

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2014-006**

A RESOLUTION DENYING AN AMENDED PUBLIC FACILITY SITE PLAN FOR SOUTH ANCHORAGE HIGH SCHOOL FOR FOOTBALL/SOCCER FIELD AMENITIES; GENERALLY LOCATED SOUTH OF LEYDEN ROAD AND WEST OF ELMORE ROAD.

(Case 2013-002, Parcel ID 018-411-75)

WHEREAS, a request was received from the Anchorage School District (ASD) to amend the approved public facility site plan for South Anchorage High School; and

WHEREAS, public hearing notices were mailed, published, and posted for public hearings that were held on January 7, 2013 and February 10, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission that:

- A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:
1. South High School is located within a neighborhood of single family homes, and the grounds and sports fields serve as a community use area during evenings and weekends. The high school site plan and the associated sports fields were approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 13, 2001.
 2. ASD requests the amendments to the site plan so that South High sports teams, particularly boys varsity football, can host "home" games at their school, as many other Anchorage high schools can do. There would be about 4 to 5 boys varsity football games played at South High School each year. ASD anticipates using the lights and/or public address system after 7:00 p.m. for approximately 10 games per year (boys varsity football and other sports).
 3. The standards for review of a public facility site plan are found at AMC 21.15.015G. The Commission is tasked with reviewing the proposal for consistency with the goals, policies and land use designations of the comprehensive plan and other municipal plans adopted by the assembly, conformity to the requirements of Title 21, and the effects of the proposal on the area surrounding the site.
 4. The site plan as amended is consistent with the *Hillside District Plan* which should not be interpreted to exclude high schools. A stadium is a common accessory use in conjunction with high schools.
 5. The site plan conforms to the requirements of Title 21.

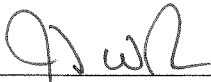
6. The Commission is divided on whether or not the proposed site plan adequately addresses the effects of the proposal on the area surrounding the site.
7. A special limitation on the zoning (AO 2001-1) states: "Buffer yards shall be undisturbed vegetative buffers along the boundary of Tract B-1 or the existing utility easement adjoining the boundary. In the event that the existing vegetation in this designated buffer area is disturbed or removed, the affected area shall be replanted to provide within a reasonable time for growth, approximately 75% visual absorption of structures under winter conditions from the perspective of persons off of the property on neighboring lands and streets." There is general disagreement about how to interpret this requirement. Some commissioners found this requirement imposes an affirmative obligation on the ASD to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the buffer, regardless of the cause of a disturbance. Some commissioners found the ASD was only responsible for repairing damage caused by affirmative acts of the ASD. There is agreement that the buffer zone does not seem adequate to visually screen the surrounding area from the intended expanded use.
8. Four commissioners found that the ASD has made efforts to mitigate and evaluate the environmental impacts of the stadium, particularly with respect to noise levels. A noise mitigation study recommended several measures to ameliorate noise. Although not all the recommendations of a noise mitigation study were accepted by the ASD, ASD did provide explanations as to why ASD determined it was impractical to implement all of the recommendations.
9. Three commissioners expressed the following concerns with potential impacts to the surrounding area:
 - a. The mitigation measures proposed by ASD and offered by members of PZC are not adequate to overcome concerns about the impact and use of the expanded facility on the surrounding area, specifically related to noise.
 - b. Some of the PZC members questioned if the ASD had tried hard enough to mitigate the noise.
 - c. DHHS provided testimony in regards to prior noise complaints for the baseball games. Many noise complaints were not investigated nor acted upon and the Commission expressed doubts about adequate enforcement.
 - d. The original site plan approval was conditioned upon assurances that the athletic fields would be used for practice only; a stadium

facility was not shown on the original site plan. The condition has been modified once for the use of the baseball diamond for games other than practice. The intensity of the proposed football stadium facility is greater than the intensity of the use of the baseball field for occasional games.

- B. The Commission failed to pass the motion to approve the amended site plan. The vote was four ayes and three nays in favor of the motion. However, the favorable vote of four ayes was not a majority of the full membership as required by AMCR 21.10.203B., and thus the application is denied.

DENIED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission on the 10th day of February, 2014.

ADOPTED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission this 2nd day of June, 2014. This written decision/resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission is final and any party may appeal it within twenty (20) days to the Board of Adjustment pursuant to Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.30.030 or, if applicable, exercise their rights under Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.15.015H.



Jerry F. Weaver, Jr.
Secretary



J.A. Fergusson
Chair

(Case No. 2013-002)