimmerman stated that he thinks that it will be more office space on bottom and residential on top.

Commissioner Swangel asked what the main usage of the building would be and asked for a more focused definition. He also asked if it were ever sold if this plan would limit what it would be the allowed uses. Mr. Zimmerman stated that selling has never been discussed so he doesn't think it will be a worry. He also explained that housing and office space has always been discussed but there hasn't been much plan development beyond that.

Commissioner Swangel asked if this would be company housing or for the public to rent. Mr. Zimmerman responded by stating that they have discussed both.

Commissioner Roll asked for the differences between General Commercial and High -Density Residential. Mrs. Reinders responded with stating that the proposed development can go two ways, it could go with General Commercial to have a business created first and request a conditional use permit from the Planning Commission for residential uses later; or the other option is to have the Planning Commission recommend to zone the lot as High-Density Residential allowing for the residential uses and have the applicant request for conditional use permit for a specific business portion.

Commissioner Roll also asked if the city gets any say on what kind of business gets to go into the building. Mrs. Reinders stated that whatever uses are listed under the zoning ordinance for General Commercial would be allowed.

Commissioner Swangel asked Mr. Zimmerman if they considered doing High-Density Residential with a conditional use permit. Mr. Zimmerman stated that they could probably make it work that way but zoning General Commercial is more ideal.

Acting Chair Gehring asked for any more questions.

Commissioner Swangel stated that there haven't really been many people opposing change in rezoning a lot in the past and his concern is that two property owners have expressed concern and that there is a church property and a school nearby. He wondered if it would be better to do High-Density Residential and have a conditional use permit for the additional business they would like to have in the building.

Acting Chair Gehring asked if Staff would like to follow up.

Mrs. Reinders stated that, as a reminder, as the Planning Commission considered what to zone properties, the things that need to be considered are: is it reasonable, is it in the public interest, and is it in conformance with the comprehensive plan. As noted in the staff report, staff finds that both General Commercial and High Density Residential meet these tests of code. Taking into account what has been stated during the Public Hearing goes into addressing whether or not the zoning is reasonable and in the public interest.

Acting Chair Gehring stated that she initially was all for this and that she doesn't see this causing an issue with the children and the school and the church. She feels as though the two options are the same. Mrs. Reinders stated that the two options are different; she explained that General Commercial approved a wide verity of commercial uses by right, however if the applicant wanted to add a business if it were zoned High-Density Residential they would need to come before the Planning Commission for a Conditional Use Permit allow for a specified use.

Commissioner Swangel asked if approval by the fire marshal for residential above the business. Mrs. Reinders stated that it would have to go through the fire marshal.

Commissioner Roll asked for clarification on what the use will be. Mrs. Reinders stated that all we know is the intent that was expressed verbally as there has been nothing submitted in writing to the City. Commissioner Swangel stated that it is great that intent has been expressed but he is concerned that they could do anything on the list if it is zoned General Commercial. Acting Chair Gehring stated that concern about what it will be used for that the better option to insure the restriction may be to suggest High-Density Residential.

Acting Chair Gehring asked how the commission would go about suggesting High Density Residential. Mrs. Reinders stated that they could move to revise the resolution to replace the underlined General Commercial to High-Density Residential and then that recommendation would go to the City Council with the amended Resolution 2016-19.

Acting Chair Gehring asked, since hearing no other discussion, if Mr. Zimmerman had anything else to say. Mr. Zimmerman declined.

Ms. Lekanoff stated that she agreed that High-Density Residential would be the best option with a conditional use later.

Acting Chair Gehring asked for a motion. Commissioner Swangel motioned to approve Resolution 2016-19, Commissioner Roll seconded.

Commissioner Roll motioned to amend the Resolution 2016-19 from Holding Zone to High Density Residential, instead of General Commercial, Acting Chair Gehring seconded, the amended Resolution 2016-19

A roll call vote was taken on the motion to amend, and the motion passed 3-0. A roll call vote was taken on the main motion, and Resolution 2016-19 as revised passed 3-0.

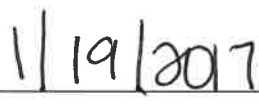
WORKSESSION

No Items

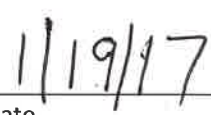
ADJOURNMENT: Acting Chair Gehring adjourned the meeting at 6:47 PM.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 19th DAY OF JANUARY, 2017 BY THE CTY OF UNALASKA PLANNING COMMISSION.


Jessica Earnshaw
Commission Chair


Date


Erin Reinders, AICP
Secretary of the Commission


Date

Prepared by Morgyn McConnell, Planning Department