

CALL TO ORDER

Session 25-06, a Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Scott Smith at 6:30 p.m. on March 19th, 2025 in the Cowles Council Chambers in City Hall, located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS BARNWELL, VENUTI, S. SMITH, CONLEY, SCHNEIDER, STARK & H. SMITH

STAFF: CITY PLANNER FOSTER & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

CONSULTANTS: SHELLY WADE, AGNEW::BECK

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair S. Smith read the supplemental items into the record. He then requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

BARNWELL/CONLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Unapproved Regular Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2025

H. SMITH/BARNWELL MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS / VISITORS

REPORTS

- A. City Planner's Report, Staff Report 25-015

City Planner Foster reviewed his staff report included in the packet, covering the following:

- Comprehensive Plan Update
- March 10, 2025 Council Meeting Recap
 - Ordinance 25-20, Amending Homer City Code by Adding Studio as a Permitted Use in the Residential Office, General Commercial 1, and General Commercial 2 Districts (approved by City Council)
 - Ordinance 25-27, Amending the Homer City Zoning Map to Rezone a Portion of the Rural Residential Zoning District to East End Mixed Use Zoning District (denied by City Council)
- Next Commission report to City Council is March 24, 2025
- Regular Meeting for April 2, 2025 has been cancelled
- Next Regular Meeting is Wednesday, April 16, 2025
- Potential Special Meeting on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 to discuss the Comprehensive Plan Comments that have been compiled

There was brief discussion among the Commission and Shelly Wade of Agnew::Beck regarding the adoption process for the Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Ordinance 25-11(S), An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska, Amending Homer City Code Chapter 21.90, Administration and Enforcement, to Direct Appeals to the Office of Administrative Hearings of a Hearing Office Appointed by the City Manager, Staff Report 25-016

Chair S. Smith introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to City Planner Foster, who provided a summary review of his staff report included in the packet.

Chair S. Smith opened the public hearing period. With no one wishing to provide testimony, Chair S. Smith closed the public hearing period. He then opened the floor to comments and questions from the Commission.

Commissioner H. Smith noted that there was no fiscal note attached to the draft ordinance that indicates how much it will cost the City to forward appeals to a hearing officer. He opined that the 10-day time limit seemed short given the transient nature of many Alaskans' work lives.

Commissioner Schneider shared that he doesn't see the need for the Planning Commission to act as a hearing officer. He agreed with Commissioner H. Smith that 10 days doesn't seem like enough time, and questioned what it would cost the City.

Commissioners Conley and Barnwell both agreed that 10-day timeframe seemed unreasonably short.

SCHNEIDER/H. SMITH MOVED TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL ADOPT ORDINANCE 25-11(S)(A) WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:

1. CHANGING THE APPEAL PERIOD REFERENCED ON LINES 113 AND 114 BACK TO 30 DAYS FROM 10 DAYS.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PLAT CONSIDERATION

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Draft Comprehensive Plan Review and Comments, Staff Report 25-014
Public Comment Received

Chair S. Smith introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to City Planner Foster and Shelly Wade of Agnew::Beck. The Commission reviewed the Draft Comprehensive Plan in-depth, discussing the following items:

- Land Use and Environment
 - Industrial vs. conservation zoning near Beluga wetlands
 - Inventory of developable/potentially developable land
 - Concerns regarding steep-slope development
 - Creating affordable housing
 - Indoor recreation center/future plans for the HERC
- Sustainability, Resilience & Climate Change
 - Inclusion/restructuring of the Climate Action Plan
 - EV charging stations
- Public Facilities & Services
 - Maintenance of DOT&PF-owned roads to City standards
- Housing
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Quality of Life
 - the City's role in regards to childcare access and education
- Governance

Chair S. Smith called for a 10-minute recess at 8:47 p.m.

Chair S. Smith called the meeting back to order at 8:57 p.m.

H. SMITH/SCHNEIDER MOVED TO EXTEND THE MEETING UNTIL 10:30 P.M.

Chair S. Smith stated that he felt the Commission should extend to 11:00 p.m.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

H. SMITH/ MOVED TO EXTEND THE MEETING UNTIL 11:00 P.M.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

H. SMITH/BARNWELL moved to continue to 11:07 p.m.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. 2025 Planning Commission Calendar
- B. 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Dates and Submittal Deadlines

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE STAFF

City Planner Foster noted that there was some great input provided tonight, and shared that he was looking forward to seeing everyone again on April 16th.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBER (If Present)

Mayor Lord thanked the Commission for letting her be there with them, and added that she hopes they start their meeting on April 29th earlier.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Venuti thanked his fellow Commissioners for serving with him, and he also thanked Mayor Lord for attending.

Commissioner Barnwell noted that there were some great conversations at the meeting. He thanked Mayor Lord and his fellow Commissioners.

Commissioner H. Smith shared his appreciation for everyone who devoted their time towards the conversation tonight.

Commissioner Stark seconded Commissioner H. Smith's comments, and thanked City Staff, Mayor Lord, and his fellow Commissioners.

Commissioner Schneider thanked City Staff for their work and thanked Mayor Lord for attending. He also thanked his fellow Commissioners, noting that the group is polite to one another.

Commissioner S. Smith noted the decommissioning of the Naushon taking place on Friday at noon down at the Spit. He provided a notice that he may not be in attendance for the meeting on April 16th.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair S. Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:05 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, April 16th, 2025**. A Worksession is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar. Meetings will adjourn promptly at 9:30 p.m. An extension is allowed by a vote of the Commission.

Zach Pettit, Deputy City Clerk II

Approved: _____