

**CITY OF UNALASKA, ALASKA
PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
UNALASKA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES**

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

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Physically Present

Thomas Bell
Helen Brown
Billie Joe Gehring
Vicki Williams
Travis Swangel

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present

Bil Homka, Planning Director
Thomas Roufos, Associate Planner
Judy Huling, Administrative Assistant

REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA: Added Oath of Office, Appointment of Chair, Changes in titles of Resolutions
Commissioner Swangel motioned to approve the Agenda as revised. Commissioner Williams seconded. Motion passed.

OATH OF OFFICE: Chair Gehring administered Oath of Office to Thomas Bell.

ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIRPERSON: Commissioner Swangel nominated Acting Chair Gehring. Commissioner Williams seconded the nomination.
Vote was unanimous. Acting Chair Gehring accepted the nomination.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Homka stated the 2017 Annual Report would be presented to the City Council at their next meeting on February 27th and asked if anyone from the Commission would be willing to make that presentation. Chair Gehring volunteered to make the presentation.
Mr. Homka also shared the new City Manager, Thomas Thomas, would be starting March 17th or 18th.
Chair Gehring said the Chocolate tasting the previous evening was well attended and wonderful.

MINUTES: Commissioner Williams made a motion to accept the minutes from December 21, 2017 and January 18, 2018. Commissioner Swangel seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **RESOLUTION 2018-01:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD 2017 ANNUAL REPORT AND FILING THE SAME WITH THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL

Commissioner Swangel noted an incorrect date in the report. Mr. Roufos gave a summary of the report and invited the Commission to make any additions as needed. Mr. Homka also gave his summary and invited the Commission to add any items they felt were important to be included in the Report.

Chair Gehring stated that they would consider **Resolution 2018-02** and **Resolution 2018-03** together as they related to the same project.

2. **RESOLUTION 2018-02:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE FOR A THREE STORY APARTMENT STRUCTURE LOCATED ON LOT 9, BLOCK 1 OF USS 1992, UNALASKA TOWNSITE, AT 28 N. 2ND STREET
3. **RESOLUTION 2018-03:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A REAR YARD SETBACK VARIANCE OF THREE FEET AND A SIDE YARD SETBACK VARIANCE OF FOUR FEET FOR A THREE STORY APARTMENT STRUCTURE LOCATED ON LOT 9, BLOCK 1 OF USS 1992, UNALASKA TOWNSITE, AT 28 N. 2ND STREET

Mr. Honan was invited to speak to the Commission. He explained his reasons for requesting the variance. The additional apartments would be used to generate income for helping people who are stranded in town.

Commissioner Gehring asked why it was called Alexandria House. Mr. Honan shared it was the name of the daughter of the man who donated the property for the purpose of helping the stranded. Mr. Honan looked up the meaning of the name and it was "helper and defender of mankind." He felt that was fantastic.

Commissioner Swangel noted that there were three lots that encompassed the site and that the staff had recommended they be combined into one. He asked if Mr. Honan had any intention of doing so. Mr. Honan stated he would love to do it.

Commissioner Swangel asked for clarification on the use of the property other than the shed under consideration. Mr. Honan stated the downstairs was commercial and the upstairs had received a variance for one residential unit. The residential unit is used as a short-term option, mostly for business people in need of accommodation with a minimum of three days and maximum of usually two weeks. Donations are accepted and used to meet the needs of people stranded in Unalaska. One office downstairs is rented, and one is available. A large room in the downstairs is used for meetings and events.

Mr. Honan explained why he was planning to use the existing foundation and what he is currently planning for each of the three stories. The first story would continue to be used for storing maintenance items with possibly an efficiency unit as room permits. The second and third stories would be used for one-bedroom studio units. Right now they have the stairway proposed on the Fox Alley side. They prefer to keep the view of the bay clear.

Commissioner Swangel asked the staff if it was a big deal to have the three lots turned into one lot. Mr. Homka stated it would probably require a plat to join the lots into one. It would involve getting a surveyor. The staff did not recommend it being made a condition of the variance, only that Mr. Honan meet with the Planning staff to talk about the possibility of joining the lots into one lot.

Chair Gehring stated that one of the conditional uses was that it not be used for overnight emergency or transient housing. She asked for clarification of Mr. Honan's statement that people had stayed in the current Alexandria House residential unit for days or weeks. Mr. Honan stated that those people that had stayed were engineers, the vet, people that were traveling through town visiting family, wanting someplace to stay for a few days. The suggested donation is \$140/night. The people who have stayed there are not the people who show up at his door in need of emergency help.

Chair Gehring stated that items four and five were dealing with the same project, so they would have public hearing on both resolutions together.

4. **RESOLUTION 2018-04:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR A CELLULAR TOWER ON LOT 2, TRACT B-2, BLUEBERRY HILL SUBDIVISION SATELLITE DISH ADDITION, PLAT 2018-01
5. **RESOLUTION 2018-05:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A FRONT SETBACK VARIANCE OF EIGHT FEET FOR A CELLULAR TOWER ON LOT 2, TRACT B-2, BLUEBERRY HILL SUBDIVISION SATELLITE DISH ADDITION, PLAT 2018-01

Mr. Emmitt Fitch was invited to speak to the Commission. Mr. Fitch stated his intent to do an LTE with this tower. The tower would enable him to reach all parts of the valley with coverage.

Commissioner Swangel asked if there would be any potential problem with damage to neighboring residential property if the tower were to fall. Mr. Fitch stated that there was no development close enough to be affected and any future development would probably not be done close enough to be affected because of the topography of the area. The tower they planned to build is the strongest available at this time. The tower is 30' tall. The intention is for the foundation to be at ground level. If the foundation ends up being above grade the tower may end up reaching 35' above ground level. The tower will be shorter than the satellite dish on the same lot and shorter than the water tower on the next lot.

Chair Gehring asked if they might have any reason to go taller at a future time. Mr. Fitch explained that current technology actually works better at lower levels rather than higher elevations used in the past.

OLD BUSINESS

No Items

NEW BUSINESS

1. **RESOLUTION 2018-01:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD 2017 ANNUAL REPORT AND FILING THE SAME WITH THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-01**. Commissioner Brown seconded.

Chair Gehring asked if there was any additional discussion on this resolution. Hearing none, a vote was called for. Motion passed.

2. **RESOLUTION 2018-02:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE FOR A THREE STORY APARTMENT STRUCTURE LOCATED ON LOT 9, BLOCK 1 OF USS 1992, UNALASKA TOWNSITE, AT 28 N. 2ND STREET

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-02**. Commissioner Swangel seconded.

Chair Gehring asked if there were any additional comments from staff. Mr. Roufos stated that the conditional use would be for three residential units on a commercial lot. Commissioner Swangel asked if the resolution should be changed to two units due to the applicant's plans to keep the first level for maintenance and storage. After discussion it was determined that the resolution should remain as written to allow the applicant to put an efficiency apartment on the first floor if space permitted.

After asking for any additional comments, Chair Gehring asked for a roll call vote on the motion to approve the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

3. **RESOLUTION 2018-03:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A REAR YARD SETBACK VARIANCE OF THREE FEET AND A SIDE YARD SETBACK VARIANCE OF FOUR FEET FOR A THREE STORY APARTMENT STRUCTURE LOCATED ON LOT 9, BLOCK 1 OF USS 1992, UNALASKA TOWNSITE, AT 28 N. 2ND STREET

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-03**. Commissioner Bell seconded.

Chair Gehring asked for staff comments. Mr. Roufos gave the staff report, explaining the current set-back requirements of the lot and the reasons for the variance request.

Commissioner Swangel asked how many parking places were on the property. Mr. Honan stated there were nine parking spots on the property itself. It was determined there would be ample room for parking as required by code. It was also stated by Mr. Roufos that Blue Fox Alley would not be used for parking.

Chair Gehring asked if there was any additional discussion. Mr. Roufos stated that Rufina Shaishnikoff had expressed her concerns to Planning staff. She was opposed to the three story height. She felt it was too tall on too

small of a foundation. She was afraid it would be blown over in a strong wind. She said historically neighbors had to build within set-back requirements after tearing their buildings down. She didn't think it was fair he would be able to build up on the same footprint. She suggested adding the 3 units to the existing Alexandria house/Elbow Room building.

Hearing no further discussion, Chair Gehring asked for a roll call vote. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **RESOLUTION 2018-04:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR A CELLULAR TOWER ON LOT 2, TRACT B-2, BLUEBERRY HILL SUBDIVISION SATELLITE DISH ADDITION, PLAT 2018-01

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-04**. Commissioner Brown seconded.

Chair Gehring asked for additional staff comments. Mr. Roufos stated that the conditional use was required because of current zoning for that property. He said staff was looking at the possibility of rezoning that area to public/quasi-public to allow it to be used as necessary for expansion of technology and communication services.

Commissioner Swangel felt that the proposed area was an appropriate place for a tower.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Gehring asked for a vote. Motion passed.

5. **RESOLUTION 2018-05:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A FRONT SETBACK VARIANCE OF EIGHT FEET FOR A CELLULAR TOWER ON LOT 2, TRACT B-2, BLUEBERRY HILL SUBDIVISION SATELLITE DISH ADDITION, PLAT 2018-01

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to accept **Resolution 2018-05**. Commissioner Bell seconded.

Chair Gehring asked for staff report. Mr. Roufos explained the reasons for the variance request and that staff felt the conditions for a variance had been met.

Commissioner Swangel felt the commission should not get in the habit of granting permission for towers to be built on the edge of a property, but he felt this was clearly a case where the location made sense.

Hearing no further discussion, Chair Gehring called for a vote on approving this resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

WORKSESSION

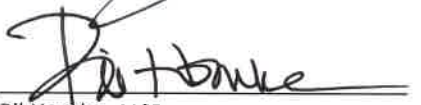
No Items

ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Williams called for adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 7:07pm.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 15th DAY OF MARCH, 2018 BY THE CTY OF UNALASKA PLANNING COMMISSION.


Billie Jo Gehring
Commission Chair

3-15-18
Date


Bil Homka, AICP
Secretary of the Commission

3-15-18
Date

Prepared by Judith Huling, Administrative Assistant