



Haines Borough
Planning Commission Meeting
January 9, 2014
MINUTES

Approved

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG** – Chairman **Goldberg** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in Assembly Chambers and led the pledge to the flag.
2. **ROLL CALL** – **Present:** Chairman Rob **Goldberg**, Commissioners Don **Turner III**, Lee **Heinmiller**, Robert **Venables**, and Danny **Gonce** (called in). **Absent:** Rob **Miller** and Andy **Hedden**.

Staff Present: Jila **Stuart**/Chief Fiscal Officer, and Tracy **Cui**/Planning & Zoning Technician III.

Also Present: Glenda **Gilbert**, Heather **Lende**, Bill **Kurz**, and Debra **Schnabel** (Liaison)

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: **Venables** moved to “approve the agenda”. **Heinmiller** seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – December 12, 2013 Regular Meeting

Motion: **Gonce** moved to “approve the December 12, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes.” It was amended to correct “the code can be amended” with “the letters can be amended” in the final paragraph of 7C. **Venables** seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

6. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Goldberg said the mayor sent an email to all the committee members. There is a draft ordinance that is going to be forwarded to the Assembly to change the method of filling vacancies on boards. In the past, the applicants wrote letters of interest, and the applications would be transmitted to the appropriate board for review and recommendation to the mayor. Now the mayor is suggesting the board hold a public meeting with a public comment period and review all applications, after which the board shall submit written recommendations for appointments to the mayor. This proposed ordinance allows public involvement in this process.

Heinmiller said he likes the way code is now.

Turner said he thinks the current code is very straight forward.

Venables said the Planning Commission has very few applicants. If the mayor and the Assembly would like to give the commission directions, the Planning Commission can make it work.

7. **STAFF REPORTS**

- A. **Planning & Zoning Report**

Cui reported recent permitting and enforcement activities.

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** – None

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Historic District/Building Review**

B. **Haines Borough Code Amendments**

1. **Public Water & Sewer Service Connection in HBC 18.100.092(A)(2)**

Stuart said the Borough code requires property owners to connect to the public utility within six months when public sanitary sewer and/or water service becomes available. **Cui** found this section of code has not been enforced before. At the last meeting, the commissioners directed the Borough staff to take a look at how many properties apply to this situation. The Borough is seeking recommendations from the Planning Commission on how to proceed enforcing it, or whether the code should be amended.

Venables said the Borough Assembly needs to establish two policies to address this issue. One is that the Borough should develop a policy that would allow for the municipality to participate in the extension of water and sewer mains. The other one is that the Borough should develop a policy that would exempt current property owners with viable water and sewer systems from being forced into a Local Improvement District (LID) or connection to the public utility system in a defined period of time.

Gilbert said she saw there are two lists in the packet. One is named “properties without public water connections”; and the other one is named “properties without public sewer connections”. She asked where those two lists came from.

Cui said she made those two lists by using ArcGIS. The lists were automatically produced based on three sets of GIS data. One is the Borough parcel shapefile, which contains detailed information of each parcel; one is the Borough public utility shapefile, which shows the location of the water and sewer mains, and the last one is the Borough existing utility customer list, which was provided by Public Works. What she did was to select the parcels that are located within 200 feet of the utility lines, are more than \$10,000 in improvement value, are privately owned, but are not on the customer list. Those two final lists have been reviewed and approved by the Borough Water and Sewer Operator, Scott Bradford.

Turner said he thinks this is not a planning-related issue, but needs to be addressed at the Assembly level.

Goldberg said he likes Venables’ suggestions.

The Planning Commissioners agreed to let Goldberg forward the suggestions to the Assembly, the mayor and the manager.

2. **Appeals to the commission in HBC 18.30.050**

Motion: **Venables** moved to “recommend the Assembly adopt the proposed draft ordinance to amend Haines Borough Code 18.30.050(A) by adding one sentence stating the Planning Commission will decline to hear an appeal in which the particular grounds for the appeal have not been stated”. **Heinmiller** seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

C. **Project Updates** – None

D. Other New Business

1. Primary School Subdivision, Lots 6 & 7

Goldberg said the Borough received a written proposal from Aspen Management LLC to purchase lots 6 and 7 of the Primary School Subdivision. The code requires the Planning Commission to review the proposal and forward it to the Assembly for a determination of whether the proposal should be further considered and, if so, whether by direct negotiation with the original proposer or by competition after an invitation for further proposals.

Motion: Venables moved to “recommend the Assembly further consider the proposal from Aspen Management LLC to build a hotel on lots 6 and 7, Primary School Subdivision, in a commercial zone of Haines downtown, by direct negotiation with the original proposer”. **Turner** seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Lende said she read the Borough Comprehensive Plan, which mentions “a well-positioned mixed-use building with some ground floor retail space would further attract people and commerce adding life to the area and downtown next door”. The Comprehensive Plan also says “the former elementary and middle schools were located here but torn down. This is an opportunity to develop a great public space”. **Lende** said she loves this idea, and this can be a great opportunity to let the proposed hotel be a “well-positioned mixed-use building” with hotel upstairs, and retails & shops downstairs. The Borough should encourage the developer to make the design of the hotel fit the Comprehensive Plan.

Goldberg said the Borough also likes the idea. However, the Borough does not have a building code, so the Planning Commission cannot legally make the developer build a hotel in a certain way. The property is zoned Commercial. The proposed use of the property as a hotel is consistent with the commercial zoning district.

More discussion ensued.

11. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Turner said he knows the Borough is working on the Picture Point project. Since Picture Point is a major snow dump spot in town, he recommends the Borough take the snow-storage issue into consideration during the design process.

12. COMMUNICATION - None

13. SET MEETING DATES – The next regular Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 13, 2014.

14. ADJOURNMENT– 7:28 p.m.