



City of Homer

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TO: Port and Harbor Advisory Commission
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner
DATE: January 14, 2020
SUBJECT: Overslope development

Introduction

The idea of overslope development has a long history around the harbor. This type of development has a lot of moving pieces. Council requested the Commission consider parking, utility access, drainage, leasing provisions and zoning code considerations, and forward recommendations to the City Council. (Reso 19-22) Many of the zoning code issues can be addressed through a zoning ordinance, and I can work with you to accomplish that. Recommendations on leasing, utilities and drainage can be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration.

At the work session, I am looking for your consensus on the items below, and to hear your general thoughts on overslope. We are at a time of change on the Spit – we've grown into our parking lots, there is an upcoming parking study, and Spit Comp Plan update is funded for 2021. This is a great time to do some housekeeping on current rules, and to look forward.

Did you know? Traffic on the Spit has increased about 14%, between 2009 and 2019. That same increase holds true on an annual basis and also 4th of July holiday week traffic. DOT has a continuous traffic counter on the Spit... so if the Commission ever wants more nitty gritty details, DOT can provide it.

How much might traffic increase in the next 10 years?

Zoning Code Issues/Discussion points

HCC 21.46, Small Boat Harbor Overlay District code was adopted in 2009. While there has been very little development within the district to apply this code, we have learned a few things. Staff appreciates the opportunity to talk about some of these issues and come up with solutions. At the work session I will walk through the items below. From your responses, I will draft an ordinance, for a future meeting.

Minor detail: It was brought to my attention that some of the Port and Harbor Commission ideas, such as a new fish buying dock, are just that: a dock. In the code, 'overslope' implies buildings on that dock structure and a general public use and access. When we've had some

discussion I will provide a clarification on dock vs 'overslope development' in a draft ordinance.

Overslope platform recommendations

1. Overslope dimensions of the platform HCC 21.46.050 (a): An overslope platform shall be 40 feet deep, and shall be not less than 40 feet nor more than 240 feet wide." Staff Recommendation: Eliminate this section. Its too specific for this construction environment and potential range of uses.
2. HCC 21.46.050 (e) - requirements Revise (e) 15 feet from edge of ramp
3. HCC 21.46.060(g): The maximum height of a building measured from the overslope platform or the adjacent grade to the highest roof peak shall not exceed 25 feet. Staff recommendation: discuss this building height – its right at 2 stories, or 1 story with a loft type space.
4. Public access 21.46.060 (h) and (i) aim to preserve public access to the harbor and allow for lookout points. The Commission had commented this could be expensive area for a developer to provide. Also,I don't think the Spit Trail had not been completed at the time this code was written. Should we revise it?
 - h. A public access not less than eight feet wide to an area overlooking the harbor shall be provided at each end of an overslope platform and at intervals not greater than 150 feet on the overslope platform.
 - i. A continuous pedestrian corridor at least eight feet wide must extend the length of the overslope development, on either the harbor or the uplands side, or some combination thereof. The corridor must be clear of obstructions, but may be covered by an awning or roof overhang. The minimum eight-foot width of the corridor may not be counted to meet landscaping or public open space requirements. [Ord. 09-44(S) § 3, 2009]. Staff comment: Is the existing spit trail enough pedestrian corridor?
5. 21.46.070 signs – staff will update this with current sign code.
6. 21.46.090, Architectural Plans. Staff recommends reducing these requirements by eliminating (a) and (d). The requirement for specific plans for a build to suit tenant can vary quite a bit.

Lease issues

1. Length of lease: is 99 years an option?
2. Lease rates: The Commission minutes reflect concern that lease rates are too high. Leases are based on paying a land lease for the area under the boardwalk, as well as a percentage of rents/sales. There are not many examples from other communities on this.

PARKING

I don't want to spend too much time on parking, in light of the upcoming parking study. Some considerations for overslope are, where will employees and customers park? How will businesses accept deliveries? Some solutions could include impact fees, or a requirements for off-site parking, and deliveries during off peak hours. A developer building a platform will ask the City two questions: What parking do I have to provide, and where can my customers park? If the city wants to entice development, we will need to be able to answer those questions.

Utility access and drainage

I have spoken with Public Works. Utility access is driven mostly by what is actually in the ground and where, and then the engineering needed to serve the new customer. The City does have some rules, but a new boardwalk would be a major undertaking with a lot of utility planning involved. Planning and Public Works regular hold pre-application meetings with developers to address utilities, drainage, site plans, etc. There is nothing different for a boardwalk, other than its more complicated due to our cold winters.

Drainage is not well addressed on the Spit, and that is true of most of Homer. There are two approaches possible: Big picture, or site specific. A drainage plan for the whole community is a top five project in the Capital Improvement Plan. If and when that plan is funded, it could address the Spit. The other alternative is to require a developer to show that their boardwalk isn't going to inundate the Spit Trail for example, or otherwise run a bunch of water to a place that causes problems. This can be accomplished through a zoning code amendment. The Commission could recommend Council look at both approaches.

Attachments

HCC 21.46 Small Boat Harbor Overlay

