

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 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 Vice Chairman Madar at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Present and constituting a quorum were Vice Chairman Madar, Commissioners Bower, Hamming, Silva, and Kircher. Chairman Kerslake 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 Silva.

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

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2010 were approved as submitted.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD: None.

G. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Request to rezone Lots 14, 15, 16, and 17, Block 2, Greatland Terrace I, from R-1, Single-Family Residential District to P, Public Use District

The staff report was provided by Ms. Garley:

- The four lots are owned by the city
- By rezoning the lots to P, staff is moving toward its goal of rezoning all lots owned by the city to P, Public Use District
- Public hearing notices were sent to 192 property owners within 1,200 feet of the subject lots; the public hearing was advertised in the newspaper on February 10, 2010 and posted at City Hall and on the city's website. Only one response to the public notice was received and it was in support of the rezone
- The lots are located off Daron Drive; the property to the north is zoned General Commercial; the properties to the east, south, and west are zoned R-1
- The proposed rezone is in accordance with the Borough and City comprehensive plan
- The proposed rezone will be an asset for the existing residential development in the area
- There will be no need for upgrades to the city utilities because residential development will not be permitted on the lots
- There are no known changed conditions affecting the lots
- The welfare of the public will be impacted in a positive way because it will designate

the lots for a public purpose

- Staff recommends approval of the requested rezone from R-1, Single-Family Residential District to P, Public Use District

COMMISSIONER HAMMING moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BOWER, to approve the request to rezone lots 14, 15, 16, and 17, Block 2, Greatland Terrace I, from R-1, Single-Family Residential District to P, Public Use District.

Discussion followed, Commissioner Bower inquired as to how many lots were used as park land; Ms Garley responded only one lot was developed for the park at this time, however, additional playground equipment will be moved onto the site. The equipment purchased ten years ago has been in storage and will be moved onto the site this year.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:08 p.m.

Gerry Romanczak spoke in support of the rezone and inquired whether the lots would be consolidated or maintained as individual lots; Ms. Garley that the city does not anticipate replatting the lots to create one new lot. Mr. Romanczak expressed concern that the Public Use designation could be rescinded at a later time; Ms. Garley advised a public process would be required to do so. Mr. Romanczak stated he would like to see the large parcel, currently owned by Safeway, be included in any future city park plans; stated that traffic congestion in the area makes it difficult to get out onto the Palmer/Wasilla Highway from Daron Drive to get to Wasilla. He stated the city does not have very much park space and wants to see more land dedicated for that purpose. He expressed concern if Safeway were to develop the parcel regarding how traffic in the area would be handled at that location.

Nathan Romanczak spoke in support of the rezone; would like to see a fence with a designated entry into the park area.

Ms. Garley inquired as to whether both Gerry and Nathan Romanczak would be willing serve as citizen members who could be called upon for input with the design and development of the park as both a winter use and summer use area; they both agreed.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:17 p.m.

Commissioner Silva expressed concern regarding the use of private property to access the park and requested appropriate fencing be provided at the park entrance in an attempt to direct people away from crossing private property to gain access to the park.

Commission Hamming inquired as to the amount of money available in the park fund and stated that the park fund was to be used for park infrastructure, not for maintenance, not anything but swing sets, slides and fences. Ms. Garley will bring that information to the next meeting.

Discussion of Findings of Facts:

Madar	Kerslake	Hamming	Bower	Silva	Kircher	
1. The proposed change is in accordance with the borough and city comprehensive plans.						
Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	

2. The proposed change is compatible with the surrounding zoning districts and the established land use pattern.						
Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	
3. Public facilities such as schools, utilities and streets are adequate to support the proposed change.						
Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	
4. Changed conditions affecting the subject parcel or the surrounding neighborhood support the proposed change.						
Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	
5. The proposed change is consistent with the public welfare and does not grant a special privilege to the owner(s).						
Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Findings

- (1) The City of Palmer’s Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 6, Goal 1, Guide growth to make Palmer an increasingly attractive place to live, invest, work and visit. Objective A states “Guide growth so the overall development pattern for the community has the following characteristics including space for new residential neighborhoods, primarily around the outer portions of the community, but also within mixed use areas in the downtown core. Residential areas include internal open space, parks and connecting trails.”
- (2) Land use in the surrounding zoning districts is primarily single-family residential, therefore, designating the four lots P, Public Use, will be an asset for the existing residential development in the area
- (3) It is not anticipated there will be any need for upgrades in public facilities due to the requested change because residential development will not be permitted on the lots.
- (4) There are no known changed conditions affecting these lots; the use of the lots has been designated for park and public purpose land.
- (5) The welfare of the public is impacted in a positive way by the zoning change because it will designate the land for a public purpose.

VOTE ON MOTION: Motion Carried Unanimously

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 1. Resolution to recommend a code change to 2.20.010.A. to allow up to two Commission members to be nonresidents of the city.

Ms. Garley provided the staff report;

- The proposed resolution was discussed at the joint meeting with the City Council on February 16, 2010
- The area within which a new commissioner may be selected has been expanded from city limits to include the Palmer Utility Service Area
- City Council requested the resolution be finalized and brought back to them for approval for the code change

COMMISSIONER HAMMING moved, seconded by COMMISSION BOWER to adopt the resolution to request a code change to PMC 2.20.010.A. to allow two members of the commission to reside outside the Palmer City Limits but within Palmer’s Utility Service Area.

Discussion followed. COMMISSIONER HAMMING moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BOWER, to enter into the Committee of the Whole at 7:28 p.m. and to allow interested members of the public to speak to the issue.

COMMISSIONER HAMMING moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BOWER, to exit the Committee of the Whole at 7:29 p.m.

COMMISSIONER HAMMING moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER KIRCHER, to amend the motion to adopt the resolution with the deletion of "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the term limit for commission members who are nonresidents of the city shall be two years."

VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO MAIN MOTION: Motion Carried Unanimously

Commissioner Madar addressed the issue of having a school student become a nonvoting member of the Commission; Commission Hamming agreed and requested a discussion be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Staff will add the request to the next agenda. Further discussion was held regarding the request of the Planning and Zoning Commission to not further qualify an applicant for the Planning and Zoning Commission other than the need to reside within the Palmer Utility Service Area; Ms. Garley advised that she will include that information in the accompanying IM that supports the Resolution.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Motion Carried Unanimously

- I. NEW BUSINESS: None.
- J. PLAT REVIEWS: None.
- K. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.
- L. BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: No report.
- M. STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Garley stated she was pleased with Chris Beck's presentation at the joint Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council meeting and hopes that it will help the City Council formulate the changes needed prior to annexation; a lot of responsibility will fall upon the Planning and Zoning Commission to get the required changes made to the Transition Zone, the Agricultural Zone and to develop an area where residents can keep large animals on residential lots, not on a farm, within the city limits accomplished this year.

- N. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Hamming: Stated he will be flying out of state on March 18th and may or may not be here for the next meeting.

Commissioner Kircher inquired as to when the final report is due from Agnew::Beck; Ms. Garley advised the report should be ready in about a month. He stated that it is very difficult to go through the annexation process and hopes there will be a new commission member before the process begins.

Commissioner Silva inquired as to the deadline for e-mail comments for Chris Beck; staff will let the commissioners know by e-mail what that date will be. Ms. Garley will forward

Agnew::Beck's scope of work to Commissioner Silva.

Commissioner Bower stated he will be gone for the months of September and October but will be willing to participate by teleconference if there are serious issues before the commission.

Commissioner Madar stated the thought Chris Beck's presentation was "spot on" and he thought the audience did listen. He also attended the terminus meeting and was disappointed at the three plans presented by the committee; he felt that the options presented would eventually cause harm to the city.

O. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Mike Madar, Vice Chairman

Dawn U. Webster, Recording Secretary