

## Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission Meeting

Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 11:30 a.m.

Permit & Development Center, Training Room  
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507

*or via Microsoft Teams and telephonic hearing (907) 519-0237 Conference ID 506 098 091#*

### MINUTES

I. **Call to Order and Statement of Procedure:** Vice Chair Brett Wilbanks (called to order at 11:32 am)

II. **Roll Call, Introductions and Disclosures:** Emma Giboney

Vice Chair Wilbanks, Commissioner Dean, Commissioner Tenny, Commissioner Flynn, and Commissioner Hansen were present. Chair Oswald and Commissioner Warfield were excused. Staff present: Emma Giboney, Nicole Jones-Vogel (contractor), Adam Trombley.

There were no disclosures made by Commissioners.

III. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

a. September 22, 2022 Agenda (Motion BF, seconded by DM, no objections)

b. August 25, 2022 Minutes (Motion DM, seconded by BF, no objections)

Commissioner Flynn requested an amendment to the minutes to describe that he was aware of the Block 102 location, not the proposed project.

IV. **Director's Report**

Adam Trombley provided a staffing update and the intent to hire a Real Estate Department director in 2023.

Staff provided an update on the removal of the Block 102 agenda item and reminded Commissioners of the upcoming *Spotlight on 3rd and Gambell* event.

V. **Proposed Action Items and Public Hearings** (*No Public Hearing shall extend over 60 minutes without an extension by majority vote of the commission. If not extended, Public Hearing may be held open and continued to the next meeting if public testimony is not complete.*)

a. HLBAC Resolution 2022-09: A resolution recommending approval of the competitive disposal of portions of HLB Parcels 6-011, 6-016, and 6-017, legally described as Tract I Prince Addition Alyeska Subdivision (Plat 87-131)(PID 075-311-04-000), Tract B Girdwood Elementary School Subdivision (Plat 85-38)(PID 075-031-32-000), and Tract 9A Section 9 Township 10 North Range 2 East (Plat 73-220)(PID 075-041-31-000), to CY Investments as described in the Development Agreement between the developer and the Municipality of Anchorage dated April 29, 2022, and amend the *HLB 2021 Annual Work Program*.

Staff provided a presentation outlining the proposed action item, describing the process and planning documents that guide the project. The Crow Creek Neighborhood Plan has been determined to still be a guiding document due to the 2011 implementation of a AWWU waterline in the area. Overview of the code requirements, development agreement, and project timelines and next steps. Community member comments were provided in the packet and generally are summarized as issues with the development agreement, requests to delay action until the agreement with the resort is complete, infrastructure constraints, environmental impacts, short-term rental challenges, concerns with the size of the project, relocation of the National Historic Iditarod Trail and providing affordable and workforce housing. The staff recommendation is approval of the resolution.

Vice Chair Wilbanks asked about comments received from the agency review, specifically the School District. The School District did not provide written response to the agency review; Vice Chair Wilbanks said that he spoke to a school district board member who said further land was not needed for development of a high school.

*Public Comment began with reading written comments into the record; comments are summarized below.*

Rachel Hatcher

Ms. Hatcher stated that she did not approve of the competitive bid disposal.

Brooks Chandler

Mr. Chandler stated that the project should be paused until binding amendments to the Development Agreement have been completed along with a Development Agreement for the adjoining property. He stated reasons that the process has not followed the code and that Commissioners do not have enough information to be able to make a decision.

Aaron Stiasny & Julie-Pierre Leclerc

A family who lives in Girdwood year-round and finds that the project does not meet community needs, does not provide enough information, or analysis of infrastructure and service provider needs. Affordable housing and environmental impacts are important issues that need to be addressed.

Tim and Barbara Lydon

The community's concerns are not being heard and the process is being expedited against the community's wishes. All parties must consider the recommendations by the HHHAC and an impact study be conducted, which will slow down the process to allow for transparency. Trends of second homes has negatively impacted the Girdwood community and is leading to a housing crisis.

Frans Weits

The development of Holtan Hills will exacerbate the problem of having workers in Girdwood to support an increasing population.

Howard Earl

Requested that the project be paused to reevaluate. The project is just too large, it is in the wrong spot, and will not solve Girdwood's housing challenges.

*In-person/Teams Public Testimony*

Lynne Doran

Ms. Doran addressed concerns regarding a lack of assessment of the land, impact study, unanswered Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, need for legal analysis, transition of five department heads, lack of commitment by CY Investments for workforce housing, overall community concerns, and administration's lack of understanding of the project to address community needs.

Betsy Connell

Ms. Connell expressed concern over who will replace Director Trombley stating that the person will need time to get up to speed on this transaction, the need to address the concerns raised by the Holtan Hills Housing Advisory Committee (HHHAC), she requested that Commissions educate themselves.

Terry Sherwood

Ms. Sherwood is a 21-year resident and works at the Food Pantry. She sees another side of the Girdwood community of hardworking-gainfully employed people unable to make rent and supplement with the Food Pantry. There is a need for starter homes and senior housing options.

Mike Edgington

Mr. Edgington stated that there is a well-documented housing issue in Girdwood and this issue has become worse, the community needs more housing. There are well studied solutions. The Crow Creek Neighborhood Plan is a 16-year-old plan and does not address the current needs, new services, take into account economic development - Girdwood needs stability.

Karolina Pavic

Ms. Pavic stated people are being expunged from Girdwood, an aspiring homeowner problem. HLB's "good faith" effort is not providing benefit to the community.

Matthew Schechter

Mr. Schechter stated that the disposal is being offered at less than Fair Market Value (FMV), the project is not meeting the needs of the community, the project is selling out Anchorage. If CY Investments has a reasonable rate of return and the other items addressed then he would support the Holtan Hills project.

Krystal Hoke

Ms. Hoke stated that the community needs to be involved; this administration is going to be blamed for ruining Girdwood. This project has had five department heads during the initiation of the RFP. Girdwood solves its own problems. We need land and that will make or break Girdwood.

David Hamre, Presented Holtan Hills Housing Advisory Committee

Mr. Hamre spoke on behalf of the HHHAC and stated that there are several issues with the process, RFP, amending plans, respondents were given 60 days, the bifurcated proposal, and analysis of the area plan. There are possible options moving forward and those were provided. Committee wants to work with CY Investment to get a solid project that meets the needs of both parties. As it is presented, this project is damaging, vote no.

Jennifer Wingard

Ms. Wingard, member of GBOS, but speaking as a resident. Girdwood is unified in their opposition to this project. Concerns that the process has not involved the Girdwood community and Girdwood will remain involved until they feel their questions have been answered and they feel they have guarantees and not just promises regarding this project.

Brooke Lavender

Ms. Lavender stated that the MOA is moving too quickly through this process. There are over 2 million tourists that visit Girdwood, the pandemic has had a significant impact, and the code for this project has not been followed.

**Vice Chair Wilbanks moved to do a 10-minute recess, motion seconded by Commissioner Flynn, no objections. Meeting reconvened at 1:03 pm.**

Natalie Treadwell

Ms. Treadwell stated that she grew up in Anchorage and agrees with the difficulty of finding housing in Girdwood. She expresses support for the Halt Holtan Hills movement. Girdwood also has other issues, such as being a food desert and the lack of secondary access. She requested that Commissioners tread cautiously this will only create luxury homes.

Shannon O'Brien

Ms. O'Brien is a 19-year resident and speaking as a community member, this disposal does not benefit the community - and that the development will make it harder. This is the largest project proposed in the Girdwood valley and will have impacts on fire/police/municipal staff. An impact study is critical to look at those items, wetlands, and the relocation of the NHIT - she requested that this project be paused.

Kimberly Van Sickle

Ms. Van Sickle has been in Girdwood for 13 years and there is so much consensus with concerns about this disposal. The developer states that there will be a trickle-down housing option effect, in other communities, that has not worked. Many homes in Girdwood are aging and will need to be replaced. She stated that we need strong communities.

Tiffany Peterson

Ms. Peterson agreed with sentiments from testimonies before her.

Grace Pleasants

Ms. Pleasants thanked the Commissioners for the time to provide testimony. She brought to the Commission's attention that there were errors in the minutes from 9/22. She raised concerns with the relocation of the NHIT, stated that the whole project has been misrepresented and is a bait and switch that lacks integrity and that she has no confidence in the success of the project.

Ben Kohler

Mr. Kohler stated he is a 15-year resident in Girdwood and requested that Commissioners do not vote for this disposal.

Briana Sullivan, GBOS

Ms. Sullivan stated that there is a huge housing crisis, the community is deeply concerned, there are more vacation rentals being created than housing options, there have been a myriad of meetings and there is a clear message from Girdwood. 1. The process for this project has been poor 2. There is a lack of infrastructure, and an impact study has not been conducted. 3. This project has indirect links to housing. 4. Girdwood needs housing affordability options. The HHHAC has provided eight recommended changes to the Development Agreement.

Sam Daniel

Mr. Daniel stated he is a 30-year resident of Girdwood and is here to provide a way to turn this around. He suggested that HLB should take land in lieu of payment and give that land to a land trust for development into affordable housing. Nightly rentals are more profitable than long-term rentals. Pause the disposal of this land and keep talking to the Community.

Nico Reijns

Mr. Reijns stated that he is a committee member, pastor, and executive director of a non-profit social services provider. He felt the meeting should have been held in Girdwood and not during the middle of the workday. He stated the process is redeemable and the focus should be affordable, workforce, and senior housing.

Jim McCollum

Mr. McCollum is the developer's attorney, has served on the AEDC Live.Work.Play committee, and is experienced with negotiating Public Private Partnerships. He stated that Girdwood does not understand how difficult it is to build due to costs. The developer wants to help but is getting attacked

Connie Yoshimura

Ms. Yoshimura stated that the HHHAC was formed at her suggestion. She wanted to make it clear that she has been in town all summer long and was not asked to engage with Girdwood. She wants to find viable solutions and implement them in the Holtan Hills plan. The bifurcation of the RFP was supported by legal and that discussion needs to happen with MOA legal.

Maureen Bennett

Ms. Bennett described trends of other resort towns and requested that this project be placed on hold.

Melissa Aheirn

Ms. Aheirn stated she has lived in Girdwood half of her life and told a story of how she had the opportunity to purchase a lot that she passed on. She stated it is important to consider affordability and the general community is not "hip" to the public process. Changes in the administration have been significant. A grassroots campaign has been created in Girdwood where 400 people have signed up and donated \$8 per person.

Mary Jo Hills

Ms. Hills requested that HLBAC help the community. Every restaurant is short-staffed; people are living in tents, RVs, and couch surfing. She stated that all of Girdwood needs to be cared for and that it needs a long-term look.

Brooks Chandler

Mr. Chandler requested that the Commissioners imagine that this was their own property and consider the information you have today to make a decision on selling. Thoroughly review and there is honor and purpose in the role and to do the job with integrity.

**The public hearing was closed.**

The Commissioners began deliberation on the agenda item.

Commissioner Flynn stated that there was a significant amount of public testimony with 30 people against the project and 2 in favor and it was difficult to digest. **Commissioner Flynn made a motion to postpone discussion to the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Marshall.** Vice Chair Wilbanks requested to discuss the resolution as there are several aspects to consider. **Commissioner Flynn withdrew his motion.**

Vice Chair Wilbanks stated that there are trust issues between HLB and the Girdwood Community and he had some proposed amendments to help rebuild trust with Girdwood.

**Vice Chair Wilbanks made a motion to amend to the Resolution stating:**

*A condition requiring all developers to submit the Girdwood Board of Supervisors' (GBOS) review in addition to Municipal staff review when seeking official action by authoritative bodies under Title 21. When referring to AMC 21.02.020, Table of Decisions and Rules Authority for land action, where a review by Municipal Staff is required, so will a review by GBOS.*

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tenny.** Discussion centered around the process and the existing Title 21 process and how this might impact the project or its timeline. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Vice Chair Wilbanks made a motion to amend the Resolution stating:**

*Moratorium on the use of any property in Holtan Hills for short-term rentals (STR), less than 30 days in duration, with a sunset provision eliminating this restriction when local ordinance is adopted to regulate the STR supply.*

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tenny.** Discussion was centered around Homeowners Association requirements and the role of the MOA in regulating short-term rentals. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed 4:1.

**Commissioner Flynn moved to extend the time, seconded by Commissioner Marshall and there was no objection.**

**Commissioner Tenny made a motion to amend the Resolution stating:**

*Development access from Hightower Road is prohibited.*

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilbanks.** Commissioners asked questions of the Developer and the timing of the secondary access to Crow Creek Road, who said that analysis will

be provided by the engineer of record. Staff provided some additional information regarding the development review process implementing traffic controls. This item was left on the table until the next meeting.

**Commissioner Flynn moved to postpone any further discussion** until the next regularly scheduled meeting, motion was seconded by Commissioner Marshall, there was no objections.

**VI. Persons or Items Not on the Agenda** (*THREE minutes per individual, each person may only speak once, commissioners and staff will not answer questions, but may have questions for you after your testimony.*)

Krystal Hoke

Ms. Hoke provided an update on the Girdwood Community's effort to find a new home for Little Bears. They are looking at HLB Parcel 6-076 and received a resolution of support at the Girdwood Board of Supervisors. They have a \$1.6 million dollar grant that they need a \$1.5 million dollar match for. Little Bears currently cares for 20 - 25 children, but the need is almost triple.

**VII. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Tenny made mention of the lack of the Chair at the last three meetings and requested that a new chair been selected at the next meeting. Mr. Tenny also stated that he would propose that there be two Girdwood-area Commissioners on the HLBAC.

Commissioner Flynn thanked the community for coming to the meeting and providing their testimony.

Commissioner Marshall echoed Commissioner Flynn's comments.

**VIII. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting Date:** Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 11:30AM in the Permit & Development Center, 4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska or via Microsoft Teams and telephonic hearing.

**IX. Adjournment**

Motion BF, seconded by DM, no objection. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.