

VALDEZ PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Valdez Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairperson Haase.

II. ROLL CALL

Chairperson Haase, Commissioners Malone, Hogarth, Ragan and Delozier were present. Commissioner Swierk was absent and excused; there is one vacancy.

Staff present included Lisa VonBargen, Director; Laura Robertson, GIS/Planning Technician; and Wendy Farlin, Senior Office Assistant of the Community & Economic Development Department.

There was no one in the audience.

III. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND CHAIR PRO TEMPORE

Scott Malone was nominated for Chairperson and Mark Delozier volunteered for Chair Pro Tempore. It was a unanimous decision by all Commissioners present and the gavel was handed to newly elected Chairperson Malone.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 14, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Haase moved and Commissioner Hogarth seconded approval of the December 14, 2011 regular meeting minutes.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 Yeas, 1 absent and excused (Commissioner Swierk), 1 vacancy; motion carried.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR - None

VI. PUBLIC APPEARANCES - None

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1) (STREET #12-01) Assign an Official Road Name and Appropriate Address Change to Lots that Access off of the Upper and Lower Access and Utility Easements Connected to Cummings Way. Applicant: City of Valdez

Commissioner Haase pointed out that he did own property in this area but did not feel he would need to abstain unless other Commissioners had objections. It was determined that abstaining was not necessary as he had nothing to gain financially. Lisa VonBargen asked that if Commissioner Haase had any comments, that he step down from the dais and speak as a property owner.

Laura Robertson, GIS/Planning Technician, handed out an email that was received after the packets were completed. It was from Tabitha Swierk stating that she was in favor of

the renaming to Lake View Drive. Laura also stated that she received a phone call from Jordan Pond at 5:30pm and that he was also in favor of the road names.

Commissioner Hogarth asked for clarification on the road naming. Lisa VonBargen responded that the original road was an unnamed access and utility easement and that several years ago John Devens had the department of transportation erect a sign naming the road Lake House Road, but that was never an official name. When the plat for the Cummings development was recorded, the roads of Cummings Way, Kodiak Cove and Tesslina Lane were officially named. The other roads that were not impacted by the plat remained unnamed, and the residents that are along these unnamed utility easements have their official addresses on Richardson Highway, even though they are not on the Richardson Highway. It became problematic when the police department and GIS upgrade happened because these addresses were too confusing.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1) (EXCPT #11-10) Approval of Exception for an Existing 1.72 Foot Encroachment of the House into the 10 Foot Western Side Yard Setback on Lot 8, Block 11, Mineral Creek Subdivision. Applicant: Teresa Ace

MOTION: Commissioner Haase moved and Commissioner Delozier seconded approval of an Existing 1.72 Foot Encroachment of the House into the 10 Foot Western Side Yard Setback on Lot 8, Block 11, Mineral Creek Subdivision.

Commissioner Haase asked if this would normally have a public hearing and Lisa VonBargen responded that there was one but it had been several weeks ago.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 Yeas, 1 absent and excused (Commissioner Swierk), 1 vacancy; motion carried.

2) Approval of Recommendation to Council Authorizing a One-Year Extension of the Land Use Permit for a Portion of Blocks 7 & 8, Valdez Townsite with Harris Sand & Gravel

MOTION: Commissioner Delozier moved and Commissioner Haase seconded approval of the Recommendation to Council Authorizing a One-Year Extension of the Land Use Permit for a Portion of Blocks 7 & 8, Valdez Townsite with Harris Sand & Gravel

There was no discussion.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 Yeas, 1 absent and excused (Commissioner Swierk), 1 vacancy; motion carried.

3) SUBD #12-01) Approval of Preliminary Plat for Municipal Entitlement Survey of Alaska State Land Survey (ASLS) No. 2011-01: A Subdivision of Tract B, T. 8S, R. 6W, CRM, Alaska, Creating Tracts B1 and B2. Applicant: City of Valdez

MOTION: Commissioner Haase moved and Commissioner Delozier seconded approval of the Preliminary Plat for Municipal Entitlement Survey of Alaska State Land Survey (ASLS) No. 2011-01: A Subdivision of Tract B, T. 8S, R. 6W, CRM, Alaska, Creating Tracts B1 and B2. Applicant: City of Valdez

Commissioner Haase thanked staff for the good historical summary because it was helpful to learn what municipal entitlement, ACMP, and foreign trade zones were. Commissioner Haase did ask if this approval would take away from the City's total allotment of other municipal entitlements. Lisa VonBargen responded that this approval is factored into the current total allotment. Laura Robertson further clarified that the total acreage was approved in 1982 but some of the surveys were not completed at that time. This survey is one that is now up for approval and is part of the original total acreage. The other two that need to be finished are Browns Creek and Robe Lake. There was no further discussion.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 Yeas, 1 absent and excused (Commissioner Swierk), 1 vacancy; motion carried.

4) (STREET #12-01) Assign an Official Road Name and Appropriate Address Change to Lots that Access off of the Upper and Lower Access and Utility Easements Connected to Cummings Way. Applicant: City of Valdez

MOTION: Commissioner Hogarth moved and Commissioner Delozier seconded approval to Assign an Official Road Name and Appropriate Address Change to Lots that Access off of the Upper and Lower Access and Utility Easements Connected to Cummings Way.

There was no discussion.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 5 Yeas, 1 absent and excused (Commissioner Swierk), 1 vacancy; motion carried.

X. REPORTS

1) E-Notes – None

2) Staff Report – Verbal at Meeting

Lisa VonBargen reminded Commissioners that the next session of Strategic Planning would be held on Saturday January 28th at 9:00am at the Civic Center. The public is invited to attend and there is time after each cell meeting for the public to comment.

Lisa VonBargen also stated that a portion of the old Three Bears Building did collapse on January 24th and that water and electric were shut off by the Fire Department to avoid any possible electrical fires as well as freezing pipes. Lisa further stated that the water supply also feeds the Valdez Center Mall, which is next door, so they were also without water. This is a private owner matter. Commissioner Delozier asked what the solution would be. Lisa VonBargen responded that there are two possible solutions, neither of which involves the City of Valdez. The first is that there may be a valve near the building which can be turned so that water can flow to the Mall but the back flow will prevent water flowing to the old Three Bears Building; however, there would be pressure against that valve so there is a potential that the water against the valve could freeze which would cause further complications. The other alternative would be to dig down and cap the line at the "Y" to the Three Bears and leave it flowing to the Mall. Lisa reiterated that this is a private matter and does not involve the City.

Lisa VonBargen stated that the Fire Department had responded and secured the building. This means that they surrounded the building with tape, which by state statute means that no one can enter the area. By doing this the building becomes a dangerous building, abatement issue and that falls under the Community Development Department. The Department will develop a report stating what the expectations are and provide it to the property owners. This report will likely include a requirement that a structural engineer evaluate the building.

Commissioner Ragan asked if a snow load measurement had been taken. Wendy Farlin, Senior Office Assistant responded that a snow load had been taken and that the reading was 109. This reading was given to Randy Bell, who was the contact during the snow globe incident because originally he was going to remove the snow on the roof, until the bank he was talking with determined that the Reynolds were in town and stated that they would be taking care of the snow removal. At that time, according to Randy Bell, he removed himself from the picture because he felt it was not safe to have anyone on top of the building. Lisa VonBargen stated that she thought the snow load on the building was probably between 70 and 90 pounds per square foot. Commissioner Haase asked if the current code requirement was 120 pounds per square foot. Lisa VonBargen responded that it is 160 pounds for ground load, but roof load isn't a straightforward answer. There are several things to factor in, such as roof pitch and roof covering.

Lisa stated that she learned from the structural engineer, who was in town during the snow globe incident looking at various City buildings, that when a building is designed, they factor in a snow load lifetime span of 50 years. They estimate that a building will hit its maximum snow load capacity once or twice in its lifetime.

Commissioner Haase asked if a snow load capacity of 160 pounds would be sufficient and Lisa VonBargen responded no. Commissioner Haase asked if that should be placed on a future Planning and Zoning Commission agenda and Lisa responded that it is actually a building code revision, which would be done by an adopted amendment to the code. As an example, Whittier's ground snow load is 300.

3) Borough Report – Verbal at Meeting

Lisa VonBargen stated that she read in the December meeting minutes that Commissioner Swierk had Borough questions, so she drafted the enclosed memo to answer Borough questions. In the memo, Lisa stated that staff was going to be meeting with the Local Boundary Commission during the early part of January, but that meeting had to be cancelled because of the snow globe incident. Hopefully it will be rescheduled in the near future. There were no questions

XI. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Commissioner Delozier stated that the snow globe incident put the City to the test and the public works department, as well as everyone else, was really amazing. Commissioner Delozier further stated that Valdezeans sometimes take snow for granted. We received 24” of snow and yet everyone jumps in their car and heads off to work assuming that it’s business as usual, that schools and businesses are open for operation, roads are completely clean and yet we’re getting bombarded with an additional 24” of snow during the day and it will be cleaned off by evening or for certain by the next morning. It is amazing what the crews accomplish. As a segue, Commissioner Delozier brought up the newly created snow storage lot in the new Cummings plat and stated that in the future, the City should look long and hard at dedicating larger spaces for snow storage.

Lisa VonBargen responded that she had the privilege of being a part of the incident management team and was able to watch the people that she works with on a daily basis rise to the occasion and come together to get what needed to be done accomplished. The total number of pounds of snow removed off of the major buildings during this incident was over 50 million pounds, with 10 million pounds coming off of the high school alone. For the most part, with the exception of the schools closing for a few days, the town kept running. There were approximately 200 shovelers, although they worked in shifts so there were probably around 100 to 150 shovelers at one time. It was an amazing effort. Lisa Von Bargen also added that the Commission should be very proud of the roles played during the incident by all the Community Development staff. Wendy, Laura, Janine and Rusty all did a wonderful job.

Commissioner Hogarth also thanked everyone for their efforts and keeping the town running.

Chairperson Malone stated that he will get better with time and assistance. Lisa VonBargen suggested getting together to go over protocol.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:42pm.