



# THE CITY OF WHITTIER

*Gateway to Western Prince William Sound*  
P.O. Box 608 • Whittier, Alaska 99693 • (907) 472-2327 • Fax (907) 472-2404

## PLANNING COMMISSION Special Meeting Thursday, November 14, 2013 Homeowner's Lounge, BTI

### MINUTES

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Charlene Arneson called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

#### 2. OPENING CEREMONY

Charlene Arneson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 3. ROLL CALL

##### **Commission members present and establishing a quorum:**

|                  |        |         |
|------------------|--------|---------|
| Charlene Arneson | Seat A | Present |
| Terry Bender     | Seat B | Present |
| Ed Hedges        | Seat C | Present |
| Walter Finke     | Seat D | Present |
| Dyanna Pratt     | Seat E | Absent  |

##### **ADMINISTRATION PRESENT**

Thomas K. Bolen, City Manager  
Jennifer Rogers, Deputy City Clerk

##### **PUBLIC PRESENT**

David Goldstein

Charlene stated that she received a letter from Dyanna Pratt informing the commission that she would not be able to attend tonight's meeting because she is out of the country.

**MOTION:** Terry Bender made a motion to excuse Dyanna Pratt from today's meeting.

**SECOND:** Walter Finke seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** None

**MOTION:** Terry Bender made a motion to close the Planning & Zoning for the year 2013.

**SECOND:** Ed Hedges seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** None

**MOTION:** Terry Bender made a motion to open the Planning & Zoning for the year 2014.

**SECOND:** Ed Hedges seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** None

Deputy Clerk, Jennifer Rogers, swore in Jean Swingle and Ed Hedges to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Charlene Arneson presented Walter Finke with a plaque of appreciation for his years of service with the Planning & Zoning Commission.

### **RE-ORGANIZATION OF COMMISSION**

Jennifer Rogers asked for nominations for the Chair for Planning & Zoning Commission.

Terry Bender nominated Charlene Arneson.

Jean Swingle seconded the nomination.

Jennifer Rogers asked for other nominations. Hearing none, she announced that Charlene Arneson has been nominated Chair for the Planning & Zoning Commission for 2014. Jennifer then turned the meeting back to Charlene.

Reseated as Chairperson, Charlene Arneson, then convened the meeting for the 2013 Planning Commission.

Charlene asked for nominations for the Vice-Chair.

Ed Hedges nominated Terry Bender.

Jean Swingle seconded the nomination.

Charlene asked for other nominations. Hearing none, she named Terry as Vice-Chair.

Charlene requested a roll call.

### **ROLL CALL**

#### **Commission members present and establishing a quorum:**

|                  |        |         |
|------------------|--------|---------|
| Charlene Arneson | Seat A | Present |
| Terry Bender     | Seat B | Present |
| Ed Hedges        | Seat C | Present |
| Jean Swingle     | Seat D | Present |
| Dyanna Pratt     | Seat E | Absent  |

#### **4. APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Terry Bender made a motion to approve the November 14, 2013 Special Meeting Agenda.

**SECOND:** Ed Hedges seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

**DISCUSSION:** None

#### **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Ed Hedges made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of September 10, 2013 as is.

**SECOND:** Terry Bender seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

**DISCUSSION:** None

#### **6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Thomas Bolen stated that a private contractor, who is a consultant to the Defense Logistics Agency, working on monitoring and sampling the wells. We can expect a report in January or February.

#### **LAND TRADES WITH THE RAILROAD**

Tom has had discussions with Jim Kubitz who works for the Alaska Rail Road. The rail road is ready to talk about land trades. Tom also mentioned that the railroad wants the City to be removed from management of the De Long Dock or ownership of the uplands. They also want the City to convey to them Tract A. They have acknowledged that in order to transfer Tract A, we have to ensure public access to the use of Smitty's Cove.

There are a number of parcels that are zoned industrial and two parcels that are zoned commercials near Tract A. The railroad would like the City to rezone the entire area as industrial, with the exception of Smitty's Cove portion. In addition, they want the City to release the railroad from their obligation to turn the Whittier Manor lease over to the City in 2019 as part of the master lease agreement. Though Tom didn't have conclusive evidence, it seemed to him that both the railroad and Whittier Manor seem to be in favor in that.

Tom further stated that he will engage in discussions with the railroad. He will state that the City will want parcel 3, which is the land across the street going to the creek and parcel 2, which is all property north of the railroad tracks. He also said that he wanted parcel 4 and 5 at the head of the bay. Tom said that railroad also wanted to make sure that they had appropriate right-of-way to the tracks at the head of the bay in case there is industrial development; they have the ability to service the area. Tom replied that it wouldn't be a problem.

That request has evolved this week as the railroad is now saying that they want the tank farm property. The railroad is now open to negotiate with us Parcel 2 in exchange for the tank farm. Tom feels that this exchange should be considered by the City Council. Presuming all of this will happen, the DeLong Dock situation will be resolved by an Alaskan Legislature repealing the law that they put in place. The land parcels will require an additional State Legislation to make that happen because that's a statute for the transfer of railroad property. The transference of tract A by the City to the railroad will have to be done by an ordinance because it's the disposal of city land.

Tom stated that he will suggest that the railroad send a representative to the City Council to present this plan.

#### **WHITTIER NAVIGATION STUDY**

The Whittier Navigation Study is also underway. We have completed the geotechnical investigation of both harbor sites. Contamination was find in two holes of the central site. No contamination was found on Shakespeare Creek

location. We did not find any bedrock that was problematic on the Shakespeare Creek side. From the Corps's perspective, if there's contamination, they will not move forward with the project until some responsible party totally remediates the contamination. The contamination was found in an area where it could have been caused by a boat wreck. They then drilled upstream towards the tank farm and did not find contamination there. It just so happens that where they drilled the hole is where they found the contamination. It does cause a problem for the site that the Corp designed because they won't move forward. The final report will be released in about two months.

### **CULVERT REPLACEMENT**

Tom reported that we are nearing the completion of the culvert replacement.

### **RAILROAD PLAZA PROJECT**

Tom stated that he printed the contracts for the landscape architects. The design for the plaza will be underway.

### **SHOTGUN COVE LAND**

The deadline for the City to put Shotgun Cove land into private hands is approaching in August 2014. Tom met with the Deputy Commissioner of DNR. The Commissioner is the one who would give us an extension. The new commissioner has just been appointed within the last several days. Tom will follow up on this. If we don't get an extension, we'll put in an appeal to the government. If we don't have any success in getting an extension, we need to put a remote parcel disposal program in place.

### **CHUGACH NATIVE CORPORATION**

Tom had met with the new CEO of the Chugach Alaska Corporation. He said that they seemed excited about getting something going out in the Shotgun Cove direction. Tom replied to them that with more funding, we'll be able to execute Phase IV of Shotgun Cove Road, which will get all the way through their parcel of land east of town. He also told them that it is his hope that they would look to develop some type of recreation opportunity or visitor attraction, perhaps for winter and summer because we provide the road traffic. Whittier needs an attraction other than Prince William Sound launch ramp. There are not many opportunities for people to do things in Whittier. If they can create something for that property, it would be huge for the City of Whittier. In particular, Tom stated that he will always be a proponent that the head of the bay should be reserved for industrial use, not recreational use; therefore, in his opinion Shotgun Cove Road needs to be the focus of the recreational development.

The Chugach Native Corporation seem to be excited about their parcel at Shotgun Cove because it is more developable. They did not divulge in detail about what their plans may be. Tom briefed the new CEO on where the Shotgun Cove Road is going as a project, and told him that he hoped that within two years Phases III and IV of Segment I. Within seven to ten years, we may see the road constructed all the way to Trinity Point. That will open up opportunities for the Forest Service, for a visitor center, it can open up opportunity for the Ferry Terminal and airstrip to relocate there.

Tom will invite the CEO of the Chugach Native Corporation to speak to the City Council in December.

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **A. Tank Farm**

Covered in City Manager's Report

### **B. Land Trades with ARR**

Covered in City Manager's Report

**C. Review of Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**

Nothing new to report

**D. Smitty's Cove Park**

Nothing new to report

**E. Zoning- Head of Passage Canal**

Charlene stated that the head of the bay is zoned industrial. A variance will be needed if the land is used for recreation. This can be removed from future agendas.

**F. Review of Tideland Zoning**

Nothing new to report

**G. Signage for Anton Anderson Tunnel Traffic Staging Area**

Nothing new to report

**H. Recommendation Projects for Commercial Vessel Passenger Fund Projects**

Thomas Bolen has authorized Scott Korbe to purchase restrooms. Terry Bender added that there isn't a handicap accessible restroom available during the winter in Whittier. The boardwalk will be repaired and restored around the triangle area. Tom is hoping to have USKH will draw up a design once they're finished with the Railroad Plaza design.

**8. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Whittier Historic Railroad Plaza**

Covered in City Manager's Report

**B. Shotgun Cove Land**

Covered in City Manager's Report

**C. Hazard Mitigation Resolution**

**MOTION:** Terry Bender made a motion to adopt Resolution 01-2013, Adopting the City of Whittier Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and to present it to the City Council.

**SECOND:** Ed Hedges seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

**DISCUSSION:** None

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

**10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Terry Bender stated that she has located paperwork documenting the sale of the Buckner Building. And also located paperwork regarding the harbor upgrades.

**11. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:**

To be determined by the Commission Chair and City Manager before the next meeting.

**12. NEXT MEETING ATTENDANCE PLANS: January 14, 2014 @ 7:00 pm**

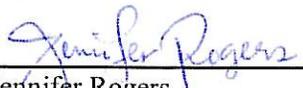
**MOTION:** Ed Hedges made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

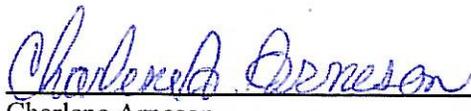
**SECOND:** Terry Bender seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

13. **ADJOURNMENT:** Charlene Arneson adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.

**ATTEST:**

  
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Jennifer Rogers  
Deputy City Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlene Arneson  
Commission Chairperson