

**THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA
HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE**

March 4, 2022 – DRAFT Meeting Minutes

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Housing and Development Task Force (HDTF) was held in the CDD Conference Room and via Zoom Webinar, and was called to order by Ex-Officio Chair Loren Jones at 12:04p.m.

Members Present: Ex-Officio Chair Loren Jones, Assemblymember Maria Gladziszewski, Assemblymember Michelle Hale, Planning Commissioner Nathaniel Dye, Planning Commissioner Paul Voelkers, Developer William (Bill) Heumann, and Developer Dave Hanna.

Members Absent: Wayne Jensen.

Staff Present: Community Development Department (CDD) Director Jill Maclean, Assistant City Attorney Sherri Layne.

B. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

C. Approval of Minutes

a. January 7, 2022 Draft Minutes

Hearing no objection, the minutes of the January 7, 2022 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Ms. McEwen noted that there were some technical difficulties in connecting to the Zoom portion of the meeting. Mr. Dye and Ms. Hale noted that they both were able to access the meeting via Zoom so it appeared to have been just a technical glitch with the Clerk's office.

D. Comments About Last Meeting

No members had any comments to share related to the previous meeting of the task force.

E. Builders & CDD Draft Recommendations Memo

Mr. Jones noted that since the last meeting, the City Manager, City Attorney's staff met with the Juneau Chamber of Commerce (JCC) and discussed both the CDD memo of February 10 and the Chamber letter from February 7. Following that meeting, Mr. Jones and Ms. Maclean met together worked on what is the one page document in the current packet (packet page 9) titled

“Summary Recommendations – Housing Development Task Force” Version March 1, 2022. He said that was a way they were trying to put together a summary of all the issues they had heard and to put it in writing in one document that might serve as a basis for the report of this task force moving forward. At this point, it is just a topic of discussion by the HDTF. Mr. Jones said that March 25, is slated to be the last meeting of the task force but if they approve or modify and approve this document, it is possible to make this the last meeting of the task force. He noted that he and Ms. Maclean are not available to meet on March 18 and that while Ms. Maclean would be available on March 25, he would not be available to attend.

Mr. Jones noted that what was before the task force at this meeting was to review the following documents:

- a. CDD Memo from February 10, 2022**
- b. Chamber Letter from February 7, 2022**
- c. Mr. Heumann’s Emails from January 7, 2022**
- d. Commissioner Voelckers’ Edits to the Table of Dimensional Standards**
- e. “Summary Recommendations – Housing Development Task Force” Version March 1, 2022**

Ms. Gladziszewski thanked Mr. Jones for explaining that one page Summary Recommendation document. She said that this is exactly the opposite of what they told the Assembly in the November 13, 2021 memo when the Assembly was looking at its goals for the coming year.

Ms. Gladziszewski then highlighted the contents of the November 13, 2021 memo to the Assembly which placed the HDTF recommendations/priorities in the following order:

- 1) Process permits in a timely fashion
- 2) Review Title 49 for edits/efficiencies
- 3) Recommend a rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan if there is time

Ms. Maclean noted that at past meetings, CDD had been asked to draft a memo of their overall workload. She explained how the workload is distributed across different divisions. The planners focus on permit and plan review and then will also be working on updates to the land use code. She said she is trying to balance what she is hearing from the assembly to help accomplish their goals while also trying to address the HDTF recommendations.

Ms. Gladziszewski noted that the Assembly did adopt goals that included the update to the Comprehensive (Comp) Plan as one of its top priorities but she also expressed her concern that focusing on the Comp Plan gorilla project may take away from the ability to affect smaller changes to other important pieces such as updating Title 49 and the Table of Permissible Uses.

She said that she doesn't object to the Comp Plan update but that will take years to do and she does object to it coming in on the HDTF recommendations as the first priority on the list.

Mr. Hanna said that he believes the full HDTF would agree on all the points in the summary but that it would likely need to be reordered. He commented that item #1 should have the words "contracting out" added such that it reads:

"1. Undertake CDD staff will be **contracting out** the revision of the Comprehensive Plan in order to execute on the following, ..."

Mr. Jones said that this summary document was not listed in any priority order. Ms. Gladziszewski said that since the one thing the HDTF had all agreed upon was the November 13 memo, the summary document threw her off guard when the Comp Plan was the first item to appear on the list.

Mr. Hanna asked to also add a new Number 13 as follows:
"13. Consider contracting out more plan reviews and inspections."

Mr. Voelckers said that he views this summary as a good faith way to put their arms around a variety of pieces, some of which are related to the Comp Plan and others are not but are rather administrative steps that can be taken. He said in looking over the list, items 8 and 11 are the main ones he sees that would be clarified by the Comp Plan process. He said that item 6 might be a little bit since Mr. Dye has proposed an interesting, provocative thing to get rid of the Table of Dimensional Standards and replace it with a category called form based zoning. He said that might be something to be studied by someone contracted to look at a comprehensive plan. Otherwise, he views the remaining items as being primarily administrative improvements that are done at a departmental level that keep the pieces moving correctly.

Mr. Voelckers said that with respect to item 6, they have already had a motion from this committee forwarded to the Title 49 Committee to begin work in terms of possible improvements. He said that the TPU may be treated in the same way. He said the Title 49 Committee is the correct venue to work on the level of specificity that it needs to get it right.

Ms. Hale said in going back to Ms. Gladziszewski and Ms. Maclean's comments at the beginning of the meeting. She said that this document is supposed to be this task force's recommendations and not the Assembly goals and not the CDD goals and workload issues and she was concerned that they are trying to conflate all those pieces. She agreed with Mr. Hanna's suggestion that when the Comp Plan is worked on, that it will need to be contracted out and even then, it will be a big lift for the CDD staff to work on.

Ms. Gladziszewski said she was looking at this list and tried to determine a way it could be parsed out into different categories such as a “management” category or “regulatory” category or a “planning” category that might help address Ms. Hale’s concerns and suggestions.

Ms. Maclean said that she doesn’t have any qualms with what is put on this list. She brought forward the workload information based on what the HDTF had asked her to provide. She said that CDD will have other opportunities to address workload concerns with the Assembly such as when they are discussing their budget pieces during the Assembly Finance Committee meetings.

Ms. Maclean said that she did want to address a couple of the items specifically that Mr. Hanna raised. She said that she had removed one item from the original draft as the intent was to have a combined draft document that the developers and staff worked on collaboratively and agreed upon since the last HDTF meeting. She said the one item that she had removed was one that they had not discussed at those in between meetings and she wanted to flag it. She doesn’t want to repeat what happened with the pre-application meeting ordinance. She wants to be very transparent and notify the committee that she does have strong concerns with Mr. Hanna’s proposed new “**13. Consider contracting out more plan reviews and inspections.**” because she feels it is a “pay to play” so that if you can afford to pay for private inspections and if you can afford to pay an outside person to review your permit, you end up skipping ahead in the que.

Ms. Maclean said that she wanted to be very clear on the record about her concerns on that one. She said that she would foresee that as that one goes through the process, including going before the Systemic Racism Review Committee that it would get flagged for equity and she thinks it should get flagged in that manner. She said that she is happy to work with the HDTF with whatever their recommendations 1-12 on the current list in whatever order they wish them to appear but she wants to be clear about her stance with respect to item 13.

Ms. Hale appreciated Ms. Maclean’s concerns expressed with respect to item 13 about the “pay to play” and noted that there are ways to consider contracting that would not include a “pay to play” model such as the Assembly setting aside a specific amount of funding for those contractual services so that the permittees are not the ones required to pay.

Members then discussed a variety of ways to approach the list as well as the potential of splitting it up into categories.

Ms. Gladziszewski suggested that the HDTF split this list into two, possibly three, categories: **Management** and **Regulatory**. Samples of those falling within the Management category would include #3, #5, whereas Regulatory items would include #2, #6, and #10. She said that a third

category might be **Long Range Planning** that would include #1 Comp Plan and other similar planning related items.

Mr. Voelckers suggested the following item **categories/changes** with categories listed in **bold** and changes listed in *italics* as follows:

Comp Plan/Regulatory [New Category]

Item #1: Undertake the revision of the Comprehensive Plan, *with a focus on items 8 & 11, (and possibly others)*

Planning Commission/Title 49 Actions [New Category]

The HDTF recommends the Title 49 Committee prioritize action on the following items:

Item #2, Item #4, and Item #6 [item 6 is already in Title 49 Committee]

CDD Administrative [New Category]

Items #3, #5, #7, #9, #10, and potentially item #12

Ms. Gladziszewski said that she appreciated Mr. Voelckers suggestions but would suggest that Item #8 should not be subsumed under the Comp Plan but rather it should be one of the items before the Planning Commission. She asked Mr. Voelckers to clarify which other items he thought should fall under the Comp Plan.

Mr. Voelckers said that item #11 was a ‘bonus reserve’ item that has been in place since he came to Juneau and that was one that he thought would be very feasible. Ms. Gladziszewski said that she thought that could fall under the Planning Commission category but could also see why he thought it should be under Comp Plan.

Mr. Dye said that item #11 is a Planning Commission ordinance that just needs to be approved. He said that items #9 and #10 should also be Planning Commission action and not fall under the Comp Plan or CDD Administrative categories. Those would be new ordinances that would be changes to Title 49.

Ms. Maclean said that, with all due respect to Commissioner Voelckers, she preferred Ms. Gladziszewski’s proposal of the two categories splitting the list between those items that could be dealt with by staff (Management Category) and those that would go through the public process from the Assembly to the Planning Commission and Title 49 Committee and to drop the Comp Plan piece and have that handled entirely separate from this process/recommendation.

Additional discussion took place regarding the naming of the two categories and the removal of the Comp Plan from the recommendation. In going down the Summary Recommendations, they came up with the following items under each categories:

Item#	Description	Category
1	Undertake the revision of the Comprehensive Plan in order to execute on the following	<i>Dropped</i>
2	Review and amend the <i>Table of Permissible Uses</i>	Regulatory
3	Acquire an online permit tracking system to track status of active permits	Management
4	Review permit threshold levels to standardize the requirements depending on the impacts of a project – such as a minor vs. major development	Regulatory
5	Establish Community Development <i>Communication Guidelines</i> a. Initial permit review to identify any issues that would require additional information. b. Provide permittee with a list of requirements needed for approval and timeline. c. Timely communication with permittees	Management
6.	Conduct a line-by-line review with recommendations to amend the <i>Table of Dimensional Standards</i> to provide more consistent flexibility	Regulatory
7	Review other Alaska communities’ and update the permit fee schedule in line with findings	Management
8	Enact the Transition Zones that meet the condition to be “up-zoned”	Regulatory
9	Review and enact application submittal requirements	Management
10	Review plat review requirements and standards	Regulatory
11	Evaluate whether denser multi-family zoning (above D10) should be more flexible, including consideration of bonus provisions.	Regulatory
12	Facilitate adding a member of the Juneau Chamber’s Housing and Development Committee as a liaison to the Title 49 Committee	

Explanatory Discussion points (if any were discussed):

Item #1 for this purposes of the HDTF, item #1 is removed from the above list but Ms. Hale noted that this is on the Assembly goals list already. Mr. Hanna expressed hope that even though this is coming off the HDTF list, he hopes CBJ would contract out the Comp Plan update.

Item #3 Ms. Gladziszewski asked if the word “acquire” should be used or if “make it better” was needed to wordsmith it more accurately. Ms. Maclean said they do not currently have an online permit tracking system. They have already been investigating this but they are working on that issue. She said that it will eventually lead to purchasing something. CDD will be forwarding

whatever its recommendation to the City Manager and it will then become an item being requested in the budget that the Assembly would need to decide upon (likely coming through with a recommendation in early spring.) Mr. Voelckers said he would hope that it might incorporate concepts that it would be used more as a management tool. Additional discussion took place about past practices as well as how this would be a useful tool for permittees as well as staff. Suggested language “continue developing a tracking system.” Mr. Hanna stressed the importance of having an online tracking system that would make it equally as easy for staff and permittees to access.

Item #5 – Discussion took place about this item. Ms. Maclean said that her staff has almost completed putting the final touches on item 5 process. Mr. Hanna said he would suggest that stakeholder groups may also be able to provide feedback on how it is working or how it might be improved once implemented. Mr. Heumann suggested they may want to reach out to the builders in the community for their feedback. He also stated that permit applications need to be complete when submitted.

Item #6 – Ms. Gladziszewski suggested simplifying it and mirroring the language under item #2.

Item #7 – Members discussed item #7 and said that it has to start at the management level with final piece regulatory. Mr. Heumann asked where this was coming from. Ms. Maclean said that CBJ’s fees have not been updated since 2004 or 2006 and they were working on that just before COVID hit. She noted that we are woefully out of date with other communities in Alaska. She noted that if they are serious about looking at permitting software, any raising of fees may help pay for those software programs and services. Mr. Heumann said that this ties in with Mr. Hanna’s suggested #13. Additional discussion took place and it was voted on to put this item under the Management category.

Item #9 – Discussion of this being similar to #7 starting in Management and going to regulatory. “Review and make recommendations...”

Item #10 –Wording change to be consistent with the wording in #9 “Review and make recommendations...”

Item #11 – Mr. Heumann asked if this means that the discussion is initiated in the Title 49 Committee and that there is no prior input from the planning department. Ms. Maclean said she greatly appreciates that question as when she looks at the list, it all starts with the planning department. CDD staff then drafts the language or concepts and provides them to the Title 49 Committee. She said that once they have something drafted, she talked about the process by which the builders can provide input via email to the PC/Title 49 Committee. Mr. Voelckers and

Mr. Heumann weighed in on the process being split between management and regulatory as well as interplay between the stakeholder groups, staff, and Planning Commission.

Additional discussion took place regarding the process by which this list would be categorized, and finalized in advance of the next HDTF meeting for additional work. Mr. Heumann said that he would like to provide a copy of the draft of the list to the Chamber Builder's Group and he felt there may be additional items added later on.

Ms. Gladziszewski noted that there are a number of additional pages in the packet that are not included on this proposed recommendation list. She noted that the Title 49 interpretation for consistency issue had not made the initial list. Additional discussion took place with respect to this issue.

Item #12 – Earlier in the meeting, Mr. Dye had proposed some wording changes to item #12. Mr. Jones noted that he captured that wording change to be: “Facilitate and work on advocacy groups that need representation.” Mr. Dye said he would agree with how Mr. Jones captured his concept but he also added that he may not support Item #12 even with that conceptual word change. He provided an examples of the streamside setback process during which experts worked on that proposal a great deal. He expressed his concern was with respect to the amount of time and all the steps along the way from Title 49 to PC COW to PC to Assembly are already very public process intensive and additional membership or side groups may slow down an already drawn out process.

Ms. Gladziszewski said she definitely does not agree with the wording as it is written in the initial draft. She may be a little less adverse to the language Mr. Jones stated but that the Assembly appoints the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission has its subcommittees. She said that she was unclear what the groups are not getting with this process. Additional discussion took place regarding the public testimony protocols, when, and how members of the public can testify at Planning Commission and subcommittee meetings. Many of the points made by members during this discussion were similar to points made during past meetings of the HDTF. Members gave their reasons for why they wanted to leave in or take out Item #12 from the list.

Mr. Heumann suggested that perhaps they may want to consider created a Community Development Department Review Committee. Mr. Dye explained that the most effective way to effect change at the Title 49 committee was to submit comments, suggestions, etc... in writing in advance of the meeting so they can be reviewed during the meeting.

The task force ran out of time for any additional discussion and left Item #12 on the list to be decided upon at the next meeting.

F. Public Comment

Mr. Wayne Coogan reminded the task force that the conception of this committee was due to the industry collectively wanted to help the city function as best as it can. He said that the root of that is to help the suffering economy. He said that tracking of permits, whether they be building or land use, he has heard it said that we may be looking at software that costs \$500,000 and he said that may just be hearsay but that he understands that software is complicated. He said that those who write the code and develop software do not always use the end product or are aware of the need of the people who use the software. Not accurate to say that a permit application is ever finished. He said that he hoped when CDD does look for an online/software solution that the end users are consulted to a great degree before the acquisition of a software. He said that he is available to discuss it with Ms. Maclean anytime.

G. Suggestions for Next Agenda

Mr. Jones said that staff will compile the revisions to be brought back to the meeting on March 25 and that since he will not be present at that meeting, Ms. Gladziszewski will be presiding.

H. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Housing and Development Task Force meeting was adjourned at 1:35p.m.