

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA**

**REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 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 at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present and constituting a quorum were Commissioners:

William Kerslake, Sr., Chairman
Michael Kircher, Vice Chairman
Dan Lucas
David Petty
Merry Maxwell
Douglas Cruthers
David Fuller

Excused absence(s):

Also present were:

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

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

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

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

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

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD:

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

G. PUBLIC HEARING(S): There were no public hearings.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no Unfinished Business.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Annual Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Following nominations duly put forth, **Commissioner Dan Lucas**, was unanimously elected to serve as **Chair** for the ensuing term ending October, 2016.

Following nominations duly put forth, **Commissioner David Petty**, was elected by written ballot to serve as **Vice Chair** for the ensuing term ending October, 2016.

[Results: Petty 5; Maxwell 1; Kircher 1]

2. **Resolution No. 15-010:** A Resolution of the Palmer Planning and Zoning Commission Supporting Designation of Area along the Railroad Right-of-Way North of the Depot as a New Grow Palmer Garden Area.

Ms. Garley explained the reasons behind the proposed resolution in support of the designation.

Commissioner Cruthers moved, seconded by **Commissioner Maxwell**, to recommend adoption of Resolution 15-010 supporting the designation of the area along the Railroad Right-of-Way North of the Depot as a New Grow Palmer Garden Area.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Cruthers spoke in support; thinks it is an excellent idea and good location for a community garden to appeal to tourists near the center of town. Commissioner Maxwell spoke in agreement; also likes that it is an excellent backdrop for the Farmers Market; likes the fact that people who come to Palmer see the community support for people who may not have enough to eat. Commissioners Lucas, Petty, and Kircher also spoke in support. Commissioner Kircher spoke to the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project.

Amendment:

Commissioner Kircher moved, seconded by **Commissioner Petty**, to amend the main motion for adoption of Resolution 15-010, to add language to the last two BE IT RESOLVED and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED paragraphs to state: “. . . , consistent with the concepts established in the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project.”

Commissioner Kircher spoke to the history and the time spent on the Palmer Urban Revitalization Project and explained many of the concepts would complement the Grow Palmer project, stated that past communications has indicated the railroad has been amenable to projects of this nature. Commissioners Petty and Fuller spoke in agreement to the amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT: Carried Unanimously.

VOTE ON MOTION AS AMENDED [Resolution 15-010]: Carried Unanimously.

J. PLAT REVIEWS:

1. **IM-026: Preliminary Plat Review:** To change the conditions of approval for Mountain Ranch Estates 5, a proposed subdivision of Tract 1-A, Caulkins Subdivision into 13 lots, located outside Palmer city limits.

Ms. Garley gave a staff report, explaining that the request is to change the conditions of approval into 13 lots now to be served by City sewer, but not by the City water system.

City Staff comments are contained in the packet indicating no changes necessary. Of particular note to the Commission under the Platting Board Findings for Preliminary Plat, is acknowledgment [note 7] of Planning & Zoning's comment about the absence of sidewalks and paths in the proposed subdivision; that Planning & Zoning supports the provision of parks and greenbelts for subdivisions in the greater Palmer area.

Questions and discussion ensued. Commissioner Kircher inquired if the City can require a developer to install a sidewalk in conjunction with extension of the City sewer system, for the safety of children not having to walk in the roads. Ms. Garley will have someone from the Public Works Department come speak to the Commission in that regard.

Commissioner Maxwell agreed that she would also like to hear from Public Works, noting she hates to see these lots crowded in without some connectivity or some willingness at least to address the Palmer Comprehensive Plan and would appreciate hearing why not.

Commissioner Fuller inquired if there was some way to sell it as a package deal, because eventually they'll be part of the City and on city water. If they're on city sewer, it makes sense to require them to take both, not just one or the other, in order to make more money. Ms. Garley will pass the question along to Public Works and invite either Mr. Healy or Mr. Wickham to the next meeting.

Commissioner Cruthers commented in agreement with the idea if they take City Sewer, they should be taking City Water as well and City Trash – a package deal.

Commissioner Lucas inquired as to the status of City discussions with the Borough for adoption of subdivision requirements similar to the City for at least the core area. Ms. Garley will follow up on the status and report back as to any forward progress.

Ms. Garley will send forward the question: What is the source of the water to service the subdivision and is it adequate to handle the additional growth.

Commissioner Petty commented in agreement with the all or nothing requirement, at least for water and sewer. He would also like to know if sidewalks can be required – makes it more accessible and tie-in with the other neighborhoods and makes for more consistency. Commissioner Kircher emphasized that it is a safety issue.

Further discussion ensued regarding sidewalks, on-street parking, issues concerning safety.

2. **IM 15-027: Preliminary Plat Review:** To subdivide Tax Parcel B2 in Section 29, Township 18 North, Range 2 East, Seward Meridian into two lots to be known as Windy Hollow Subdivision, located outside Palmer city limits.

Ms. Garley directed attention to the map on page 38 of the packet. Staff comments noted that if both lots were to be brought into the city they would meet any minimum lot size and minimum lot width standards. There were no potential zoning issues. If developed, they would have to meet all life safety requirements in place at the time of

development.

Mr. Cruthers commented that we're going to see more of this happening in the Palmer area where, in this case, the larger Lot 1 is being held for future development; that we need to be forward-thinking in setting higher standards for what kind of development do we want for Palmer.

3. **IM 15-028: Preliminary Plat Review:** To create one lot from Lot 8 and Lot 9, Block 2, ARRC No. 1, Plat No. 3-124, to be known as Lot 1, Brooks Subdivision, located inside Palmer city limits.

Ms. Garley gave a staff report, noting that the request meets all the requirements for property within a Limited Commercial District for future development. City staff had no additional comments or changes.

The Commission had no additional comments.

K. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

L. STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Garley reported:

- Application by Fred Meyer for a building permit is currently being processed.

Chairman Kerslake inquired what the proposed plan is for the next phase of annexation for the City of Palmer. Ms. Garley updated for the benefit of the new commissioners on the history and current status, and reported that last July, the city council postponed indefinitely making a decision on adopting a zoning priority map. Currently, the council is more comfortable responding to voluntary annexations.

M. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Lucas commented that it is nice to see a full board for the first time since he has been on the Commission; welcomed new Commissioner Fuller.

Commissioner Petty also welcomed Mr. Fuller and also thinks it is great to have a full Commission; thanked everyone for the promotion.

Commissioner Kircher also welcomed Mr. Fuller and congratulated the new Chair and Vice Chair.

Commissioner Maxwell welcomed Commissioner Fuller; inquired regarding the sign discussion. Ms. Garley is still working on compiling information as to standards in order to a complete package.

Commissioner Cruthers also congratulated the new executive officers and thanked them for agreeing to serve; also welcomed Commissioner Fuller.

Commissioner Fuller thanked everyone for the warm welcome; hopefully his input can contribute to a positive change for the community.

Chairman Kerslake congratulated new Chair Lucas and Vice Chair Petty and welcomed Commissioner Fuller. He applauded Commissioner Kircher for being the longest tenured P&Z Commissioner and expressed appreciation for his perspective and thoughts on the matters discussed. Commissioner Kircher noted it has been 20 years.

N. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

William Kerslake, Sr., Chairman

Kimberly A. McClure
Planning and Code Compliance Technician