

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2017-021

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING DENIAL OF THE REZONING OF APPROXIMATELY 77 ACRES FROM R-8 (LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL, 4 ACRE) DISTRICT TO R-6 SL (LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL, 1 ACRE) DISTRICT WITH SPECIAL LIMITATIONS FOR THE N ½ OF THE SE ¼ OF SECTION 25, T12N, R3W, S.M., ALASKA EXCEPTING THE NW ¼ OF THE SE ¼ OF SECTION 25, T12N, R3W, S.M., ALASKA AND LOTS 1 AND 2 OF VERGASON-JONES SUBDIVISION PER PLAT 98-178; GENERALLY LOCATED SOUTH OF UPPER DEARMOUN ROAD, WEST OF CANYON ROAD, AND EAST OF MESSINIA STREET, IN ANCHORAGE.

(Case 2017-0072)

WHEREAS, a request has been received from Todd Brownson, Big Country Enterprises, LLC to rezone approximately 77 acres from R-8 (low-density residential, 4 acre) district to R-6 SL (low-density residential, 1 acre) district with special limitations for the N ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 25, T12N, R3W, S.M., Alaska excepting the NW ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 25, T12N, R3W, S.M., Alaska and Lot 1 and 2 of Vergason-Jones Subdivision per Plat 98-178; generally located south of Upper DeArmoun Road, west of Canyon Drive, and east of Messinia Street, in Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, notices were published, posted, and mailed, and a public hearing was held on June 12, 2017.

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

A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:

1. The applicant presented a great case. In 2015, a very similar rezone was requested, if boiled down to just the bare bones. The zoning currently allows 14 lots and the developer would like 30 lots to be allowed. New soils information has been presented and it appears that the groundwater is not as bad and drains water better. The groundwater will vary from year to year based on snowfall. All other factors that were problems approximately two years ago with compatibility, environmental impacts to drainage, glaciation, and downstream watercourses, all seem to still be there.
2. There are concerning things about this case. Anchorage does not need more large-lot housing, so upzoning does not seem necessary.
3. There is strong community council and neighborhood objection to this rezone.

4. The rezone is not compatible with the *Comprehensive Plan* and while an increase of 0.25 DUA to 0.39 DUA does not sound like much, it results in a large increase (50%) in the number of dwelling units.
5. The Commission is unsure that the rezone is compatible with the surrounding zoning and while the R-6 district abuts the site, the zoning is predominately the R-8 district.
6. The Commission is unsure that DeArmoun Road can support this rezone because there is a lot of traffic from recreational users.
7. The applicant has done a very good job to ensure that this rezone will limit adverse impacts upon the natural environment, however, it is still a concern.
8. A dissenting commissioner stated that underutilization of property is bad development. Bigger lots are less likely to have good coordinated development than smaller lots because the cost of infrastructure is harder to distribute. Even though R-6 lots are being referred to as smaller lots, they are actually quite large. The Commission is not here to determine whether or not the site can sustain these on-site septic systems because the Municipality will ensure that the design is good. The Commission has to decide if the information provided is adequate enough to determine that this is a quality rezone and the answer is "yes." The *Design Criteria Manual*, which did not exist previously, will impose strict design standards to protect wetlands and create sustainable design in this area. In regards to the *Hillside District Plan*, Mr. McClintock's expansive letter convincingly stated that it is important for one to look at the entire *Plan*, not just a tiny piece of it, and manipulate that piece to make your point.
9. Another dissenting commissioner stated that 12 of 13 lots from a recent R-6 subdivision sold quickly, so there is huge demand for these lots. This rezone is supportable with a new special limitation requiring conservation of open space tracts. This may provide some balance for what was heard from the community.
10. The proposed plan shows roughly 30 lots and the R-8 would allow 14 lots. The answer is somewhere in between because the topography would probably support a number between 14 and 30. The 30 lots is a higher density that is askew, but the Commission does not have a choice. By default, absent a development plan that bridges the gap, the R-8 district should remain.

B. The Commission recommends DENIAL to the Anchorage Assembly that approximately 77 acres be rezoned from R-8 district to R-6 SL district.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission on the 12th day of June, 2017.

ADOPTED by the Anchorage Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission this 10th day of July, 2017.



Hal H. Hart, AICP
Secretary



Tyler Robinson
Chair

(Case 2017-0072)

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