

THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE
October 29, 2021 – Meeting Minutes

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Loren Jones called the Housing & Development Task Force Meeting to order at 12:05p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Ex-Officio Chair Loren Jones, Vice Chair Maria Gladziszewski, Michelle Hale, Nathaniel Dye, Dave Hanna, Wayne Jensen, and Bill Heumann.

Members Absent: Paul Voelkers.

Staff Present: Community Development Department Director Jill Maclean, City Manager Rorie Watt.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Mr. Hanna to add a new topic under **Item E – CDD Workload & Resources** to include: “d. Task Force Recommendations to the Assembly”.

Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved as amended.

C. MINUTES

a. October 15, 2021 Draft Minutes

MOTION by Mr. Hanna to change the language in **Item E - Suggestions for Next Agenda** to state “...coming up with Task Force recommendations to the Assembly Priorities.”

D. Comments About Previous Meeting

Mr. Hanna recalled that the task force unanimously agreed to draft changes to Title 49 that would allow for the pre-application process to become optional. He asked for clarification on the next steps following this decision.

Mr. Jones mentioned that the Law Department had begun drafting an amendment to Title 49 for the pre-application process, however, this did not include making the process optional. He added that the Law Department is currently addressing each item in their amendment, and it is an ongoing process.

There was a discussion regarding the draft amendments to Title 49.

Ms. Gladziszewski and Ms. Hale spoke to bringing the draft ordinances to the Lands, Housing, and Economic Development Committee and the Committee of the Whole.

E. CDD Workload & Resources

a. Discussion Based on Previous Documents Sent to Task Force

b. Memo from City Manager to Lands, Housing, & Economic Development Committee

Mr. Hanna shared that he felt disheartened by the memo. He said that the memo seemed to recommend appointing a hearing officer, rather than receiving a hearing from the Planning Commission. Mr. Hanna believed that appointing a hearing officer, as employed by the city, would not be impartial to the applications they would be tasked with handling.

Mr. Watt clarified that he did not make any recommendations in his memo to the LHEDC, as stated in the document.

c. Memo from CDD Regarding Priorities

Ms. Maclean explained how CDD Priorities and Assembly Goals are established and developed each year, and how it corresponded with the table featured in the memo.

Mr. Jones advised the task force to be clear on exactly what changes they would like to make to certain processes, and reminded them that the Planning Commission is not obligated to accept any of the priorities they set.

Mr. Heumann noted that Code administration in relation to permit processing was not included in the Priority List. He felt that permit processing should be considered one of the topmost priorities for the task force, particularly the timing of the process.

Ms. Maclean spoke to CDD's involvement in permitting, and said that the permitting process was considered a guaranteed priority for the department.

d. Task Force Recommendations to the Assembly

Ms. Gladziszewski suggested that one of the priorities could include an assessment of Title 49, and an assessment of the permitting process.

Mr. Hanna suggested the task force conduct an assessment of CDD's current workload, and determine which projects could be outsourced to a consultant.

Mr. Heumann shared that local developers have expressed frustration with the length of time it takes to complete the permitting process. He also called for the task force to review CDD's workload, re-delegating their responsibilities to allow for an expedited process.

Mr. Dye mentioned that amending Title 49 can be a complicated effort due to the amount of staff time it takes for CDD and the Law Department to review and draft each amendment.

Ms. Hale and Ms. Maclean discussed CDD developing and presenting a matrix to share with the task force and the LHEDC.

MOTION by Ms. Gladziszewski for the Housing & Development Task Force to draft and forward a memo to the Assembly that listed the priorities of the task force.

The first priority listed was for the task force to identify ways in which the permitting process could be completed in a timely manner.

The second priority chosen for the list directed the task force to conduct a thorough review of Title 49.

The third and final priority listed called for the task force to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dye supported Ms. Gladziszewski's motion, and gave an example of how changes at the federal level can affect ongoing development projects and Title 49 as a whole.

Mr. Heumann also spoke in favor in Ms. Gladziszewski's motion.

Ms. Maclean spoke to the efficient timing of how permits are issued, particularly compared to the timing of permitting compared to other communities of comparable size. She also explained that certain applications given to CDD are incomplete or incorrect when submitted; this sometimes results in a cycle of corrections and re-submissions between CDD and the developer, which cannot be entirely attributed to CDD's workload.

Hearing no objections, the motion passed with unanimous consent.

F. Comments on Two Draft Documents Related to Process for Task Force to Move Recommendations from and to Another Body

Mr. Jones will present a draft memo to the task force at the November 12, 2021 HDTF meeting, as well as a draft memo in relation to the pre-application process as discussed at the October 15, 2021 Housing & Development Task Force meeting.

G. Public Comment (10 Minutes)

Travis Arndt – Mr. Arndt, a Planning Commissioner and local developer, spoke to the amount of backlog that has been attributed to the Code and to Title 49. He recommended the main revisions to Title 49 to be reductions and deletions, rather than additions. Mr. Arndt said that adding more amendments to Title 49 creates more work for CDD staff and the Planning Commission, and does not necessarily change or improve the finished product.

H. Suggestions for Next Agenda

Mr. Hanna had two agenda item suggestions: the first suggestion was to bring recommendations for changes in Title 49, the second suggestion was to bring a list of permitting delays to review.

I. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Housing & Development Task Force, the meeting was adjourned at 1:21p.m.