

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2010
7:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairman Kerslake at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Present and constituting a quorum were Chairman Kerslake, Commissioners Madar, Bower, Silva, and Kircher. Commissioner Hamming was excused. Also present were Sandra Garley, Community Development Director, and Dawn Webster, Recording Secretary.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge was led by Commissioner Madar.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved as amended.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 17, 2009 were approved as submitted.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD: None.

G. PUBLIC HEARING: None.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Highway Corridor Landscape Draft Ordinance Review

Ms. Garley provided the staff report:

- gave an overview of the Highway Corridor Landscape Committee ordinance
- stated it was a good working draft
- thanked the committee members, Tamie Miller, Michael Kircher, Ron Bissett, and Chuck Leet, along with staff members who worked on the project
- introduced Luanne Urfer of URS who is the design consultant for the project

Luanne Urfer provided the commissioners with:

- Overview of the ordinance and the guide
- Draft appendices handed out tonight to the commissioners
- Advised of how the corridors and gateways were selected by magnitude of importance
- Referenced the maps in the appendices
- Information on the "boulevard look" for the Glenn Highway
- How the Historic District was considered with regard to design conflicts

- Character elements which impact the design of Palmer
- Accessible and safe walkways and walkable zones
- Addressed winter cities design elements and complete streets
- Complete streets have design elements that are friendly to pedestrians, vehicles, and bicycles
- Wildlife and lighting impacts
- Curb extensions at major intersections and provide pedestrians with more access for crossing roadways
- Discussed the types of plants that are prohibited (invasive species) and that the list may be modified from time to time
- Discussed how the ordinance will be written to allow the contractor freedom to select other types of plantings than just those listed, the contractor can propose additional plants
- The plant types submitted will be reviewed by the city, botanical names will be required in the submittals

Commissioner Madar complimented Ms. Urfer on the report. Commissioner Madar asked for clarification on Section 7, conflicts in code; and how the planting submittal reviews will take place. Ms. Garley advised the submittals will be sent to Public Works for their review and comments. Commissioner Madar inquired whether the R-O-W widths could be added to the list of roads in the document. He also inquired whether existing business will be impacted by the ordinance; Ms. Garley advised that the existing businesses will not be impacted; new road construction will be required to comply with the ordinance.

Chairman Kerlake inquired of whether we could request a boulevard type of design for the Glenn Highway; Ms. Garley advised the design standards will reflect that request.

COMMISSIONER KIRCHER moved, seconded by CHAIRMAN KERSLAKE, to forward the incomplete working document in its current form to the City Council for their information and comments and request they send it back to the commission for further review and work.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion regarding possible code change to allow a planning and zoning commission member to reside outside the city limits

Ms. Garley discussed the draft resolution on the table as a starting point to prepare a final resolution to send to the City Council requesting a code change to allow a commissioner to be a nonresident of the city.

Commissioner Madar suggested the code change allow up to two nonresidents as commission members and limit the number of years the commissioner could serve to see how it works.

Commissioner Kircher agreed to the time limit; he suggested restricting the area for applicants to the utility service area or some other existing boundary.

Commissioner Silva suggested allowing Palmer business owners to apply to be commissioners; discussion followed. Commissioner Kircher disagreed with the suggestion because the business owners can come and testify at any time at any commission meeting without having to be a member of the commission.

Ms. Garley will bring a new resolution to the next meeting (February 18, 2010) reflecting the changes requested by the commission.

2. Janette Bower, City Clerk, presentation to Commission

Ms. Bower addressed:

- Preparation of the agenda
- Committee of the Whole
- Changes to the Open Meeting Act
- Ex-parte contact
- Parliamentary procedures
- Motions
- Voting procedures

J. PLAT REVIEWS: None.

K. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

L. STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Garley advised of a meeting held with a board member of the Matanuska Christian School which is located in the C-L, Commercial Limited District. During the meeting it was determined that schools are not a permitted use in the district. The Matanuska Christian School has formally requested a code change to permit both public and private schools to be located in the C-L District. Staff will be bringing forward a recommendation for the code change at the next meeting.

Ms. Garley addressed the annual building report and changes it reflected from the previous year; she indicated there was a huge change in the number of residential structures constructed last year and that it is a good economic indicator.

M. BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: None.

N. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Madar: none

Commissioner Bower: none

Commissioner Silva: Thanked Ms. Garley for the year-end activity report from Community Development with photographs of the before and after property conditions

Commissioner Kircher: Noted that the commission meetings are not listed on the City's website Events Calendar. Also stated that the webcam is down and wondered if it could be

fixed? Announced a presentation by USGS on the Castle Mountain Fault to be held on February 5, 2010, at the Spring Creek Farm; it is open to the public. To see other programs being held at the farm, Google - Spring Creek Farm Alaska.

Chairman Kerslake announced he may not be here for the February 18, 2010 meeting.

O. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

William B. Kerslake, Sr., Chairman

Dawn U. Webster, Recording Secretary