



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, January 14, 2014 Council Chambers, P-12 Building

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Charlene Arneson called the meeting to order at 7:00 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
Jean Swingle	Seat D	Present
Dyanna Pratt	Seat E	Present

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

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

PUBLIC PRESENT

Dan Blair
Andy Donovan
Jim Kubitz
Don Stevens

4. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Terry Bender made a motion to approve the January 14, 2014 Regular Meeting Agenda.

SECOND: Dyanna Pratt seconded the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION: None

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Terry Bender made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of November 14, 2013 as is.

SECOND: Dyanna Pratt seconded the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION: None

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

See original report in Clerk's packet.

Shotgun Cove

Tom reported that the Commissioner of DNR, Ed Fogless, granted an extension on the reversion clause regarding the land at Shotgun Cove for another ten years. Tom recommends that the City proceed with the disposal of land at Shotgun Cove area primarily since road access to this area could be half a decade away. We can find ourselves in the same situation ten years from now. The disposal could be patterned after the State of Alaska's remote parcel buying and disposal. This was something he brought up just for consideration. Tom recommended that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the City Council in regards to how to proceed with land disposal.

Terry Bender suggested that we have town meetings to discuss this.

Tank Farm

Tom suspects that Defense Logistics Agency, which is responsible for the cleanup at the tank farm property is nearing an important milestone in their efforts as they summoned him to a meeting in Anchorage the following week.

In the near future, Tom stated that he'll be bringing some proposals on new leases in the harbor district. There are currently two parties actively seeking new leases, and/or new lease lots where lots don't currently exist.

Visitor Center

There's been a lot of discussion about a Visitor Center in Whittier. He asked what specifically does the community expect or want out of a Visitor Center. He is currently entertaining the concept of contracting a Visitor Center to a local business. The Visitor Center will operate within the business, but separate from their own business establishment. This would represent a cost savings to the City, as oppose to owning, maintaining and staffing its own Visitor Center. We would send a Request for Proposal for this concept.

Terry Bender stated that when Whittier became part of the National Scenic Highway, she was told that there was funding available for a Visitor Center. She doesn't believe anyone has ever pursued this as a source of funding. Charlene said she will look into this.

Terry suggested that we give the local teenagers an opportunity to run the Visitor Center. Charlene Arneson

reminded everyone that the Senior Citizens ran the Visitor Center in the past. Tom suggested that perhaps that Chamber of Commerce run the Visitor Center. Charlene stated that they're pretty busy because most of them are business owners, but it is a possibility. Tom stated that he'd like the Visitor Center to be easily available to all who come to Whittier. Adequate short-time parking will be a problem. Charlene suggested the lot near the Coast Guard. She said the Forest Services used to put up a tent there. She said she considered that to be a prime location for the Visitor Center and moving the diner there, but it was sold.

She asked if the CIRI building is still available. Tom said it is still in town. Charlene further stated that the size of the building would be perfect for a Visitor Center.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Jim Kubitz with the ARR

Jim Kubitz, a representative for the Alaska Railroad reported that they are asking the City to consider changing the zoning of Block 10, Lots 3 & 5 from Commercial to Industrial. The railroad owns Lots 3,4, 5 and 6. 4 is already zoned Industrial and 6 is the lot near Smitty's Cove, which is zoned Commercial. They'll leave 6 as it is because they have plans to extend that road access. They want to keep the industrial separated from the recreation areas as they are very safety conscious; they don't want people wandering in the wrong areas.

Charlene asked Jim Kubitz if he has a proposal for what they want to do. Jim replied that they do not, they just know that what they'll do is related to the De Long Dock's commercial and industrial activity. They're looking at the structure of the De Long Dock and what long term plans they have. If the railroad is to invest a lot of money into that type of business, they'd like to be able to control the land around it. Charlene said she had a study done years ago regarding the railroad and harbor, but she has been inside that and she said it was scary because they are just wooden barges put together. Jim said that they had it inspected and it safe, but it does have a shelf life and they know that they'll need to do something.

Terry Bender asked if this will affect the land swap. Jim said it is not related; this is just rezoning their property. The land swap is a separate issue. Charlene reminded him that there is a process that we'll need to go through to rezone the property. Charlene took several minutes to review the necessary steps in great detail.

Charlene asked if there will be any blasting. Jim said though they don't have any plans at the moment, it is possible. They just know that they want to have that property support any type of investment they make. Charlene said she is pleased that they will support keeping Smitty's Cove a park and a marine park. A survey was done for the marine park; it just needs to be submitted to NOAA and the Coast Guard to have the rest of it approved as a marina.

B. Approval of New Agenda Format

MOTION: Dyanna Pratt made a motion to adopt the new Agenda format and ask the City Council to reflect the changes by way of Ordinance.

SECOND: Terry Bender seconded the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION: None

8. NON-ACTION BUSINESS:

A. Tank Farm

Covered in City Manager's Report

B. Land Trades with Alaska Railroad

Nothing New to Report

C. Review of Hazard Mitigation Plan

Charlene Arneson stated that the City Council needs to approve the Resolution at their next meeting so that it can be submitted to Scott Nelson.

D. Smitty's Cove Park

Nothing New to Report

E. Whittier Historic Railroad Plaza

Covered in City Manager's Report

F. Review of Tideland Zoning

Nothing New to Report

G. Signage for Anton Anderson Tunnel Traffic Staging Area

Dyanna Pratt stated that she will continue to look into this.

H. CVP Fund Projects

Covered in City Manager's Report

I. Shotgun Cove Land

Covered in City Manager's Report

9. CORRESPONDENCE

A. Department of Natural Resources

B. Prince William Sound Economic Development District

9. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

MOTION: Terry Bender made a motion to schedule a Public Hearing for the Rezoning of Block 10, Lots 3 & 5 on February 5, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

SECOND: Ed Hedges seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous

11. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

- A. Set Hearings for Shotgun Cove Land
- B. Town Meeting for Visitor Center

12. NEXT MEETING ATTENDANCE PLANS: February 5, 2014 @ 7:00 pm

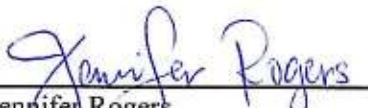
MOTION: Ed Hedges made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: Terry Bender seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous

13. ADJOURNMENT: Charlene Arneson adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers
Deputy City Clerk



Charlene Arneson
Commission Chairperson