



City of Palmer
Planning and Zoning Commission Packet
May 21, 2015





AGENDA

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Approval of Agenda
- Page 5 E. Minutes of Previous Meetings
 - 1. Regular Meeting of April 16, 2015
- F. Persons to be Heard
- G. Public Hearings
- Page 17 H. Unfinished Business
 - 1. Review Draft Ordinance 15-00x An Ordinance of the Palmer City Council Amending Palmer Municipal Code Title 17 Zoning Chapter 17.60 to include 17.60.057 Amnesty For Setback Encroachments
- Page 23 I. New Business
 - 1. IM 15-012 Planned Unit Development Informal Review for Tax Parcel C8 in Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian- Presentation by John Weaver with Valley Residential Services
 - 2. Review Safe Routes to School Plan
 - Page 37 3. Resolution No. 15-004: A Resolution of the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission requesting the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities add a separated trail along the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Sutton to the State Transportation Improvement Program
 - Page 41 4. Resolution No. 15-005: A Resolution of the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Approving the Placement of a 60' x 40' Storage Building in the P-Public District Located on Tract 1G, ARRC 2008 for the Palmer Senior Center
 - Page 49 5. Resolution No. 15-006: A Resolution of the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Approving the Construction of a 64' x 30' Pole Barn in the P-Public District Located at 1170 W. Arctic Avenue on Tax Parcel C17 in Section 32, Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian, for the Palmer High School
- J. Plat Reviews
- K. Public Comments

L. Staff Report

M. Commissioner Comments

N. Adjournment



Minutes

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015
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 on April 16, 2015 at 7:06 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present and constituting a quorum were Commissioners:

William Kerslake, Sr., Chairman
Michael Kircher, Vice Chairman
David Petty
Douglas Cruthers

Excused absence(s):

Dan Lucas
Merry Maxwell

Also present were:

Sandra S. Garley, Community Development Director
Kimberly A. McClure, Planning and Code Compliance Technician

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

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

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

The minutes of the January 15, 2015 Regular Meeting were approved as presented.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD:

There were no persons wishing to speak on a topic not on the agenda.

G. PUBLIC HEARING(S):

1. **IM 15-008:** Request to rezone Tax Parcel C8 in Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian located south of E. Cope Industrial Way and adjacent to the MTA Events Center and Palmer Job Corps from R-1, Single-family Residential to R-4, High Density Residential.

Ms. Garley reported background information on the above zoning map amendment, noting the applicant/owner is Brandon J. Blake, along with owner representatives Duaine Arthur Richards and Ardith Eleanor Richards, Co-Trustees of the Richards Family Trust, Sid A. Richards, James Donald Smith, Jr., and Pierre J. Nicolet. The owners are requesting a zone change from R-1 to R-4 to allow for future development of this parcel

for higher density of residential use. Information and written responses provided by the applicant are contained in staff's full written report beginning at page 13 of the packet. Public notice and publishing requirements pursuant to code have been met. A total of 20 written comments (1 comment via phone) were received in response – 0 in favor, 19 opposed, and 1 no objection.

Staff would recommend approval based on the following findings *if the Commission concurs following public hearing*:

Pursuant to PMC 17.80.036.C, the Commission shall give consideration as to what effect the proposed change would have on public health, safety, welfare and convenience, and for a map amendment show whether:

Fact 1) The proposed change is in accordance with the borough and city comprehensive plans:

Staff finds the following facts support this finding: Goal 2 of Chapter 6, Land Use, from The 2006 Palmer Comprehensive Plan states: "Maintain high quality residential neighborhoods; promote development of a range of desirable new places to live in Palmer." Objective C under Goal 2 goes on to state "Encourage infill and higher density housing in and around downtown. Prepare new zoning standards and design guidelines to ensure higher density housing is high quality to benefit the residents and the community." The proposed zone change to R-4, High Density Residential, would allow for the option of infill of high density development on this property which is located between the MTA Events Center and Job Corps.

The 2006 Palmer Comprehensive Plan recognized one of Palmer's many assets to be water and sewer connections which would permit higher density housing. Another asset mentioned is the chance to have a residence within a short walking distance of schools.

Fact 2) The proposed change is compatible with surrounding zoning districts and the established land use pattern:

Finding: The parcel's location is surrounded by a mix of public, business, high density residential and planned unit development uses. Among the surrounding districts and established uses are Palmer Job Corps, Mountain Rose Estates, MTA Events Center, Palmer Junior Middle School, and nearby are Mountain Rose East Condos and Eagle Ridge apartment building. If rezoned to R-4, High Density Residential, this parcel would be compatible with surrounding zoning districts and existing uses, and would allow for future development of this parcel for residential use at a higher density level.

Fact 3) Public facilities such as schools, utilities and streets are adequate to support the proposed change:

Finding: Public facilities such as schools and utilities are adequate to support the proposed change. There are numerous existing low to high density residential and public uses in the surrounding area. An Application for a proposed secondary access to this parcel has been submitted to the Borough; the availability of water and sewer lines to accommodate high density development on this parcel has been confirmed by Public Works.

Fact 4) Changed conditions affecting the subject parcel or the surrounding neighborhood support the proposed change:

Finding: The surrounding neighborhoods east of South Chugach are comprised of a mix of residential, public and business uses. The proposed change to R-4, High Density Residential, for this parcel would be compatible and is supported by the variety of surrounding public uses and low to high density residential uses.

Fact 5) The proposed change is consistent with the public welfare and does not grant a special privilege to the owner(s):

Finding: The proposed zone change is consistent with the public welfare and does not grant this parcel any special privilege as the requested zone change is consistent with nearby PUD and properties zoned R-2 and R-4.

Public Hearing [Resolution 15-003; Zoning Map Amendment, Tax Parcel C8, R-1 to R-4]

Chairman Kerslake opened the public hearing at 7:14 p.m.

Speaking on behalf of the applicants:

John Weaver, President and CEO of Valley Residential Services, noted a recent study revealed that the Mat-Su Borough population will increase from today's population of 98,000 to 125,000 by the year 2020 and 165,000 by the year 2030. Additional housing is needed in the Valley to accommodate this growth. Rezoning this 9.3 acre parcel to R-4 will allow a housing project to be developed to this anticipated need. VRS is teaming up with Volunteers of America for this project. He introduced Elaine Dogren.

Elaine McDahlgren, President and CEO of Volunteers of America Alaska, explained that VOA is a national nonprofit organization that builds homes and provides many services across the United States. They are the largest provider of affordable housing in the nonprofit world and own over 19,000 units of housing outside of Alaska, and recently built 141 units of housing in Trail Side Heights on Abbott & Lake Otis in Anchorage. They own the units they build forever and take very good care of them. They conduct screening and background checks on all residents. They know who is living in their units and who is driving through at all times. She introduced Ron Bateman.

Ron Bateman, Lumen Design, LLC, Architect on this project, explained that Lumen has been involved since 2007 in 22 housing projects ranging from 12 to 80 units. Mr. Bateman explained his background and housing projects in which he has been involved. They have four projects currently under construction with VOAAK, including three in Anchorage and one in Juneau. Of primary importance and reasons for their success in development of affordable housing is: 1) Neighborhoods must be safe – certain rules of design create safe areas for people to live; all of their townhouse units have garages – purpose is not only for cars, but to help keep the site clean; projects are pointed toward “workforce housing” – young working families who have good credit and need a decent

place to live. 2) The property must look nice having high quality material siding and curb appeal; much emphasis is put on and money invested in a landscape that can mature into a beautiful neighborhood that people would want to live in, and that over time be a real asset to the community. He would not work on a project that he, himself, would not want to live in. He invited Commission members to visit one of their developments in Anchorage. The key for projects like this is it has to be a place that people would want to live and it has to have on-site property management that takes care of and has long-term ownership in the property. This project will be a 6-star Building Energy Efficiency Standard (BEES), which is the highest energy rating attainable. All their projects utilize significant solar panels contributing to the electrical utilities of the building use as siding. The units are generally two and three bedroom, between 900 and 1200 square feet, with at least a one-car garage with parking space in front. Another emphasis is put on pedestrian paths for kids to move through the project and to schools.

Robert Nilsen, resident of Mountain Rose Estates, spoke in opposition to the requested rezone, explaining that this parcel is adjacent to MRE on the north side. The residents of MRE are all senior citizens who have purchased for their quiet retirement living. Since 2001, rezoning has changed the adjacent property from farm land to multi-purpose housing, two 10-plexes, a ball park and an ice rink. Rezoning this parcel has the potential to add an additional 10-plexes or small cluster homes which they believe will negatively impact the quiet living of MRE residents with a potential of loss to home values. They see no need for additional high density housing and requested the commission consider the impact on 67 senior families when making its decision.

Keith Morberg, resident of Mountain Rose Estates, emphasized that he is not anti-development, believes in responsible development, but spoke in opposition to this requested rezone. It is not responsible for P&Z to take the lowest density residential zoning and convert it to the highest density without the advantage of looking at a site plan. Although he's heard the testimony about the proposed development tonight, there is no guarantee it will be built accordingly. He explained the PUD process which allows both the city and the adjacent owners to review and comment on a site plan, and if approved, gives some sort of assurance that the development will be built per the approved site plan before going forward. For that reason, he asked that the commission not approve the requested rezone.

Allan Linn, resident of Mountain Rose Estates, substantially mirrored the comments of Mr. Morberg, speaking in opposition. Expanding on his written comments in the packet, he is opposed to the requested rezone for the reasons 1) R-4 permits the establishment of a trailer court next to MRE of which he would be opposed; 2) There is a 100' powerline easement which runs along the entire length of the proposed rezone area near its easterly side, within which no permanent improvement can be constructed that would interfere with the ability of the utility to maintain the facility; he has concerns as to what the impact would be on MRE; and 3) raised concerns and spoke about the surface water runoff and drainage problem in the area, including the proposed rezone location, which if not strictly controlled could increase potential hazards to residents of MRE.

Dave Rose, Mat-Su Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, informed of the Mat-Su Borough Housing Needs Assessment recently conducted in February and spoke to the need for more housing of any kind in the Mat-Su Borough and in Palmer. The Needs Assessment revealed that "in general there's an affordable housing issue in the Mat-Su Borough affecting approximately 24-29% of the population" – almost one-third of the population is having a hard time finding housing they can afford. He applauded the Commission for addressing the issue.

Warren Keogh, resident of Mountain Rose Estates, spoke in opposition. He appreciated the comments of the applicants and Mr. Rose and agreed that there is a need for more housing in the valley and certainly a need for more affordable housing. The proposed project sounds worthy, but he opposes the location. He echoed the impacts articulated by the previous MRE residents which he felt are significant. There is also the potential for more noise and a change in the character of the neighborhood in the surrounding area. Another concern is potential devaluation of existing properties in MRE. He believes the expected growth in the valley can be accommodated without high density housing on this particular lot and urged the Commission to deny the requested rezone.

Christine Woods Sulak, current resident of Mountain Rose Estates, spoke in opposition for the reason explaining that she previously lived on property adjacent to a high density development; spoke of the many problems; that they were able to build right up to her property without leaving room for ambulances or fire trucks to get through. She agrees there is a need for more housing in the valley, but believes we already have enough high density in Palmer.

There being no other persons coming forward to speak, the public hearing was closed at 7:44 p.m.

For purposes of discussion:

Commissioner Kerlake moved, seconded by **Commissioner Petty**, to recommend that the city council approve subject zoning map amendment more particularly described in **Resolution 15-008**, Parcel C8, from R-1 to R-4, and as outlined by staff.

Commissioner Kircher spoke to and discussed the concerns raised by the residents of Mountain Rose Estates as well as the plans proposed for this property by the applicants. He questioned staff and discussion took place concerning access to the property and the potential for extension of Commercial Drive, including whether it could be vacated. He discussed the requirements and intent of R-4 zoning and conditions that could be applied such as a requirement for tree buffers and fencing. He would have liked to have seen a site plan, however, based on the applicant's testimony, it sounds like it would be well suited for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) which are allowed in an R-1 area without having to change the zoning. He suggested that the Commission decline the change to R-4 based on the testimony given, leave it as R-1, and suggest to the applicants that they go forward with a PUD. It would give everyone a chance to look at it and comment on a guaranteed plan.

Commissioner Petty commented that he also would like to see a site plan, raising concerns about adequate access to the property in terms of fire and emergency; that he also favors a PUD, but mainly would like the fire marshal's opinion and approval of a plan first.

Commissioner Cruthers also would like to see a site plan prior to approval in order to confirm there will be at least two required accesses to the site, but also to see how large the development will be, how many structures, how they will be situated on the site, how many units in total.

Chairman Kerslake commented that since the applicant's presentation did not include a site plan, it would have been beneficial to see photos of their other developments similar to what they have in mind for this location. From the paperwork, he envisioned 20-plex apartment buildings. After listening to the presentation, however, he was encouraged and believes they are actually interested in bringing a good development to Palmer and believes it would be of value to the community. He informed the applicant that one of the goals of the Palmer Comprehensive Plan is to try to fill some of these empty lots with a mix of higher density which is closer to the downtown area in order to make it a viable area, and he thinks the area is growing in that sense. In order to guarantee a design however, he agrees with the others that a PUD would be the right process. He would be very interested in visiting some of the locations in Anchorage, but at this point there are not enough guarantees. For the stated reasons, he encouraged denial of the requested rezone at this time.

VOTE ON MOTION: Defeated Unanimously.

[Kerslake, Kircher, Petty, Cruthers]

Ms. Garley advised the audience of the review process under PMC 17.80.051 upon Commission denial of a motion, stating that upon final vote of the Commission that does not recommend approval of a map or text amendment, that decision shall be final unless the initiating party or property owner, within 20 days of the decision, files a written statement with the City Clerk requesting that amendment be considered by the City Council. She also briefly explained the process should the applicant choose to appeal, in addition to explaining the process for submission of a PUD.

[Chairman Kerslake called a recess at approximately 8:05 p.m.; called the meeting back to order at 8:15 p.m.]

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **IM 15-009**: Consideration of Recommendation to Adopt Amnesty for Certain Setback Encroachments.

Staff Report: Ms. Garley summarized the reasons for the draft ordinance, explaining

that Palmer has housing stock that was built in the '50s before the city was incorporated. These houses can submit a request to be considered for a determination of legal nonconforming. However, there is a second group of long-existing homes that were built after the city adopted setback requirements that have minor setback encroachments but do not qualify for legal nonconforming. It is estimated an approximate 120-150 properties fall into this category. An example of the encroachment is contained in the packet. Letters acknowledging the discrepancies were issued that stated these properties could continue as non-conforming structures subject to restrictions of the zoning ordinance. The problem now arises with financial institutions/lenders no longer accepting this letter because of more stringent lending requirements. They are requiring documentation to show the city does not have issues with these structures that do not qualify for "legal nonconforming" status. The amnesty for these properties would give the City the opportunity to make that certification.

Commissioner Kircher moved, seconded by **Commissioner Petty**, to recommend adoption of the proposed ordinance and move it forward to the City Council.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Cruthers suggested that because these structures were built nonconforming, that language be added to the ordinance requiring any new structure be brought into conformance with current code should it be destroyed by fire. Following further discussion, the other commissioners agreed. Ms. Garley was asked to add the appropriate language for further consideration at the next meeting.

Commissioner Cruthers moved, seconded by **Commissioner Kircher**, to postpone subject motion for further consideration at the next meeting.

VOTE ON MOTION: Carried Unanimously.

J. PLAT REVIEWS:

1. **IM 15-003:** Plat Review – The request is to combine Lots 1 & 2, Block 1, T A Smith, into one lot to be known as Lot 2A, Block 1, T A Smith, located inside Palmer city limits.

Staff Report: Ms. Garley summarized the reviews by city departments noting no changes are necessary.

Following review, there were no further comments by the Commission.

2. **IM 15-004:** Plat Review – The request is to combine Lots 7, 8 & 9, Block 13, ARRC #1, into one lot to be known as Lot 7A, Block 13, ARRC #1, located inside Palmer city limits.

Staff Report: Ms. Garley summarized the reviews by city departments indicating that no changes are necessary.

Following review, there were no further comments by the Commission.

3. **IM 15-005:** Master Plan Review – The request is to 1) Subdivide Tax Parcel A17, Section 7, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian, located outside Palmer city limits, and Tax Parcel D36, Section 6, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian, located inside Palmer city limits, and Lot 5, Block 1, Palmer West, located inside Palmer city limits into a 5-phase Master Plan to be known as Terra Fina, and 2) Request elimination of a 10' drainage easement on the north boundary of Lot 5, Block 1, Palmer West and those portions of two 10' utility easements lying within the future extension of Esty Drive into the proposed subdivision.

Ms. Garley summarized the reviews by city departments calling attention to written comments in the packet. Previous P&Z comments submitted to the Platting Board concerning this subdivision requested the creation of a second access point, which has been accomplished, extending N. Esty from Helen Drive to meet the as yet unnamed road access into Terra Fina Subdivision. Also, per the fire chief, the cul-de-sacs now meet the required radius. P&Z preference for curb, gutter, sidewalk were forwarded; at this time, the lots within the borough will be built to Borough standards; lots within the City must be built to City standards.

Commissioner Cruthers inquired as to drainage and mitigation of runoff. He was referred to the Public Works Director's written comments at page-96 of the packet. There were no further comments by the Commission.

4. **IM 15-006:** Plat Review – The request is to combine Lots 7 & 8, Block 3, M.D. Snodgrass Subdivision into one lot to be known as Lot 7A, Block 3, M.D. Snodgrass Subdivision to the Palmer Townsite, located inside Palmer city limits.

Staff Report: Ms. Garley summarized the reviews by city departments noting no changes necessary. The lots are zoned C-G and meet the requirements.

Following review, there were no further comments by the Commission.

5. **IM 15-007:** Pre-application Review – The request is to create a Public Use Easement or Right-of-Way across southern portion of Tract A-2 to create another access for Tax Parcel C8 to the east, located inside Palmer city limits.

Staff Report: This is a request from a previous rezoning request to have a secondary access to the property and which would meet fire code requirements. They have asked to create a public use right-of-way across this parcel which belongs to the City. City departments find no changes are necessary. The proposed 60' width is adequate to meet road development standards, curb, gutter, and sidewalks and the public use easement will provide a second access for future development of the surrounding area.

Following review and questions of staff, there were no further comments by the Commission.

6. **IM 15-010:** Pre-application Review – Lots 1, 2, Tract A, Alaska State Fair 2010 and

Tax Parcel D8, in Section 8, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian – The request is to vacate the public interest in Rebarchek Avenue and replace with private road creating a gated subdivision, located inside Palmer city limits.

Staff Report: Ms. Garley referred to vicinity map on page 139 of the packet, showing Rebarchek Road and the portion to be vacated. A board member of the Alaska State Fair was present to answer any questions. In summary, this particular road is heavily used by the public during the year from Rebarchek through the ASF parking lot to get to the Glenn Highway. This is actually trespassing across ASF property. In order to help reduce some of this traffic, the thought is to vacate a section of Rebarchek. Alaska Demolition (parcel D8) understands this will be a gated road, but they will have access and will continue to be able to use their trucks on what will be a private road. The reviews by city departments had no changes.

Larry Longnecker, ASF Board, answered commissioner questions. During Fair traffic, the road will continue to be used as part of the DOT traffic route; it will be open and used as it always has been. Regarding Alaska Demolition, the agreement for the Conditional Use Permit through the city, if they came off the Glenn Highway, they would access through the Fairgrounds and not go around the Springer so as not to disturb the subdivisions back there. The gate would be on the Springer end. There will be a "no through traffic" sign at the beginning of the road and where the ASF property ends/Rebarchek starts, there is a "road closed" sign, a "no outlet" sign, plus a turn-around area.

There were no further comments by the Commission.

K. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

L. STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Garley reported FYI for next meeting, she received today an abbreviated plat for T.A. Smith Subdivision at the corner of E. Arctic and the Alaska Railroad. The request is to combine two of the small city lots into one larger lot. The new lot would be 94' wide and have a lot area of 13,329 sf, which meets General Commercial zoning.

Commissioner Cruthers commented he would be in favor of vacating the lot line at this location. Some of the lots are just too small for the type of modern construction that we would like to see being built in Palmer, something that brings in new business. New businesses are looking for larger square footage and thinks it would be a good idea.

M. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Cruthers had no additional comments.

Commissioner Petty had no additional comments.

Commissioner Kircher welcomed new Commissioner Cruthers; commented that he

also likes to see some of these smaller lots combined.

Chairman Kerslake also welcomed Commissioner Cruthers to the Commission. In terms of the zoning action tonight, he was encouraged by the presentation and is hopeful that the applicants will come back with a site plan and PUD, that he thinks it would be the right thing to do in that area and would bring value to the city.

N. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

William Kerslake, Sr., Chairman

Kimberly A. McClure
Planning and Code Compliance Technician



Unfinished Business

Commission Information:
 Initiated by: Planning and Zoning Commission
 First on Agenda: April 16, 2015
 Action:
 Vote:
 Council Information:
 Introduced by: City Manager Hannan
 Introduced:
 Public Hearing:
 Action:
 Vote:

Yes:	No:

CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA
ORDINANCE NO. 15-00x

An Ordinance of the Palmer City Council Amending Palmer Municipal Code Title 17 Zoning Chapter 17.60 to include 17.60.057 Amnesty for setback encroachments

THE CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA ORDAINS:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance shall be permanent in nature and shall be incorporated into the Palmer Municipal Code.

Section 2. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance or any application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and the application to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Section 3. Section 17.60.057 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

17.60.057 Amnesty for setback encroachments

A. Certain technical setback violations exist on residential properties throughout the City of Palmer. In some cases, these violations have existed compatibly with the surrounding neighborhoods for 25 or more years with no known adverse impacts to public health, safety or welfare.

B. In such cases, the City's existing amnesty program provides a mechanism for excusing full compliance with city setback regulations for certain minor violations existing on or before adoption of the current zoning code.

C. To qualify as eligible for amnesty for certain setback violations, the following standards must be strictly satisfied:

1. The building or structure must be pre-existing and have been issued a building permit prior to construction;
2. The area or dimensional requirement involves front, rear, and/or side yard setbacks;
3. The building or structure complies with all other aspects of Palmer planning and zoning regulations. Such encroachments may be deemed "de minimis" as prescribed above and are determined to be "Lawfully non-conforming";
4. The City has a record of a statement that the present property owner had no personal knowledge of any violation of the requirements of this section prior to substantial completion of the structure;
5. The city building inspector or a licensed architect has certified in writing that the encroachment conforms to the requirements of Palmer Municipal Code Title 15 and State of Alaska Fire and Life Safety Regulations (13 AAC 50-13 AAC 55);
6. The City has received an as-built survey of the property that is the subject of the application, prepared and stamped by a land surveyor registered in the state of Alaska, which shows the location and dimensions of all structures on the property at the date of application, and the distances between structures and between the structures and the lot lines of the property;
7. The City has on file a copy of each plat note that applies to the property; and
8. Upon receiving a complete application,
 - a) the zoning administrator shall within five (5) days mail notice of the application to each record owner of any property that immediately adjoins the property on which the encroachment is located, requesting written comment on the application within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the notice.
 - b) within five (5) days following the conclusion of the comment period, the zoning administrator shall issue a written determination whether the encroachment meets the standards for amnesty under this subsection. The zoning administrator may impose such conditions on the requested amnesty as the zoning administrator determines are appropriate to protect the general welfare.
 - c) A determination under this subsection shall describe the type and dimensions of the encroachment, and shall include a copy of the as-built survey that was submitted with the application for registration.

D. In accordance with PMC 17.68.050, no such structure may be enlarged or altered in a way which increases its nonconformity, but any structure or portion thereof may be altered to decrease its nonconformity;

E. In accordance with PMC 17.68.050, should such structure be destroyed by any means to an extent of more than 60 percent of its assessed value at time of destruction, it shall not be reconstructed except in conformity with the provisions of this title;

Section 4. Effective Date. Ordinance 15-00x shall take effect upon adoption by the Palmer City Council.

Passed and approved this _____ day of _____, 2015.

DeLena Goodwin Johnson, Mayor

Janette M. Bower, MMC, City Clerk



New Business



**CITY OF PALMER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 15-012**

SUBJECT: Planned Unit Development Informal Review for Tax Parcel C8 in Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian – presentation by John Weaver with Valley Residential Services

AGENDA OF: May 21, 2015

ACTION: Review and provide recommendations

Attachment(s): 1) PUD concept site plan
2) PUD narrative

Summary: The request is for the informal review of the proposed Planned Unit Development to be located on Tax Parcel C8 in Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian, located inside Palmer city limits.

Received

MAY 11 2015

City of Palmer

Palmer VOA / VRS Housing

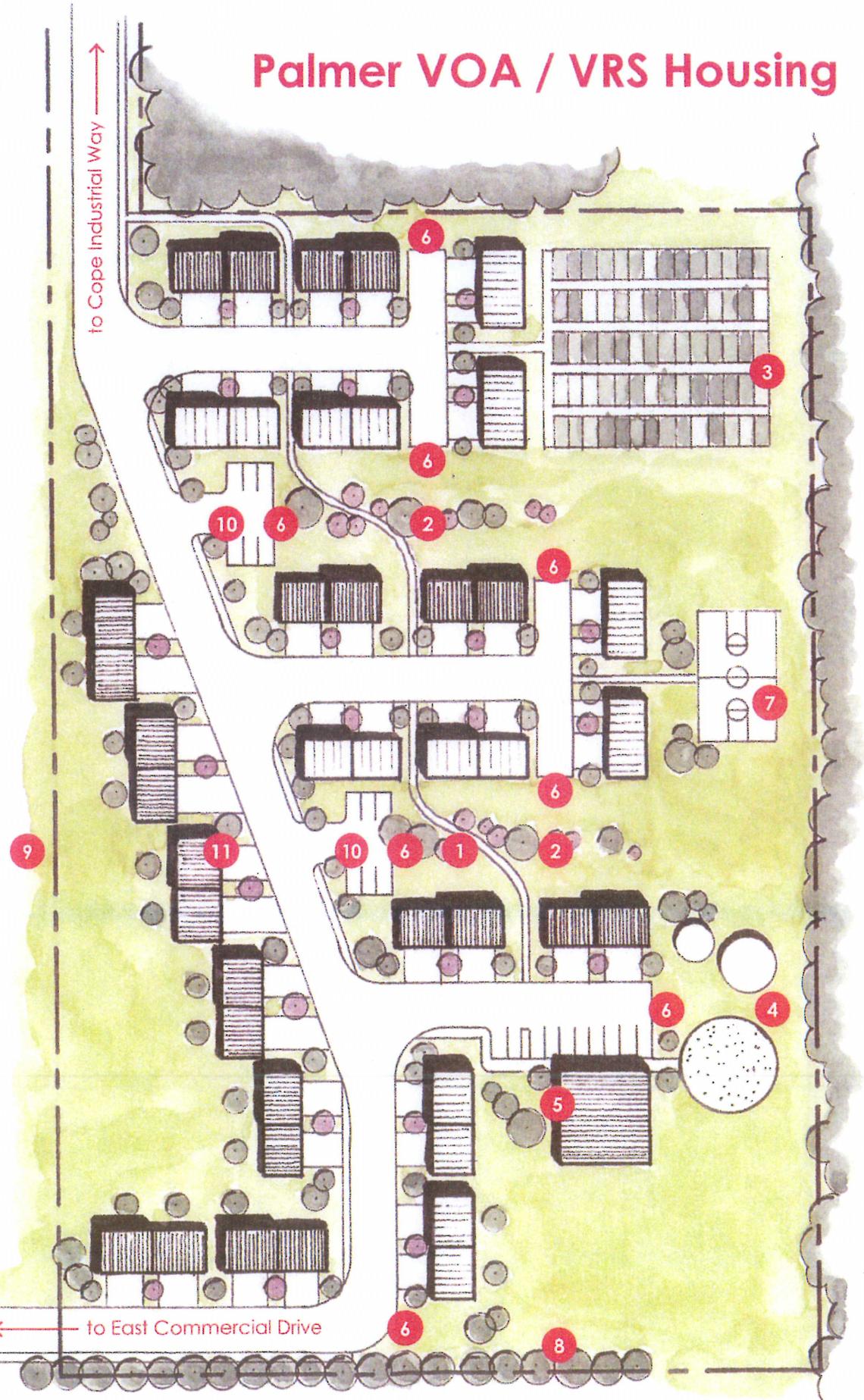
05 08 2015 LUMEN design

Palmer VOA / VRS Housing

concept site plan



- 1 off-street walk
- 2 infiltration swale & lilac garden
- 3 garden plots
- 4 picnic area & playground
- 5 community center
- 6 snow storage
- 7 basketball court
- 8 privacy barrier (fence & trees)
- 9 adjacent soccer field
- 10 guest parking
- 11 parking spaces (1 driveway + 1 garage space at every unit)



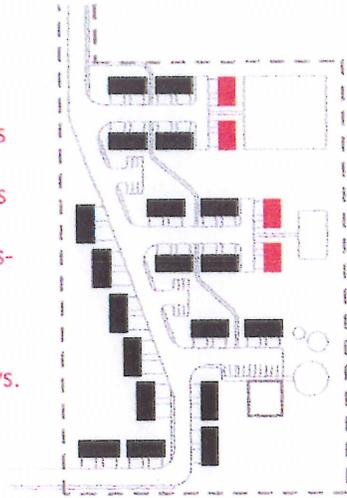
Palmer VOA / VRS Housing

concept site diagrams

unit counts

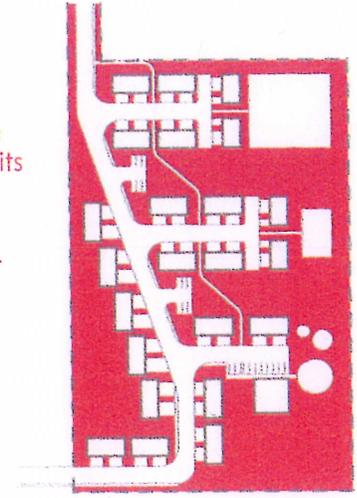
- 4 townhouses
- 3 townhouses

The project comprises 88 units total, each with its own garage, front door, and mountain views.



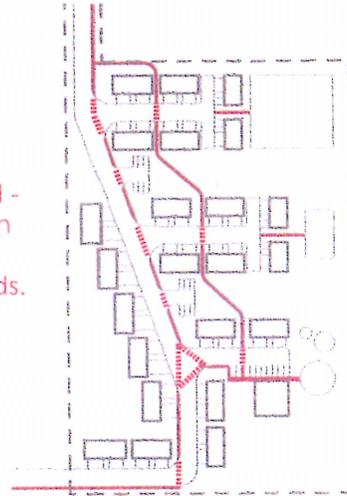
green space

Efficient circulation and townhouse units preserve ample open space between buildings.



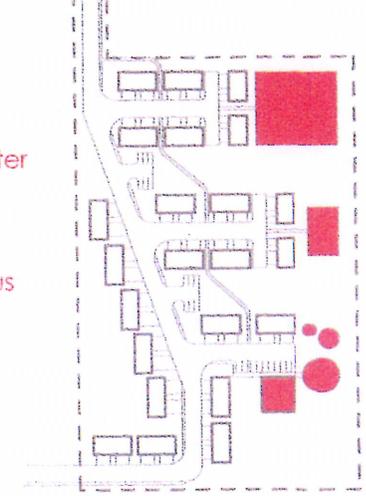
pedestrian circulation

Two pedestrian paths are provided - one along the main drive and one through the grounds.



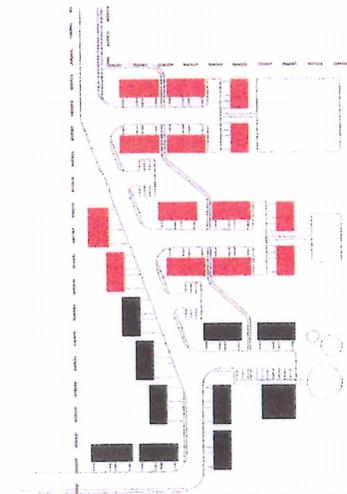
community amenities

A community center offers services for residents, and exterior space is reserved for various outdoor activities.



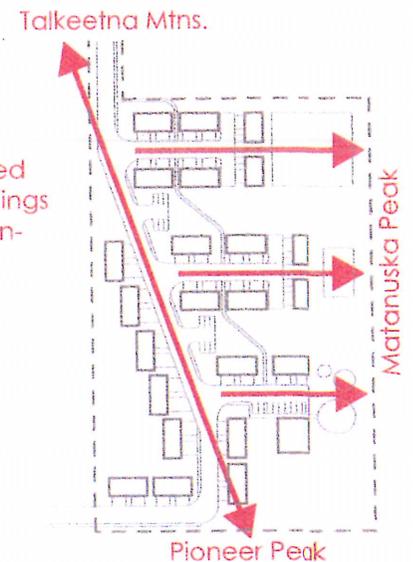
phasing

- phase 1
- phase 2



view corridors

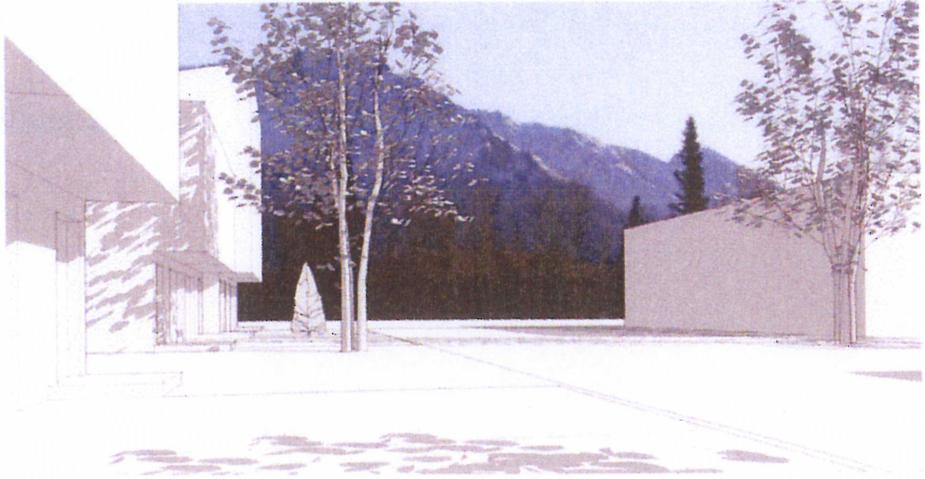
Roads are oriented to preserve openings to dramatic mountain views to the north, south, and east.



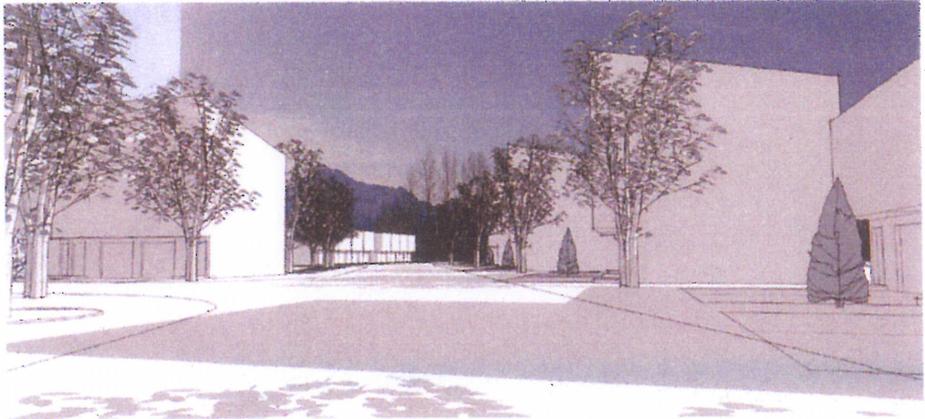
Palmer VOA / VRS Housing

concept perspective views

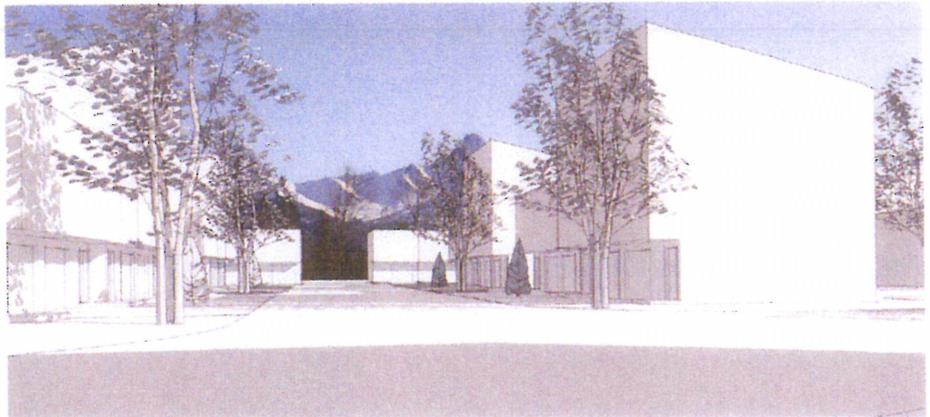
residences (left) and community center (right) with woods and mountains beyond



primary street axis aligned with Pioneer Peak



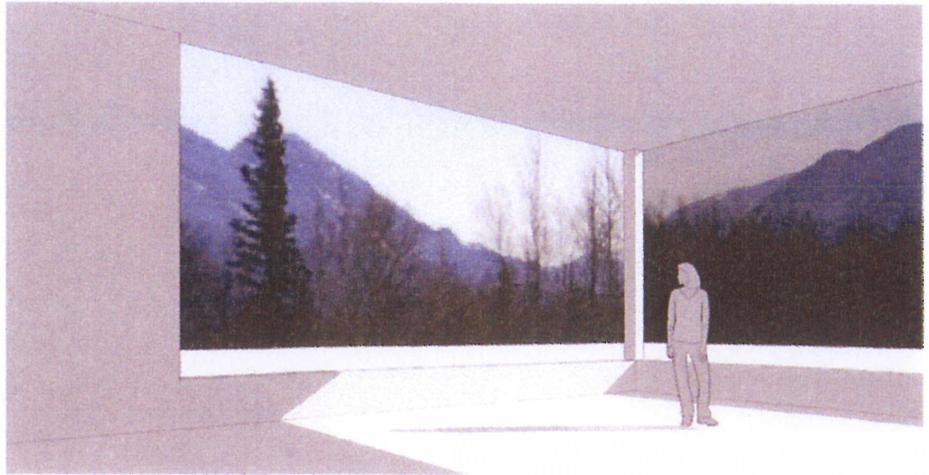
secondary streets oriented east toward Matanuska Peak



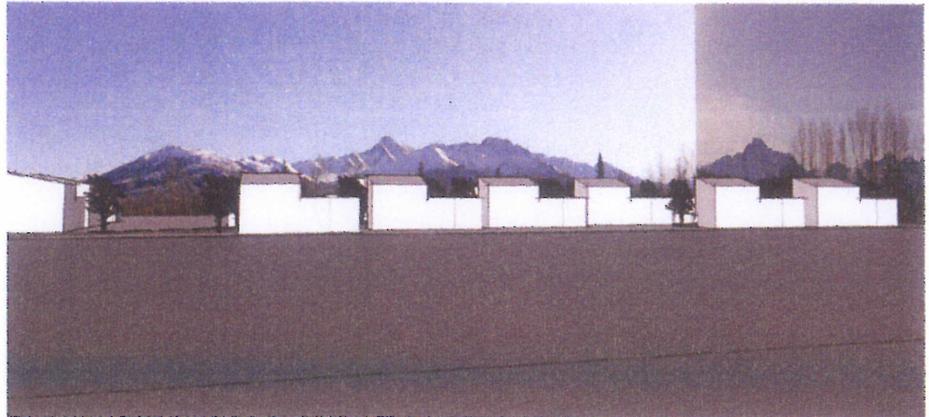
Palmer VOA / VRS Housing

concept perspective views

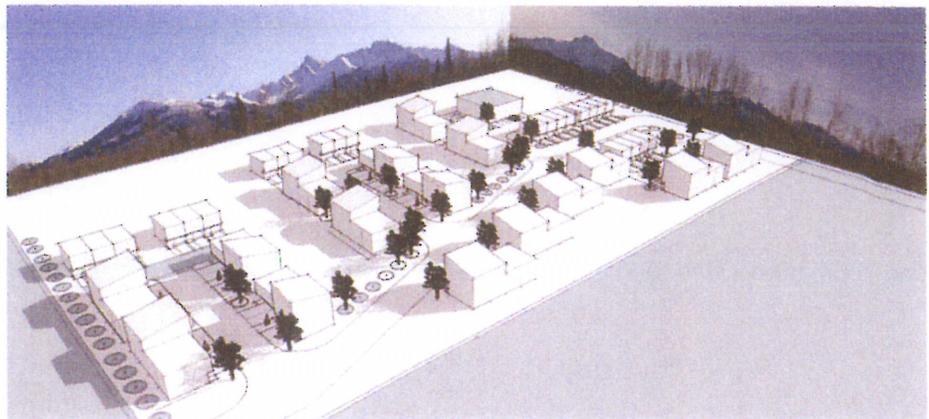
potential panoramic view from the community center toward Chugach Mountains



view east from adjacent soccer field



aerial view from northwest



Received

MAY 11 2015

City of Palmer

LUMEN design llc

5201 east northern lights blvd suite 1S anchorage, alaska 99508

VOA \ VRS Palmer Housing

Planning Ideas

The proposed VRS/VOA site is adjacent to industrial, civic and residential properties. The housing to the west is generally modest single family houses on small lots, where the prevailing planning pattern is a series of rectangular grids. The proposed project sits on the edge of the established traditional grid, and abuts developed properties where the established grid has not been used.

The traditional grid is an effective way to organize town living, however it doesn't seem to be a foregone conclusion on this site. Here's why:

- More recent adjacent neighborhoods to the east and the south have abandoned the grid and there is no likelihood that the grid will reappear anytime soon. While grids allow for the most economical land use patterns, curved streets can have a certain appeal. They slow traffic when the run is long and provide a constantly changing view. They work best when high density is not a requirement.
- This site has stunning mountain views in several directions. This is an uncommon opportunity that should be incorporated as much as possible into the living experience. We've attempted to plan the project around the best use of these views.

Site Circulation

Vehicles

For better or worse, automobiles are an important part of Alaska living. It makes sense then, to try to develop a scheme that accommodates vehicles well. Cars would enter the site at a point through a landscaped entrance corridor on East Cope Industrial Way. They could also enter through an extension of East Commercial Drive. Road widths are 30 feet back of curb to back of curb, in conformance with the local zoning and fire codes.

Parking

This scheme avoids large parking lots. There are several reasons to avoid parking lots, whenever possible.

- They almost never make a positive contribution to the landscape.
- Private property stored on large lots is difficult to protect.
- Use of the lot is difficult to regulate.

This plan distributes parking across the site, which accomplishes the following:

- Private parking spaces near the front door of each unit.
- Improved security for private property.

- Automatically assigned parking spaces
- Reduction in the amount of land consumed by parking lot circulation. Roadways double as parking lot circulation.
- The zoning requirement for parking for each unit is met at the unit.
- Provides a reasonable amount of unassigned guest parking which is scattered across the site.
- The typical parking goal is 2 spaces per unit plus another 10-15% or so for unassigned temporary guest parking.

People

It doesn't make sense to assume vehicles are the only way to move about in the modern world. We believe it is a fundamental requirement of any medium density housing project to plan well for pedestrian circulation. This scheme has a double layered pedestrian circulation network. There are walkways on at least one side of the street, which accommodate the practical needs of daily life. They get you safely from your front door to the mailbox, the community center or out to the larger neighborhood. There is also a secondary network of paths which run behind the dwelling units. This network connects the housing pods to each other, then to the public outdoor spaces, and to the community building. It is possible to move from one end of the site to the opposite end with minimal contact with the road system. This network connects all the public outdoor spaces and provides a route to the adjacent playfields and the nearby school. These trails are ideal for children on big wheels, trikes bikes, scooters and skateboards. They help to separate people from moving cars.

Trash/waste/recycle

This project would be a dumpster free site. The idea is to make use of private garages as a staging area for individual trash service. Dumpster service is intrusive. It's noisy, violent, hard to supervise, often destructive to surrounding infrastructure, hard to police and always an eyesore in the landscape.

In this scenario each unit would be provided with a rolling trash and recycle bin which is wheeled to the curb on the appropriate day, just as in any other neighborhood in town.

The advantages to this approach are:

- A cleaner site. People are fully responsible their own their trash.
- A safer, more civilized site. Curbside trash service also means curbside recycling is possible.

Energy

The funding sources for this project will require the following:

- BEES 5 star plus energy rating. (or the highest current AHFC standard)
- Photovoltaic solar panels to assist in electrical production.
- Solar thermal panels to assist in the production of domestic hot water.

Our design team has significant experience with these installations. Our projects currently have the largest functioning solar installations in Alaska.

Defensible space

In our experience defensible space is created two basic ways. One way is to use the property configuration to promote personal "ownership". Most people are less likely to abuse property they are responsible for, that "belong" to them. Corridors, elevators, parking lots and parking garages tend to "belong" to no one. They are hard to manage.

The second and best strategy for defending space is to make it as public as possible. People are less likely to act out in front of witnesses. The design must avoid "dark corners". Every part of this site should be visible to multiple sets of eyes through unit windows. If the odds are high someone could happen to be watching what's going on outside at any given time, people tend to think twice about what they are doing.

Dwelling units should be arranged to provide windows overlooking every outdoor space. This means there is a higher likelihood someone is watching activity outside. There are no elevators or hallways. All of every building is occupied by a tenant and is assigned private space.

Public outdoor space

There are four primary open spaces in this scheme. The space on the north side contains a community garden plot. The space at the center is used to manage storm water and leads to a basketball court. The space to the south is a view corridor for the community center. The space on the east side is a small playing field.

Each of these open spaces also serve as:

- light wells, allowing more natural light into dwellings.
- scenic landscape elements in the foreground.
- view corridors to the sky and mountains beyond.
- elements in the pedestrian network landscape.
- snow storage areas in the winter.

Site noise

This property sits on a boundary between industrial and residential uses. The most significant residential property is Mountain Rose Estates to the south. It's an affluent retirement community, hoping to preserve a certain quality of development in the area.

In an attempt to be good neighbors, the south side of the site has the lowest housing density. Further, what housing there is, is set back approximately 50 feet, two times the 25 foot zoning code requirement. The concept plan also includes a privacy fence and a landscape screen.

Landscaping

The site plan is the most important element in any building project. Average buildings on a beautiful site plan wear much better than beautiful buildings on a poorly designed site. Our goal from the beginning was to produce a site design that used the ground carefully. Here's how we did:

- 1.3 acres (60,000 sf) of the site is used for roads drives and guest parking
- 1.6 acres (69,000 sf) used for private parking and building footprints
- 1.85 acres (80,600 sf) for existing easements.
- .8 acres (34,800 sf) for required setbacks.

- This leaves 3.8 acres of open outdoor spaces.

A close look at the site plan shows a lovely back network of walkways, pocket parks, and community outdoor spaces. This makes it possible to develop a sophisticated landscape plan. We propose indigenous spruce and birch plantings as much as possible. Specimen plantings would be concentrated at the north property entrance and along the main route into the project.

Housing strategy

The project would consist of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom multi-level IRC townhouse units. The precise mix will be subject to a market study currently underway. The final unit mix will be assembled using a logic is driven by several design goals.

Variety

- Units are assembled in patterns that provide visual variety in two and three dimensions.
- This also provides a more complex social distribution of families across the site.

Fit

At the same time decisions about unit types used to create building types are driven by regulatory requirements. The requirements of Palmer Municipal Code and Fire Department regulations lead naturally to certain configurations which must be maintained.

Scale

Adjacent neighborhoods characteristically have small houses. By limiting the building footprint size and providing a variety of unit heights, the scale of the project becomes smaller, more residential. The entire complex begins to take on the appearance of a neighborhood. The warehouse syndrome disappears.

Garages

At first glance, the decision to provide private garages might be surprising. These factors inform our choice:

- Basic good planning dictates significant amounts of parking. If all these parking spaces are collected together in one place the result is a surprisingly large and uninspiring sea of parking.
- Since the interior of the garage counts as a parking space and the driveway in front counts as a parking space, this is, clearly, the most economical way to use the land.
- When you consider unit storage requirements, head bolt heater requirements for parking lots, security lighting, zoning requirements for parking lot landscaping and the expense of other outdoor parking lot accoutrements, garages begin to make financial sense as well.
- Many of the working poor own automobiles. Garages make older vehicles easier to own and operate during cold Alaskan winters, thereby contributing to the financial stability of the family.
- Finally, the convenience value to residents is tremendous. Happy renters mean successful projects.

Housing Planning Overview

There is a garage and driveway at each unit. This allows vehicle circulation and parking to be combined into a familiar residential pattern that's compact and highly functional.

We believe the townhouse type, modified to include a garage, is the best approach to use in this circumstance. Here's why:

More than any other housing type, it promotes "ownership" in the mind of the resident.

- Each unit has a private entrance.
- Each unit has it's own private parking spaces.
- The garage make it easier to own and maintain a car in the winter, provides a place for projects, for storage, all in the unit.
- There are no noisy residents above or below. Sound control is a much easier proposition in a party wall. (Currently our projects have a party wall STC rating of about 60, well above code requirement and standard practice.)
- There are no shared entrance lobbies, parking areas, elevators or corridors.

Everything the family needs is in one location, which they control. This model comes closest to providing all the advantages of a single family home.

Summary

- The primary influence on site layout is the incorporation of majestic mountain views into the living experience.
- The building strategy is small clusters of townhouses, each with a garage.
- The efficiency of the townhouse cluster makes it possible to preserve large portions of the site for outdoor activity space and view corridors.
- The town house elements are small enough that the scale will feel appropriate to the small town setting.
- The property will have a community center. Typically the community center contains meeting spaces for social and educational activities, and offices for full time property management.
- The project is geared toward housing for young working families who need a clean and safe place to live.



**CITY OF PALMER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 15-011**

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission requesting the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities add a separated trail along the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Sutton to the State Transportation Improvement Program

AGENDA OF: May 21, 2015

ACTION: Review and approve draft Resolution No. 15-004 and move forward to City Council

Attachment(s): Draft Resolution No. 15-004

Summary: The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Parks, Recreation and Trails Advisory Board has recently passed MSB Resolution No. 15.03 with similar language reflecting the desire for the addition of an at-grade paved pathway along the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Sutton to the State Transportation Improvement Program.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Transportation Advisory Board has MSB Resolution No. 15-07 containing similar language on their May agenda for review and discussion.

The proposed paved pathways from Palmer to Sutton would create a vital recreation connection between the two communities.

Recommendation: Review draft Resolution No. 15-004 and if approved, move forward to City Council with recommendation for adoption.

PALMER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 15-004

A RESOLUTION OF THE PALMER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION REQUESTING THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES ADD A SEPARATED TRAIL ALONG THE GLENN HIGHWAY FROM PALMER TO SUTTON TO THE STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission supports construction of paved pathways along state maintained roads in the City and in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and

WHEREAS, separated paved pathways similar to the ones along the Glenn Highway from Chugiak to Anchorage are desirable; and

WHEREAS, Section 5.2 of the Palmer Parks, Trails and Recreational Fields Master Plan identifies as a primary need multi-use trails that connect to regional trails outside the community; and

WHEREAS, the abandoned railroad right-of-way from Palmer to Sutton has been contemplated for future development of a pathway from Palmer to Sutton; and

WHEREAS, the existing and future erosion associated with the Matanuska River makes development of a paved pathway from Palmer to Sutton along the abandoned railroad right-of-way cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS, an at-grade paved pathway along the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Sutton would create a vital recreation connection between the two communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission requests the addition of an at-grade, paved pathway along the Glenn Highway from Palmer to Sutton to the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Palmer, Alaska, this 21st day of May, 2015.

William Kerslake, Chairman

Kimberly A. McClure
Planning & Code Compliance Technician



**CITY OF PALMER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 15-013**

SUBJECT: Approve the placement of a 60' x 40' storage building in the P-Public District located on Tract 1G, ARRC 2008 for the Palmer Senior Center

AGENDA OF: May 21, 2015

ACTION: Review site plan

Attachment(s): 1) Site plan drawings & project overview (Sheets A0.0, A0.1, A0.2 & A1.1)
2) Resolution No. 15-005

Summary: The site plan and drawings were submitted on May 11, 2015. The 2,400 sf warehouse storage building will be a new pre-engineered metal building with the dimensions of 60' x 40' and a maximum height of 18'. All yards are over 10 feet. There is a separation of 15 feet between the new proposed warehouse and existing buildings. The proposed warehouse will be located on the northeast side of the property. The lot area is 244,796 square feet which exceeds the minimum required lot area of 7,200 square feet. The lot width is approximately 421 feet which exceeds the required minimum lot of 60 feet. According to PMC 17.40.050, before approval of the building or structure, the commission shall receive, review and approve:

- A. Plot plans
- B. Architectural design
- C. Rear yards
- D. Front yards
- E. Side yards
- F. Off-street parking
- G. Conformance to the city and borough comprehensive plans

According to PMC 17.40.060 Lot areas, setback requirements shall be determined by the commission, consistent with the setback requirements of the adjoining property.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the placement of the 60' x 40' storage building.

Received

MAY 11 2015

City of Palmer

Sheet Number	Sheet Name
A0.0	Title Sheet
A0.1	Code Sheet
A0.2	Particulates
A1.0a	General Notes 1
A1.0b	General Notes 2
A1.1	Site Plan
A2.1	Floor Plan
A3.1	Exterior Elevations
A4.1	Building Sections and Typical Elevation Section
A6.1	Wall Types and Typ. Window Schedule

Palmer Senior Center Storage Building

1132 South Chugach Street
Palmer, Alaska 99645

PERMIT # n/a

ARCHITECT:



**FAULKENBERRY
& ASSOCIATES, INC.
ARCHITECTS**
P.O. Box 230663 • Anchorage, Alaska 99523-0663 • (907)253-9193

OWNER:



REVISIONS AND NOTES ARE IN SQUARE BUBBLES

Plotted on: 6/6/2015 3:28:53 PM

Palmer Senior Center Storage Building

1132 South Chugach Street
Palmer, Alaska 99645



**FAULKENBERRY
& ASSOCIATES, INC.
ARCHITECTS**

P.O. Box 230663 • Anchorage, Alaska 99523-0663 • (907)253-9193

BAUER
CONSTRUCTION, INC.
(907) 357.3053
General Contractor

3/22/2015
3:28:53 PM

Project Start Date:
03-27-15
Release Date:
04-05-15
Released for:
Final/perm/constr

1/14 Drawing #

Sheet

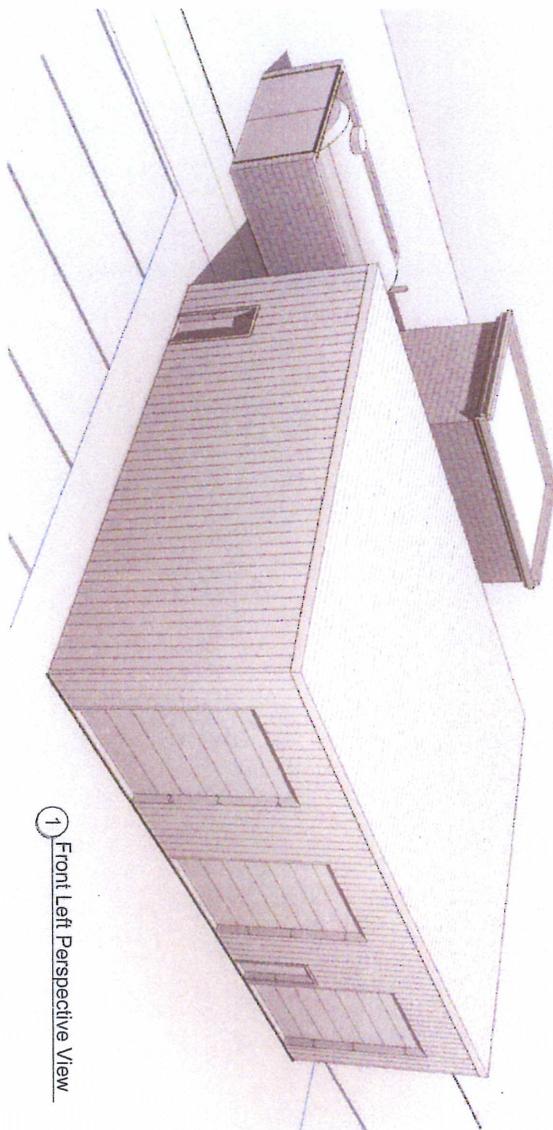
Title Sheet

A0.0

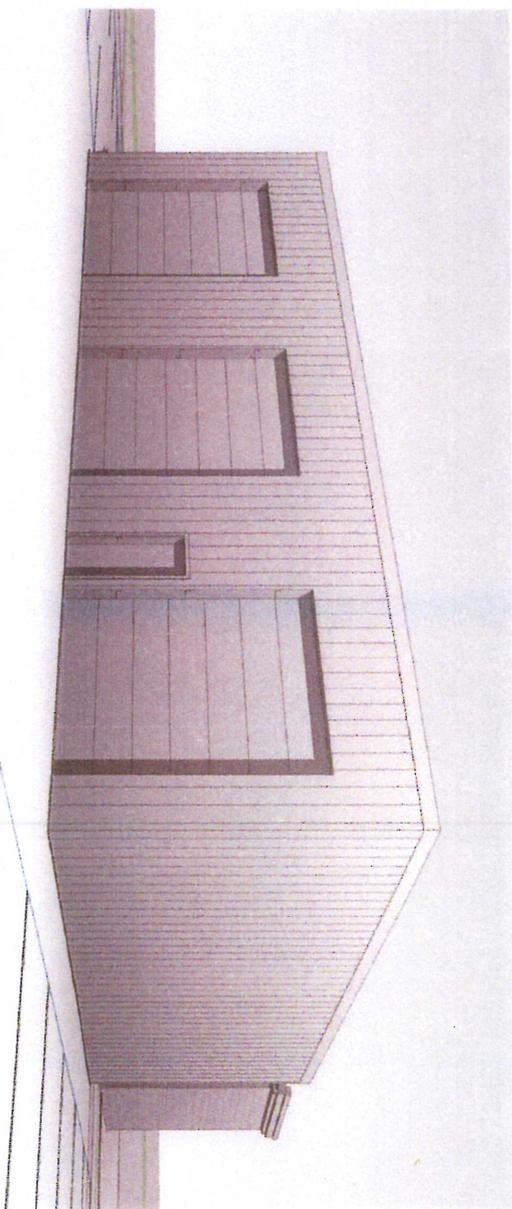
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MAY 11 2015

City of Palmer



1 Front Left Perspective View



2 Front Right Perspective View

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Palmer Senior Center Storage Building

Perspectives

A0.2

1122 South Chugach Street
Palmer, Alaska 99645



FAULKENBERRY
& ASSOCIATES, INC.
ARCHITECTS

P.O. Box 230903 • Anchorage, Alaska 99533-0903 • (907) 552-4193



Project Start Date:
03-27-15
Release Date:
05-05-15
Released for:
Final/submit/contract

PALMER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 15-005

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PLACEMENT OF A 60' X 40' STORAGE BUILDING IN THE P-PUBLIC DISTRICT LOCATED ON TRACT 1G, ARRC 2008 FOR THE PALMER SENIOR CENTER

WHEREAS, Jassen Michael of Bauer Construction Inc. has submitted plans on behalf of Palmer Senior Center, for the addition of a 2,400sf Storage Building located on Tract 1G, ARRC 2008, adjacent to the Palmer Senior Center property; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this project is to provide additional storage area to meet the growing needs of the senior center; and

WHEREAS, public buildings are permitted uses in the P-Public Use district under PMC 17.40.030; and

WHEREAS, Palmer Municipal Code 17.40.050 requires the Planning and Zoning Commission review and approve any building or structure in the P-Public Use District prior to construction; and

WHEREAS, this parcel has a lot area of 244,796sf which exceeds the minimum required lot area of 7,200sf and has a lot width of approximately 421 feet which exceeds the minimum required lot width of 60 feet; and

WHEREAS, the location of the proposed facility on the northeast corner of the property minimizes impacts to existing buildings, parking and landscaping; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission does approves the placement of a 2,400sf Storage Building located on Tract 1G, ARRC 2008 for the Palmer Senior Center.

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Palmer, Alaska, this 21st day of May, 2015.

William Kerlake, Chairman

Kimberly A. McClure
Planning and Code Compliance Technician



**CITY OF PALMER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 15-014**

SUBJECT: Approve the construction of a 64' x 30' pole barn in the P-Public District at 1170 W. Arctic Avenue, located on Tax Parcel C17 in Section 32, Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian for the Palmer High School

AGENDA OF: May 21, 2015

ACTION: Review site plan

Attachment(s): 1) Site plan drawings
2) Resolution No. 15-006

Summary: The site plan and drawings were submitted on May 7, 2015. The project is for the construction of a 64' x 30' pole barn for the use of the Palmer High School. The proposed pole barn will be located on northeast side of the Palmer High School building. The north side of the pole barn will be 250' from the edge of Arctic Avenue and the east side of the pole barn will be 210' from the roadway. The lot area is 42.43 acres which exceeds the required minimum lot area of 7,200 square feet. According to PMC 17.40.050, before approval of the building or structure, the commission shall receive, review and approve:

- A. Plot plans
- B. Architectural design
- C. Rear yards
- D. Front yards
- E. Side yards
- F. Off-street parking
- G. Conformance to the city and borough comprehensive plans

According to PMC 17.40.060 Lot areas, setback requirements shall be determined by the commission, consistent with the setback requirements of the adjoining property.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the construction of a 64' x 30' pole barn.

PALMER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 15-006

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 64' X 30' POLE BARN IN THE P-PUBLIC DISTRICT AT 1170 W. ARCTIC AVENUE LOCATED ON TAX PARCEL C17 IN SECTION 32, TOWNSHIP 18 NORTH, RANGE 2 EAST, SEWARD MERIDIAN, FOR THE PALMER HIGH SCHOOL

WHEREAS, Antonio Weese of the Matanuska Susitna School District has submitted plans on behalf of the Palmer High School, for the construction of a 1,920sf Pole Barn at 1170 W. Arctic Avenue, located on Tax Parcel C17 in Section 32, Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this project is to provide additional storage area to meet the growing needs of the Palmer High School; and

WHEREAS, public buildings are permitted uses in the P-Public Use district under PMC 17.40.030; and

WHEREAS, Palmer Municipal Code 17.40.050 requires the Planning and Zoning Commission review and approve any building or structure in the P-Public Use District prior to construction; and

WHEREAS, this parcel exceeds the minimum required lot area of 7,200sf and exceeds the minimum required lot width of 60 feet; and

WHEREAS, the location of the proposed facility on the northeast corner of the high school minimizes impacts to existing buildings, parking and landscaping; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission does approves the placement of a 1,920sf Pole Barn at 1170 W. Arctic Avenue, located on Tax Parcel C17 in Section 32, Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian for the Palmer High School.

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Palmer, Alaska, this 21st day of May, 2015.

William Kerslake, Chairman

Kimberly A. McClure
Planning and Code Compliance Technician