

Michelle Webb

To: DG_Assembly
Subject: FW: Subdivisions and utility connection requirements

From: Rob Goldberg [<mailto:artstudioalaska@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Saturday, February 08, 2014 11:32 PM
To: Michelle Webb
Cc: Julie Cozzi; Stephanie Scott; Xi Cui
Subject: Subdivisions and utility connection requirements

Hi Michelle,

Please forward this to all Assembly Members. Thanks!

To: Haines Borough Assembly

Gina St. Clair's proposed subdivision has brought to light a section of Borough Code that I think needs review. The current requirement is that a subdivider must connect to the Borough's water and sewer service if any part of the subdivision is within 200 feet of existing service. This provision works in most of the townsite, where lots are small. A few years before the City and Borough consolidated, the City annexed lands on the west side of town, including the area where Gina St. Clair now lives. The lots that were annexed are mostly 1 acre or more, and the zoning is Rural Residential, which in the Townsite has a 1 acre minimum lot size. A one acre lot is large enough to support an independent water well and septic system. I question whether the current regulation is a good fit with the lots the City annexed and the zoning of the area.

Extending water and sewer lines is very expensive. The only way a developer, or the future lot owners, can pay for this is if the lots are small, and there are many of them to share the cost. The minimum lot size in the Borough is 10,000 square feet (100' x 100' for example), or about a quarter acre. Many of the existing lots downtown are half that size. Gina St. Clair's subdivision is the worst possible scenario for a property owner. Her lot is about 7 acres, and she is only creating one new lot at the part of her property farthest from the utilities. The distance to the newly created lot is so great that the cost of extending utilities to it is unaffordable. The Code is preventing her from selling part of her property. I think most or all of us, planning commissioners and assembly members, think this isn't right.

Here are some possible Code changes to remedy this:

An exemption from the requirement to connect to existing utility service may be granted if:

- the newly created lots are more than 200 feet from existing service
- the newly created lots are one acre or larger

I hope you will consider these changes. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Rob Goldberg

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