

APPROVED MINUTES

Agenda

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

Erik Pedersen, Chair

June 23, 2026

A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Read by Ms. Derr.

We would like to acknowledge that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wish to honor the indigenous people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. Gunalchéesh!

B. ROLL CALL

Erik Pedersen, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, virtually via Zoom Webinar, and telephonically, to order at 6 p.m.

Commissioners present: Commissioners present in Chambers –Erik Pedersen, Chair; Lacey Derr, Vice Chair; Mandy Cole, Clerk; Jessalynn Rintala, Vice Clerk; Larry Gamez; Carlee Simon; Keith Koruna; Karinne Wiebold

Commissioners present via video conferencing – Douglas Salik

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Scott Ciambor, CDD Director; Forrest Courtney, Senior Planner; Madeline Carse, CDD Administrative Assistant; Nicole Lynch, Attorney III; Emmanuel Lebbie, CDD Administrative Officer

Assembly members: None

C. REQUEST FOR AGENDA CHANGES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

E. BRIEF REVIEW OF THE RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

G. ITEMS FOR RECONSIDERATION

H. CONSENT AGENDA

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

J. REGULAR AGENDA

1. CSP2026 0001: The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities requests State Project Review for construction of a modified, partially signalized intersection at Egan Drive and Yandukin Drive.

Applicant: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Location: 8181 Glacier Hwy

Director's Report

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities requests a State Project Review approval for construction of a modified, partially signalized intersection at Egan Drive and Yandukin Drive.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Director's analysis and findings and APPROVE City/State Project CSP2026 0001

Chair Pedersen recused himself from the item and asked Ms. Derr to preside over the item.

Jim Brown, Design Group Chief of Alaska DOT & PF, gave the history and overview of the intersection at Egan Drive and Yandukin Drive. He talked about the PEL that was conducted after concerns about safety at the intersection. He said they started with 15 different concepts with the stakeholder advisory groups, some of which included a mobility alternative, full access signalized intersection, two signalized T-intersections, and Diamond Exchange Overpass at the intersection, but they ultimately decided on the Partial Access Signalized Intersection Project.

Yuri Mereszczak, with Parametrix, discussed the preliminary design work that occurred since the PEL. He explained the intersection will maintain the right-in/right-out and left end movements to continue prohibiting left turns out, add a traffic signal at the intersection to stop Egan Drive traffic based on the detection of left turn vehicles or the pedestrian crossing button, two in-bound left turn lanes for both directions, a new at-grade pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Fred Meyer area, airport, and Honsinger Pond area, with new sidewalks and pedestrian ramps, median refuge areas, pedestrian activated signalized crossings, advanced warning flashers, and

lengthening of the northbound acceleration lane on Egan Drive. He went over what drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists can expect from the finished project and what users can expect during construction. He voiced that construction is anticipated to begin and end 2027 and last for around six months.

Mr. Brown expressed they are getting ready to head into final review and should be going into certification this fall and starting construction next spring, which is estimated to last 4 to 6 months. He also talked about public participation and stakeholder advisory groups participation.

Mr. Mereszczak added they met and spoke with the Public Works Committee in November and also gave thanks to CBJ's participation.

Ms. Cole asked why they chose this design over some of the others they discussed.

Mr. Brown answered some of the alternatives included economic impacts and situations where they would still have pedestrians running across the highway. He noted this is a crash prone intersection and they wanted to get something as expediently done as they could.

Mr. Gamez inquired if there was any consideration for a bus stop on Yandukin Drive, as people leaving the airport with luggage could have to cross that highway.

Mr. Mereszczak agreed that was an interesting consideration and said that bus stop may not even fall within the project area based on airport traffic. He shared they are partnering with Capital Transit and it would probably ultimately be a collaboration between DOT and Capital Transit to make something like that occur, but it was not a consideration so far for this project.

Ms. Wiebold asked if the pedestrians would be initiating crossing by pushing the button like at a normal intersection where they push it or like the one by IGA, where they stop everything and the lights come on for the pedestrian.

Mr. Mereszczak answered the pedestrian crossing on Egan Drive north and south bound through lanes will be regular pedestrian crossings with the button and walk signal, but for the crossing of the right turn lanes that come off and go into Fred Meyer or go on to Yandukin Drive, as well as crossing Yandukin to get to the Honsinger area, they will be pressing the button to activate flashing lights.

Ms. Wiebold asked if issues of speed were negated by the fact that the crosswalks are very close to the actual turns so cars almost slow completely by the time they are at a crosswalk.

Mr. Mereszczak responded yes, they used the geometrics and curvature to slow people down, but that is also what is already there and they felt that was not enough, which is why the flashing lights are part of this. He also shared some statistics on using the flashing lights.

Ms. Wiebold voiced the left turns are one of the biggest problems there. She said when trying to get to Fred Meyer's, the northbound or southbound people cannot go at the same time because the traffic signal prohibits that.

Mr. Mereszczak responded the northbound and southbound left turns will be able to go at the same time, and southbound left will not have to judge gaps with the northbound through traffic. He added there will also be a raised median in the center of the intersection to help better define the pathways for those left turns.

Ms. Cole voiced when making the lefthand turn southbound to Fred Meyer, there is a right merge lane going into Yandukin and they both have to merge to that small space before Fred Meyer.

Mr. Mereszczak explained currently there is a single lane for a short distance and then it widens to the left turn into Fred Meyer, but with the new design, they will have two lanes from that left turn and the inner left turn lane will go into the Fred Meyer access and the outer lane will continue on to Glacier Highway. He said the right turns will still be in a yield condition for gaps in traffic to go to Fred Meyer's, but the signal will help meter that.

Ms. Rintala commented the lefthand left lane will probably draw more traffic with people mostly going to Fred Meyer's. She inquired if they thought that would cause any downstream effects.

Mr. Mereszczak answered the length of the left turn lanes are such that it allows for backup traffic around 500 feet in each lane. He stated the lanes are actually about 1000 feet long to provide the room for that storage and room beyond that to allow vehicles coming into those lanes to decelerate. He was not concerned about backup out of the left turn lanes into Egan Drive traffic, but they did consider backup due to congestion at Yandukin and Honsinger, which is why they provided the same situation on that side. He added they talked with the DOT traffic engineer about good signage to put before the intersection and at the intersection to help people line into the proper lanes.

Ms. Simon asked if they would be eliminating all of the grassy median.

Mr. Mereszczak responded there will be around 5 to 7 feet of the grassy median left. He added part of what is taking up that grassy area is barrier to provide position protection between the dual left turn lanes and avoid crossing lane collisions.

Ms. Simon inquired if they see a potential problem after passing Fred Meyer's in the area of the funny stop sign.

Mr. Mereszczak answered they are not worried about a problem at that location as much as the other side of the road. He did not think the volumes going to and from Glacier Highway and the connection intersection would change too much with this project, but they were concerned about the Honsinger area. He shared they added a center to a left turn lane at Yandukin and Honsinger to allow drivers from Honsinger to come out and do a type of two stage action if turning left onto Yandukin.

Ms. Rintala stated there were a lot of community concerns about perceived safety risk at this intersection. She wondered what the community outreach looked like on this.

Mr. Brown expressed this project has really been identification of the community's interest in the safety concerns and hearing a lot of stories about lack of visibility and severity of crashes. He

said from this point forward, it is mostly outreach to determine the construction and a lot of the people they will impact by that, so a lot of their public involvement now more targeted for that rather than the design solution.

Ms. Simon commented that having one main artery and no other option seems like a missed opportunity. She inquired if there were any discussion on how to possibly not have this one road.

Mr. Brown responded they first focused on getting a speed reduction in place until they could get a signal in place, and step three would be looking at trying to find funding for an extension of the roadway behind Fred Meyer down to McDonalds.

Ms. Wiebold explained what they hear from people is that Egan is a state highway, but if they put too many lights on it, too many lights closer together or fully bladed intersections, it will not be a state highway, and then they lose their money.

Mr. Brown stated he was not aware of such a stipulation at all with that.

Ms. Derr asked who would be maintaining the snow removal there and who they should direct the public to on that, because if it is not removed, pedestrians will be standing on Egan Drive.

Mr. Brown answered it is a state route so it would be the state's responsibility, and he recommended contacting maintenance at 7 mile for that.

Ms. Derr asked for public comment on the item.

Jenny Smith, resident, asked why they did not have a pedestrian crossing bridge as one of the options.

Ms. Derr invited Mr. Brown and Mr. Mereszczak to come back up for closing.

Mr. Brown stated the question of the pedestrian crossing bridge came up during the PEL as well. He said a pedestrian bridge was one of the alternatives they were looking at potentially funding, but they do not know enough about the use patterns from pedestrians right now. He said by putting this signal in place and pedestrian crossing in first, they will have an assessment of how well that functions and see if there is a need for a pedestrian bridge.

Mr. Mereszczak added that is also a substantial cost investment and they want to make sure the usage is in place for reaping the benefits of that substantial cost investment. He noted with a pedestrian bridge there, they would have to go farther out of the way to get to it because of requirements with accessibility.

Ms. Derr asked for commission discussion and/or a motion.

MOTION: *by Ms. Cole to accept staff's findings, analysis, and recommendations, and approve CSP2026 0001.*

The motion passed.

2. VAR2026 0001: Non-Administrative Variance to reduce the rear yard setback in an Industrial zone.

Applicant: Mike Sturrock
Location: 1727 Anka Street

Director's Report

The applicant requests a Non-Administrative Variance to reduce the rear yard setback from 10 feet to 2 feet for the purpose of constructing a storage structure with a caretaker unit in an Industrial zone

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Director's analysis and findings and DENY VAR2026 0001.

Mike Sturrock explained he wanted to maximize practical use of industrial land. He said they currently have 0 foot side setbacks, 10 foot front and rear setbacks, and the 10 foot rear setback borders a parcel of land that is unbuildable and mined every year. He stated since it is bordering unbuildable land, he did not need the need or purpose for the 10 foot rear setback. He noted that land is different than every other block of land in the subdivision. He asked to have the 10 foot rear setback reduced to make use of the industrial land.

Mr. Gamez asked if the setback was toward Lemon Creek and who owned the other side of the parcel.

Mr. Sturrock answered yes, it borders the rear of the property, but is 50 feet away from the property line. The owners of the other side is Colaska.

Mr. Gamez inquired if he was the first one on the line of Lemon Creek requesting this setback.

Mr. Sturrock responded yes, as far as he knew.

Ms. Cole noted the staff report says the 50 foot no build from the river extends 2 feet into his property, basically 8 foot of setback and 2 feet in the no build. She asked if that was his understanding.

Mr. Sturrock answered yes.

Mr. Koruna inquired if there were any erosion concerns happening on the back side of the property from Lemon Creek or the mining activities.

Mr. Sturrock responded he has not seen any.

Ms. Derr inquired if he had considered any other dimensions of his building to fit within the setback and still accomplish what he wanted to do.

Mr. Sturrock answered yes, but it makes the building 10 feet smaller and the land behind the building becomes unusable.

Mr. Koruna pointed out that in the packet he said something about utilizing the space between the new carport and the additional one and the space in between. He asked if he had a rough dimension of the ending of the existing carport to the beginning of the new building.

Mr. Sturrock answered roughly 22 feet.

Ms. Wiebold asked if the non-administrative variance is denied and the storage structure is still constructed, would it still maintain approximately 22 feet separation from the existing structure to accommodate circulation, as noted in the packet.

Mr. Sturrock yes, if he was to shrink the building.

Chair Pedersen asked for public comment. There was none.

Mr. Sturrock declined the need to add additional information or closing.

Chair Pedersen asked for Commission deliberation and/or a motion.

Ms. Cole commented it was clear that while the applicant would like to use this and his building would be 10 feet bigger if he were able to build into the setback, it did not meet the definitional standard of an undue hardship. Therefore, she agreed to deny the variance.

MOTION: *by Ms. Cole to accept staff's findings, analysis, and recommendations, and deny VAR2026 0001.*

The motion passed 5-4.

K. OTHER BUSINESS

L. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Ciambor thanked CBD staff for helping with the last Planning Commission Meeting in his absence. He stated the Community Development Department have already gone through 450 building permits, 30 packs, and 30 NCC applications to date. He shared that they hired a new administrative officer and Planner I, changed some of the senior planner job descriptions in order to recruit more candidates, rehired Joseph Myers in one of the new senior planner positions, and promoted David Peterson to Senior Planner. He expressed they have two Planner I and II positions open, in which they have 16 resumes in the queue for, and they still have the planning manager position vacancy. He voiced they updated almost all the job descriptions and refined a Planner I and II training module

to see if they can help planners to get a better understanding of the software system and start on substantial work quicker. In regard to EPL and Civic Access, they are working on the software and trying to figure out how best to train, setup standard protocols, and how to get the most use out of the system. He added CDD has rewritten almost all of their standard operating procedures since the transition, and there will be continued tweaking as they learn more. Mr. Ciambor shared they have had a big problem with legacy permits, and had to do a lot of leg work in reaching out to those applicants to get them to sign up for an account and get all their information they already submitted into the system. He said Planning staff is in a mixed phase of working 80% in Civic Access while also still dealing with their old legacy system. He felt implementing this software has been a big culture shift internally and on the customer side. He added one of the key features of the new software is applicants can see their status and if the status does not change, they start getting calls on why. He emphasized they are still in transition and there are new things to learn every day and they will have a move to another office building at some point. Mr. Ciambor expressed the Advisory Committee would be meeting tomorrow to start looking into the growth and land use scenarios that came out of the last round, and they will fine-tune their commentary for preparations to go public with the scenarios. He said they have been warning applicants that when the Planning Commission packet gets posted, they have been getting immediately bombarded with requests of money, emails scans, and wire transfers. He stated they talked with Law and IT about it and decided to redact emails on all the public documents, but that did not work, so they are trying to figure that out.

M. COMMITTEE REPORTS

N. LIAISON REPORTS

O. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

P. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Ms. Wiebold asked when they are going to vote on the DOT proposition.

Chair Pedersen explained it is up to the chair to call a roll call vote or ask if there is any opposition. He said the chair usually tries to feel out the room in the discussion and if people do not really ask questions or indicate opposition, the chair usually leans more towards just asking for any opposition.

Ms. Simon stated if there any committees that need someone, she currently does not have any and was available for that.

Chair Pedersen responded they would keep that in mind, especially when they do new committee assignments at the beginning of the year. He added sometimes the Assembly forms new advisory committees for special projects, but there were none upcoming yet.

Mr. Salik asked for an idea of what the future looks like in terms of meetings.

Mr. Ciambor responded so far they have two cases scheduled in July for the end of the month and August has not be set yet, but he assumed they would have stuff for each meeting through the fall.

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION

R. ADJOURNMENT

The June 23, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.