



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 Regular Meeting Tuesday, July 9, 2013 Homeowner's Lounge, BTI

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Charlene Arneson called the meeting to order at 7:03 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	Present

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Thomas Bolen, City Manager
Scott Korbe, Public Works Director
Brenda Krol, City Clerk

PUBLIC PRESENT

William Saabye

4. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Walter Finke made a motion to approve the July 9, 2013 regular Meeting Agenda.

SECOND: Terry Bender 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 June 11, 2013 as is.

SECOND: Walter Finke seconded the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION: None

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. City Manager Reports:

City Manager, Thomas Bolen stated that Scott Korbe would not be attending future Planning Commission meetings unless he is asked to for the purpose of discussing certain projects or to answer questions. Tom added that Scott is a salary employee and is already working plenty of hours and would attend if he wants, but he is not required to attend.

B. Director of Public Works Reports:

Scott Korbe was not present for this meeting.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Tank Farm

Tom gave a brief update on the tank farm. He shared the discussion he had with Defense Logistics agency in Anchorage; they are the federal entity who is responsible with dealing with the tank farm. He also met with their technical consultant. They had some concerns and important information to share. They questioned whether or not the City of Whittier is still interested in taking ownership of the property. He replied that yes, we are.

They discussed the prospect of whether that could happen, given the language in the federal law which specifies fair market value. So in theory, if the fair market value was high enough, the City of Whittier will not be able to afford to buy it. During the course of that conversation, they shared with Tom two other recent closures and transfers they had done. In both of those incidences, fair market value was deemed to be zero, so the transfer of land was with no cash. What drives the equation, in terms of the price, is how clean would they need to make the property prior to the change? If they clean it, there will be a price associated.

If Whittier is willing to accept the property under a lesser standing, that within a year, that property will be conveyed and it will be for zero dollars. They have two things planned for this summer. One is that they have additional clean-up work for the monitoring that they need to do. This is actually offsite from the DOD property, it's on the railroad property.

They've applied for a permit to do some work in that area in July. The second thing is that they want to have a community meeting to get the community input in terms of how they feel about these issues. They need some understanding of how stringent of a clean-up will be required. Tom will have a summary of the remediation efforts that have taken place. They have reassured Tom that even after the transfer takes place, the City of Whittier will be, "Responsible, but partnered with D.E.C. who will help us to continue to monitor. If there's a problem, the Feds will be called back in. A date for the meeting has not been set, but Tom will be in touch with them for an update.

He is encouraged by their explanation of how the Anchorage deal occurred. He said there was concern on their part

regarding the zoning of the area. If the property were to be zoned as industrial, there would not be a problem. If the property is zoned residential, there would be a huge problem. If the property is zoned recreational/commercial, there would be potential problems. They would prefer if the property were zoned industrial. It is currently zoned industrial, however, there are some documents that they were able to research which made reference to this property as commercial and recreational uses.

What they were most concerned about was the reference to P.U.D. (Planned Unit Development) Clarification is needed as a result of this. There was much discussion among the City Manager and members about how the land should be developed.

He handed out a letter from Stephan Witzmann from Environmental Resources Management. – ERM The letter from ERM can be located in the Deputy Clerk's folder on file.

B. Land Trades with ARR

Tom Bolen gave a brief updated regarding the land trades with the ARR and reported that the City had ten years to develop the land along Glacier Street. The City failed to do so, and the land has been reverted back to the ARR. The same language is in place regarding the Head of the Bay, and the deadline was November 2012. Charlene added that we have developed up there. Tom replied that the way he reads the language is that parcels which are developed are ok, but anything not under development reverts back to the ARR. He has not had a conversation with the ARR to figure out what their interpretation is.

C. Review of Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Charlene spoke to Scott Nelsen earlier and he stated that he submitted it to FEMA. We should receive a letter from FEMA sometime around the end of July or early August.

D. Smitty's Cove Park

Thomas Bolen had nothing new to report. Charlene stated that Smitty's Cove is already designated as a park by the City, but the Coast Guard and NOAA need to ratify that so that signage can be put up. Charlene added that she has gave Scott Korbe the contact information for Erica, but she realizes how busy he is. Tom stated that it doesn't make any sense to him that that location is marked as a park. Charlene replied that divers faithfully come to that location.

Tom would like to relocate the park to another location in the future. So he would like to hold off on the Coast Guard and NOAA. Charlene replied that there are life form located there that would be impossible to move.

E. Zoning- Head of Passage Canal

See agenda 8A Tank Farm, for brief discussion on zoning at HOPC. We are moving forward this summer with the geotech work at the HOPC for the Corp. The Council approved the money for that and there is a contract out for request for bids for drilling. Tom will hire a consulting engineer to do the sampling; that will count as part of our match to the Corp. He sees some challenges ahead with the Corp.

He had a tough conversation with them this week over the geotech work. They told Tom a month ago that Whittier agreed to pay for the geotech work as their contribution. They were trying to figure out how to send their geotech crew here. Tom responded that he will take care of it. In return, they sent him the scope of work on what they wanted to accomplish. They have taken an adversarial attitude with us, but we have a very strong support from the D.C. headquarters.

F. Review of Tideland Zoning

Thomas Bolen stated that approximately three months ago at a regular City Council meeting, Pete Heddell suggested that the City acquire all tidelands; Tom has assigned this task to the City attorney and asked what steps would need to be taken to acquire the tidelands. Charlene stated that any tidelands that have not been designated belong to DNR. She added that zoning of the tidelands is also very important. She also mentioned that she would like those who use the tidelands to have a permit. At this point, a lot of the area has not been zoned, so a permit is not required for the use.

Tom asked who owns the tidelands at the head of the bay. Charlene replied that the City owns it. Charlene disclosed that Glen Gray told her that we can zone the federal and the state tidelands, which mean we can zone anything that we want to zone. In return, it will give us control as to how the land is used.

G. Signage for Anton Anderson Tunnel Traffic Staging Area

Per Dyanna Pratt, there is nothing new to report. She will have dinner with Gordon Burton on Thursday. She will follow-up and report back at the next meeting.

B. Recommendation Projects for Commercial Vessel Passenger Fund Projects

See original Planning Commission packet for CVP project nominations. Charlene Arneson touched briefly on the CVP projects. Thomas Bolen stated that we already have money available and in play for restrooms that he sent out for bid. We have money appropriated for boardwalk upgrades, drinking fountains, and additional benches. The ARR has decided that they like the idea of a permanent railroad station instead of the white tents. They want to work with the \$25,000 railroad grant we have.

Walter Finke asked what the utility upgrade at the cruise ship was about. Charlene stated that it was for the water system. There was some discussion regarding the pedestrian bridge and other projects nominated.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

There was brief discussion on future planning. Tom Bolen reminded the commission that they need to keep in mind the population and size of our community when they plan.

Tom Bolen also mentioned that he attended a meeting in which the ARR expressed their desire to have a better route for their coal trains inside of Seward. He started dialogue with the ARR, mining companies and other parties involved.

11. NEXT MEETING ATTENDANCE PLANS: August 13, 2013 @ 7:00 pm

MOTION: Dyanna Pratt made the motion to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: Terry Bender seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous

13. ADJOURNMENT: Charlene Arneson adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

ATTEST:

Jennifer Rogers
Deputy City Clerk

Charlene Arneson
Commission Chairperson