

DRAFT MINUTES

Agenda

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

Mandy Cole, Chair

March 25, 2025

I. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Read by Ms. Rintala.

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!

II. ROLL CALL

Mandy Cole, 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 – Mandy Cole, Chair; Erik Pedersen, Vice Chair; Matthew Bell, Assistant Clerk; Nina Keller; Jessalynn Rintala, Lacey Derr

Commissioners present via video conferencing – None

Commissioners absent: Douglas Salik, David Epstein, Adam Brown

Staff present: Jill Lawhorne, CDD Director; Irene Gallion, Senior Planner; Madeline Carse, CDD Administrative Assistant; Ilsa Lund, Planner I; Jolene Murphy, Planner I; Forrest Courtney, Senior Planner, Floodplain Manager; Minta Montalbo, Senior Planner; Joseph Meyers, Senior Planner, Housing and Land Use Specialist

Assembly members: Christine Woll

III. REQUEST FOR AGENDA CHANGES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Pedersen added an item under Other Business, to incorporate the supplemental materials in their approval of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee selections.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes available for this meeting.

V. BRIEF REVIEW OF THE RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS- None.

VII. ITEMS FOR RECONSIDERATION- None.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

Case USE2025 007 was moved from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda.

USE2025 0006: A Conditional Use Permit to operate a Pet Grooming Salon.
Applicant: Anna Hay
Location: 2203 Dunn Street

Director's Report

The applicant requests a Conditional Use Permit to operate a pet grooming salon with 1 to 2 employees by appointment. Hours of operation would be Sunday to Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm. A small retail space will be located at the front of the store. Pet boarding is not permitted. The proposed use would occur in one (1) unit of an eight (8) unit mixed-use structure.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Director's analysis and findings and approve the Conditional Use Permit USE2025 0006 with the requested condition.

MOTION: *by Mr. Pedersen to accept staff's findings, analysis and recommendations, and approve USE2025 0006.*

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS- None.

X. REGULAR AGENDA

USE2025 0007: Conditional Use Permit for a three-story dental clinic.
Applicant: Dawson Construction
Location: 3063 Vintage Blvd.

Director's Report

The applicant requests a Conditional Use Permit to construct a three-story, 19,635 square foot dental clinic in a Light Commercial zoning district. This facility will become a part of the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium's medical campus in the Vintage Park subdivision.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the Director's analysis and findings and approve Conditional Use Permit USE2025 0007 with conditions.

Ms. Derr asked who is in charge of the Postal Way extension.

Director Lawhorne responded that the extension is privately owned and not maintained by CBJ.

Ms. Derr inquired if the traffic analysis from 2022 is the only traffic analysis they have, as there have been substantial changes to this area since then.

Director Lawhorne answered yes, as the code only requires Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) if the number of Average Daily Trips (ADT) is over 500. She noted that if ADTs are under 250, it is not required at all, and anything between 250 and 499 is up to her discretion. She said that given the Vintage Park area was laid out for development in the 90s, she did not see the need for it. She added that they do not have development impact fees in Juneau and do not generally require developers to do offsite improvements. She previously received a comment about emergency response when going to the assisted living facility and senior housing there. She stated that after talking with Mr. Gray from Streets, he did not recommend a crosswalk from the extension across to Postal Way because of the distance from the intersection, but Vintage Blvd. and Clinton Dr. are on their list for reconstruction and that could be an opportune time to look at emergency response needs and pedestrian access in that area.

Ms. Derr asked if they have power to put conditions on a private road.

Director Lawhorne requested time to think about that and revisit it later.

Mr. Pedersen noted that the ingress and egress to the parking lot is off of that private road.

Chair Cole asked if there were any specific right-of-way designations on that road.

Director Lawhorne voiced not that she is aware of, and it is treated like any private street in the city, where the owner would be required for all maintenance and upkeep.

Scott Martin, SEARHC Construction Manager, voiced that he could not speak to the questions regarding property, but the conditions on the report did not seem out of line.

Ms. Derr asked how the private street would be maintained so the facility had adequate access, snow removal, and pedestrian walkways.

Mr. Martin responded that he is sure they would keep that street clear, as they have patients coming into the building and they take that very seriously.

Ms. Derr expressed that her concern is pedestrians, as this street is not maintained currently. She said they do not plow it in the winter. She pointed out that there was a condition for a shared agreement between parking, and that gives her an indication that people are possibly going to have to park across the street and walk across the street to this facility. She asked if there were any crosswalks in place for that.

Mr. Martin answered that they have discussed that and are working on those plans, and they intend to have some of their workers park in the other housing complex and walk over, so that is under their consideration.

Mr. Bell asked how they are going to be able to construct while trying to maintain an accessible road that it used by hundreds of people a day.

Mr. Martin responded that they will secure the site and everything that comes into the site will be stored on that site. He shared that usually deliveries come early in the morning or late in the afternoon, and they will do their best to keep the area clear. He added that currently they have moved a lot of the material over to the housing project and cleaned up the site pretty well.

Chair Cole asked if they plan to have any electric charging stations at any of the parking spaces.

Mr. Martin answered that it is not in the plans right now.

Chair Cole asked Mr. Martin if he had anything else to add.

He added that they have discussed that the site will be well lit, as well as the building, so that will help with pedestrian traffic.

Chair Cole inquired if they had a lighting plan in the application.

Mr. Martin believed they submitted one.

Chair Cole asked if all conditions were acceptable.

Mr. Martin answered yes, and the only one they had questions about was the covered bike rack.

Director Lawhorne went back and answered the previous question about putting conditions on a private road. She said they can condition it, but she suggested a condition along the lines of having CDD work with Streets to look at the location and see what makes sense of where a crosswalk may work safely. She asked that when they discuss crosswalks and pedestrian crossings to give flexibility so they can have the appropriate staff reviewing that and/or the applicant's engineers approving that.

Mr. Pedersen asked for Director Lawhorne's thoughts on allowing the principle access to a commercial development like this be coming from an easement versus a public right-of-way, as they do not allow that in residential use.

Director Lawhorne responded that she does not have the subdivision history in front of her, but many years ago, the Commission approved that entire site with the intention of being built out for commercial uses. She said as the site has developed, there has not been any concerns raised with using the access way, and since it is already subdivided, they are allowed to construct on it.

Chair Cole expressed that it sounds like SEARHC intends to treat the road as their responsibility, so she asked about conditioning responsibility for one entity over a privately owned road.

Director Lawhorne recommended putting the condition on there with a little flexibility to ensure the crosswalks are put where it is safe, but she does not think that is unreasonable. She added that if there is any concern with the applicant, they can work with them and come back. She voiced that SEARHC has already opened one medical facility and going to build a second, so they are going to keep the road open for their patients, employees, and who they serve.

Ms. Derr expressed that her issue is not at all with the dental building, as she is grateful for the development that SEARHC has already done and appreciates that they have installed a sidewalk on the clinic side. Her biggest concern is that the private road is not maintained. She added that it is not plowed in the winter and potholes are not fixed. She said that adding the dental building will add additional traffic in the area and on a tight road that is not maintained. She voiced that she would like to see a formal agreement that someone is going to plow and maintain this road so it can be used by the multiple businesses accessing this area.

Chair Cole asked what the remedy would be if they condition SEARHC to maintain the private road that they do not own and that causes an issue.

[At ease]

Director Lawhorne answered that she would ask the applicant if they would prefer a continuance or go forward tonight with conditions. She said she does not believe it is an issue to have the applicants make sure the road is maintained for winter maintenance.

MOTION: *by Ms. Derr to accept staff's findings, analysis, and recommendations, and approve USE2025 0007, in addition to a shared maintenance agreement for the Postal Way Extension, ensuring safe use by vehicles and pedestrians, with snow removal, and establishing a pedestrian crosswalk between the two SEARHC lots in the most appropriate place.*

Mr. Pedersen stated that particular access and utility easement is serving multiple lots, and all of those lots have an interest in using or maintaining that, so he does not know if they can just say that SEARHC has to do it and all the Safeway patrons can free use the road. He expressed that they would be putting the burden of the maintenance directly onto SEARHC.

Chair Cole asked if it turns out the SEARHC is amenable to this, is there a problem tasking them a disproportionate amount of responsibility.

Director Lawhorne responded that is more of a question for the Commission to answer. She stated there should be a maintenance agreement that already exists that the owners have, so if they condition it as discussed, SEARHC could speak to the other owners about it, but the burden would be on SEARHC.

Chair Cole expressed that the way she sees it, the burden for SEARHC is to ensure there is an agreement, not that they take up the line share of that agreement. She asked Mr. Pedersen if that felt more amenable to him.

Mr. Pedersen answered yes.

The motion passed.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of the Comp Plan Advisory Committee

Director Lawhorne explained that CDD and CBJ staff evaluated 27 applicants and selected 21. She voiced that it was important to have an active and representative committee that are not the usual suspects. She said that those chose people of varying ages, diversity, and people who wear different hats in professional or personal life that bring different experiences to the table.

Ms. Derr expressed that 21 people is a lot of people to get together at one time. She asked if they had to make up a quorum when they meet and if they are a voting body or just an advisory.

Director Lawhorne responded that they will do their best to get the majority at the meetings, but it is one meeting every other month, and they do not vote on decisions like the Commission. There are there as a sounding board and to ensure that we are hearing from different communities or flag if they see something we have missed.

Chair Cole shared that she and Director Lawhorne discussed conflict of interest, as there are probably people on the list some or all of the Commission know personally, so they settled on declaring if there are any personal or professional relationships. However, as they are not a voting body and do not have any financial interests attached, that should not change their ability to be on the committee.

Director Lawhorne pointed out that they also want representation from tribal entities as well, and come to the decision to have them as liaisons to the committee, as they are all spread thin right now.

Ms. Keller was curious why an applicant with a background in working for the state, living all over southwest Alaska, and being active with the Douglas Community Garden was not on the list, as they seemed to have a different perspective she could not find with other applicants she thought would be beneficial. She also asked why 21 was the limit.

Director Lawhorne responded that the number was really between 16 to 21, and the more people they add, the more challenging it becomes to facilitate and keep it a timely process. In regard to that applicant, the reasoning they had for not picking him was they had another applicant that was quite similar, and since he had already been a part of it and had experience, they picked the other that had not had the opportunity yet.

Ms. Rintala thanked everyone who applied, as this kind of engagement is important to Juneau, and it is exciting to see so many talented applicants.

Mr. Pedersen agreed they got a lot of good people and that is probably why they wound up with 21 people.

Ms. Keller expressed they have a great mix of people here, and the main reason that specific applicant jumped out to her was the Community Garden engagement, as giving that a voice feels important, and she could not find someone else that had that interest.

Chair Cole suggested recommending the committee utilize that applicant as a subject matter expert for gardening. She also thanked everyone who applied, and said the nice thing about having 21 spots, is that they will have lots of perspectives, and the people that did not make the list can contribute in a multitude of ways.

MOTION: *by Mr. Pedersen to accept the selected individuals from the supplemental materials packet to be on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee.*

The motion passed.

XII. STAFF REPORTS

Director Lawhorne reported that the first Planner II position they filled will arrive April 7th, and they just confirmed the second planner position, who will arrive in early June. She stated that they are incredibly busy with permits coming in and does not anticipate any Commission meetings getting canceled any time soon. They have a lot of training coming up and a number of CBJ staff are taking emergency training to be better prepared, as the new emergency manager is firm, but supportive in them getting the training done. She shared that they had to close Waterfront on Glacier, which is very unfortunate, as it was booked, but the owner cannot prove that any construction work was done by a licensed contractor, and even initially denied doing work in the first place, so they are not confident that the building is safe for occupants. She stated it was vacated yesterday, but

they will continue to work with them and if the owner gets licensed contractors in to do work, it likely could be addressed in a month's time and be reopened.

XIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Derr voiced that she did not attend the Lands and Licensing Committee, as she was dealing with illness, but she believes the meeting was surrounding the Floyd Dryden Building. She deferred to the director for any other information.

Director Lawhorne added that the senior planner for housing gave an update at that meeting.

XIV. LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Woll expressed that she attended half of the Lands Meeting and the primary discussion was the lease to Tlingit & Haida to use Floyd Dryden. She stated that April 7th is the next Regular Assembly Meeting and likely the meeting they will take final action on the lease for Huna Totem Dock. She added that she just saw the final Parks and Rec Commercial Use Plan on where to allow commercial use in regard to parks and trails. They are also working on a policy for release of body worn camera footage after police shootings and the budget. She said they kick off the budget process on April 5th, and they usually spend about two months meeting weekly to go through budget decision making, and which is where they will likely decide if they are putting any ballot initiatives onto the ballot for October and any potential bond projects and seasonal sales tax.

XV. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS- None.

XVI. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Chair Cole expressed they are happy to frontload cases and permits, as they are eager to get working and get building in this season.

Ms. Derr asked for clarification that next month they go back to 7 p.m.

Chair Cole voiced she believes May is when they go back to 7 p.m. Director Lawhorne agreed.

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION- None.

XVIII. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

The March 25, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.