

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-09 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:01 p.m. on January 14, 2025 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS AREVALO, YOUNG, BROWN, NOOMAH, DICKINSON, MARKS & ZUBEK

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK APPEL

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as presented.

DICKINSON/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

Scott Adams, Homer resident, spoke on Bridge Creek Watershed. He said the Bridge Creek Watershed wasn't included in the Comprehensive Plan and he believes it is important for community development. He also asked why the HERC building hasn't been surveyed to potential future use, instead of using more money to purchase land to a new building. He suggested to plan for future building plans to account for growth in the community.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. EDC Unapproved Minutes of October 08, 2024

Chair Marks requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as presented.

ZUBEK/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 08 AND NOVEMBER 12 MEETING MINUTES.

Chair Marks commented on a typo in the November 12 meeting minutes.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

- B. EDC Unapproved Minutes of November 12, 2024

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Introductions

Chair Marks introduced the topic and open the table to Commissioners and Staff to introduce themselves to new individuals.

B. EDC Staff Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported various transportation projects and the adoption of the Kenai Peninsula Borough's transportation plan. She also mentioned a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce for an event celebrating Kristen Faulkner's double gold medals. She spoke on a potential grant application with the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve and the Land Trust. She also mentioned to the Commission that the Comp Plan Open House was coming up and suggested the Commission to attend.

C. Chamber Director Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported that the Chamber of Commerce Membership Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 4. She mentioned tickets are available online for twenty-five dollars a person. She also mentioned the Chamber is gearing up for the Winter King Tournament, which is currently scheduled to happen later in March.

D. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

No report was provided

E. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks stated that she had missed the October meeting and the January meeting hadn't happened yet, but was looking forward to having a full report for the Commission for the February Regular Meeting.

F. HERC Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported that the City is currently working on analyses and other tasks required to apply for a large grant. The City Council passed a memorandum asking the EDC, PARCAC, and the Planning Commissions to consider using Town Center as a future site for a new Recreation Center. Engebretsen mentioned the City has been looking at different pieces of property for the past year and weighing out pros and cons, such as traffic access, utilities, total usable area of the property, etc.

G. Housing Update

Commissioner spoke on a group out of the hospital the periodically surveys the community for what the community thinks are the most important health areas. The survey found the top answer was housing and the second was communication on the resources the city has.

H. Planning Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen spoke on the comprehensive plan steering committee releasing a pre-draft of the plan. She mentioned there has been an increase of permit application this year as opposed to prior years.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. EDC Strategic Plan

Community Development Director spoke on the Strategic Plan and goals for the Commission. This discussion included looking at local properties for a recreation center and putting it out to public opinion on where the community feels would be the best location. She encouraged Commissioners to come to her with questions regarding the Strategic Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Agenda Item Report- Amenity Trap

Community Development Director Engebretsen mentioned the brochure that was included in the meeting packet. She explained that this document shows many communities that have the same kinds of issues as Homer. She stated she feels the document is geared more toward western states but a lot of the same themes are present in the Homer community. The commission asked her to forward the brochure to the Planning Commission for their February 5th meeting.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. City Manager's Report
CM's Report for November 21, 2024
CM's Report for January 08, 2025

- B. EDC Annual Calendar 2025

- C. QOL Report

Chair Marks noted the informational materials. Chair Marks volunteered to deliver the January report to City Council.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Scott Adams, city resident, noted the housing memo did not have interest rates on houses or property listed. He also spoke about the property assessments from the Borough being raised.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Dickinson welcomed the new Commissioner.

Commissioner Young expressed his excitement for the February comp plan open house.

Commissioner Brown stated she would not be present for the February meeting.

Commissioner Arevalo welcomed the new Commissioner.

Commissioner Noomah stated it was a great first meeting and his is looking forward to working closely with the Commission.

Chair Marks encouraged Commissioners to submit ideas for topics and guest speakers for the Agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.

ASHLEY APPEL, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____