

**CITY OF UNALASKA, ALASKA  
PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2018, 6:00 P.M.  
UNALASKA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Billie Jo Gehring called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Physically Present

Billie Jo Gehring  
Thomas Bell  
Helen Brown  
Vicki Williams  
Travis Swangel

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present

Bil Homka, Planning Director  
Thomas Roufos, Associate Planner  
James Price, GIS Administrator  
Judy Huling, Administrative Assistant  
Christian Schmidt, Planning Intern

**REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None

**MINUTES:** Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the minutes from May 17, 2018. Commissioner Swangel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

**Resolution 2018-08** – A RESOLUTION APPROVING A 10 FOOT VARIANCE TO THE 20 FOOT FRONT SETBACK FOR A CONTAINER GREEN HOUSE ON LOT 14A, AERIE SUBDIVISION, PLAT 89-01, AIRD

No public was there to speak on this resolution.

**Resolution 2018-09** – A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN 8 FOOT VARIANCE TO THE 10 FOOT SIDE YARD SETBACK FOR AN ARCTIC ENTRY AND DECK ON LOT 1 SEAGULL HILL SUBDIVISION, NICHOLS ADDITION, PLAT 99-05, AIRD

No public was there to speak on this resolution.

**Resolution 2018-10** – A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PRELIMINARY PLAT OF PARKSIDE ESTATES PART 2, A RESUBDIVISION OF TRACT D, PARKSIDE ESTATES SUBDIVISION, PLAT 2011-7, AIRD

Mr. Homka explained that **Resolution 2018-10** was on the agenda as a formality. The applicant requested that it be deferred until next month so he could be present.

OLD BUSINESS *None*

NEW BUSINESS

**Resolution 2018-08** – A RESOLUTION APPROVING A 10 FOOT VARIANCE TO THE 20 FOOT FRONT SETBACK FOR A CONTAINER GREEN HOUSE ON LOT 14A, AERIE SUBDIVISION, PLAT 89-01, AIRD

Mr. Homka gave the staff report.

Jason Gates, the applicant, spoke to the commission explaining his intentions to put a 20' container, as a greenhouse, against the side of his garage. He had tested various sites on his property the previous year to see which would work best for a greenhouse. The selected location received the best sunlight and was most suitable for greenhouse purposes. The other potential sites were right up against the property line on the north side of the property, or behind the house, which would require walking a crane up General Hill to lift the container over the house.

Commissioner Swangel explained that, considering the shape and topography of the lot, the 20' front yard setback does make it difficult for development. On the other hand, the hardship of getting a crane up the hill to lift a container over the garage is not reason enough to grant a variance.

Mr. Homka asked about the potential spot on the side yard lot line. Mr. Gates explained that the only flat area on that side is right on the lot line, and he was told by staff that he would not receive a variance for that.

Commissioner Swangel asked how much space Mr. Gates was asking for between the container and his garage. Mr. Gates stated the Fire department had suggested he put it right up against the garage. He said he had 24 feet between the garage and the setback. An 8' container would require a 4 foot variance.

Mr. Roufos explained that the Resolution asking for a 10 foot variance had been written using the old imagery. The new imagery allows for more accurate measurement of property. He suggested the Commission could amend the Resolution to correct the amount of variance requested.

Commissioner Swangel thought that would be worth looking at considering the actual amount of variance would only be four feet instead of ten feet.

Chair Gehring thought that would be good as it appeared that would be the only feasible area in the yard.

Commissioner Swangel asked the applicant if he was considering this as a permanent location or if he would prefer it to be somewhere else.

Mr. Gates stated that was the best spot for sunlight.

Commissioner Swangel stated that he would support a four foot variance, only because of the shape of the lot. He felt it would still allow room for snow removal.

Commissioner Bell stated in originally looking at the request on the surface it did not appear to meet the code requirements for a variance. But, because of the difference in the amount of variance required, he would agree with Commissioner Swangel. Because of the amount of frontage on this lot, it could be more acceptable to grant a variance on it.

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-08**. Commissioner Brown seconded. Discussion had already occurred.

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-08** as amended with a 5 foot variance. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution 2018-09** – A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN 8 FOOT VARIANCE TO THE 10 FOOT SIDE YARD SETBACK FOR AN ARCTIC ENTRY AND DECK ON LOT 1 SEAGULL HILL SUBDIVISION, NICHOLS ADDITION, PLAT 99-05, AIRD

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve **Resolution 2018-09**. Commissioner Bell seconded.

Mr. Homka gave the staff report.

Chair Gehring invited Tyler Zimmerman, the applicant to speak.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that originally with his property there was an arctic entry on the side of the house. It was removed before his time. The house currently has only one entryway. He would like to put a door on the other side to allow for entry into the kitchen instead of the living room, and give another egress for the house. He would like a deck there also. He also owns the lot next door. The adjacent property, belonging to OC, is narrow and would not be easy to develop any time soon.

Commissioner Swangel asked for clarification as to the length of the variance requested.

Mr. Roufos stated that this was another instance where the initial measurements were taken using old imagery. New measurements changed it from a ten foot variance to a six foot variance.

Chair Gehring pointed out that there was a deck on the back of the neighboring structure that looked like it might have been similar to what was on Tyler's structure. It seemed to be within the setback requirements also. She stated that granting the variance did not seem to be much of an issue as there was no need for leaving room for snow removal, or being too close to the road or another structure. This is abutted to a property that may or may not ever be developed.

Mr. Homka stated that one of the nice things of having these gentlemen come in for variances was that it raised this discussion. This community's side yard requirements are large compared to other places.

Commissioner Bell asked for verification whether there was 12 feet at the side of the building or 10. Mr. Roufos stated it was basically 12 feet along the side, and the proposed construction was eight feet. Commissioner Bell asked if Tyler had considered moving the entry and deck to the front of the house instead of the side. Mr. Zimmerman said he'd thought about it, but that would preclude any garage or parking in that area.

Commissioner Swangel stated that typically when something that was noncompliant was torn down, the homeowner was not allowed to rebuild in that area. In this case, there was clearly something there, coming out of the back. As an egress, it would come into the setback whether it were a set of stairs, or an entry. He originally wasn't going to be in support of it, but having it changed to five feet made it reasonable.

Commissioner Swangel made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-09 with a change to 6 foot variance instead of 8 foot variance. Commissioner Bell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution 2018-10** - A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PRELIMINARY PLAT OF PARKSIDE ESTATES PART 2, A RESUBDIVISION OF TRACT 3, PARKSIDE ESTATES SUBDIVISION, PLAT 2011-7, AIRD

Commissioner Williams made a motion to table Resolution 2018-10 until the next meeting. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### WORKSESSION

Mr. Homka stated that Andy Dietrich has a done a great job with the new imagery, as well as James with our GIS department, and Public Works. They used GPS to set locations to make it easier to lay the imagery across the parcel fabric. He was hoping to make a presentation to Council a month from now showing the new imaging results, and would like to go live with the imaging before August.

Mr. Homka reviewed a supplement given the Commissioners on a study of the downtown area, giving lot sizes in each block of USS 1992. This information can be used when considering whether or not changes need to be made to the zoning code, either for this area specifically, or for all Single Family-Duplex lots. He suggested that they walk around downtown to look at it from a Planning Commission point of view. What works, what doesn't? How can each parcel best be used? What are the parking requirements? What setbacks would work?

There was discussion of some of the potential issues in the downtown area and other areas on the island. It was decided that everyone would visit the downtown area before the next meeting and come back for more discussion.

Residential Boat Lease Policy review discussion. Mr. Homka explained that this had come up because someone was looking at living on a boat as an alternative to traditional housing. Staff added some wording to the current Tideland leasing policy to allow for liveaboards. This would only apply to new docks, not existing private or public docks.

Chair Gehring stated it was her understanding that if everyone was in favor of this it would be on the schedule for the next meeting as a Resolution to approve. The Zoning review discussion would continue for several meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Williams made a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Brown seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2018 BY THE CITY OF UNALASKA PLANNING COMMISSION.

  
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Billie Jo Gehring  
Commission Chair

7/19/18  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bil Homka, AICP  
Secretary of the Commission

7-19-18  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Prepared by Judith Huling, Administrative Assistant