



Municipality of Anchorage

Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

A G E N D A

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

12:00 Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting

(Hybrid format)

In-Person Physical Location

or

Via Microsoft Teams

Planning Conference Room 170
Planning and Development Center
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, Alaska

[Click here to join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 257 692 952 645; Passcode: 6zzbL3

Or call in (audio only): [+1 907-519-0237](tel:+19075190237)
Phone conference ID: [802 292 200#](#)

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
 - A. Establishment of Quorum
 - B. Disclosures
- II. **MINUTES**
 - A. April 24, 2024
- III. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - A. MOA Wetland Permitting Program
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS**
- V. **PERSONS TO BE HEARD (3-minute limit)**
- VI. **OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT**
- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: Wednesday October 23, 2024



Municipality of Anchorage
Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

ACTION SUMMARY

Hybrid: Microsoft Teams
 and
 Planning Conference Room 170
 4700 Elmore Road

Wednesday, April 24, 2024
 12:00 Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

A. Establishment of Quorum

A quorum was present. (*attended remotely)

Present: Emily Creely, Chair
 Lee Cruise*
 Tamás Deák, Vice Chair
 Maddie Halloran
 Kevin Jackson*
 Nic Kinsman*

Excused: Holly Kent
 Matt Nemeth

Staff: Karlie Lamothe, Senior Planner, Planning Department
 Ryan Yelle, Long-Range Planning Manager, Planning Department
 Kenna Billups, PME Watershed Management
 Kyle Cunningham, PME Watershed Management
 Emma Giboney,* Heritage Land Bank, Real Estate Department

Guests: Assembly Member Anna Brawley*
 Assembly Member Daniel Volland*

B. Disclosures

No disclosures.

Chair Creely proposed a change to the agenda order.

Commissioner Deák moved to change the agenda order to take up item V.A. New Business before IV. Unfinished Business. *Commissioner Halloran* seconded. There was no objection to the change.

II. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

There was no special order of business.

III. MINUTES

A. February 7, 2024 Action Summary

Commissioner Deák moved to approve the February 7, 2024 minutes as written. *Commissioner Halloran* seconded. **The minutes were approved as written.**

B. March 27, 2024 Work Session

A summary of the work session was provided for information. No approval was required.

V. NEW BUSINESS (*Agenda order change*)

A. H.O.M.E. Initiative Presentation (PZC Case 2024-0006)

Assembly Members Anna Brawley and *Daniel Volland* presented the slideshow, discussed, and answered questions, and are looking for feedback on what may be missing or not being considered. They are not necessarily looking for a statement of support. What are some of the controls already in place when it comes to protecting watersheds? They are not looking to really expand beyond residential zoning at this time, but any ideas are welcomed and if don't pertain to this ordinance, maybe they will for another ordinance.

Chair Creely said that, based on timing, commenting as people who are interested and have expertise might be the best way to handle input regarding this. *Ryan Yelle* added that a special meeting is an option if necessary.

Assembly Member Brawley will send updated slides from the presentation which was previously shown to Planning and Zoning Commission, and *Karlie* will email to commissioners and include sponsors' responses to Planning and Zoning Commission staff report.

NOTE: The remaining agenda continued hereon in, beginning with IV. Unfinished Business.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. MOA Wetland Permitting Program

Ryan Yelle stated that the April 24 work session was held outlining issues and structure of the present program and desires going forward. He also attended a National Association of Wetland Managers webinar about the accuracy of mapping jurisdictional vs non-jurisdictional wetlands

and everyone across country is struggling with same issue. MOA has a wetlands plan, existing guidance, some good maps, and we need to just polish it. Other states don't have this.

Chair Creely stated that the previous general permit process might be a good place to start from since familiar with process and it's pretty good. It's predictable and was for lower-value wetlands, not for areas like Connors Bog. Could mirror it and amend it.

The commission should stay out of the day-to-day permitting and only deal with the high-visibility ones. Commission is advisory, so anything reviewed would be for a recommendation and not for a yes or no.

There was discussion to review pre-identified wetlands, determine impact thresholds, and use determination (A, B, C wetlands) to establish priority areas.

For July 24 meeting, Chair Creely requests from Kyle Cunningham, Watershed Management Services, to create mapping to assist with jurisdictional mapping.

V. NEW BUSINESS (*taken up before IV. Unfinished Business*)

VI. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (3-minute limit) (*none*)

VII. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT

Ryan Yelle reported that Samantha Simpson was appointed to the commission at last night's Assembly meeting. This makes a full membership of nine again.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Deák moved to adjourn. *Commissioner Halloran* seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.

Application for Wetland Permit or Amendment to AWMP

Municipality of Anchorage
Planning Department
PO Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650



PETITIONER*			PETITIONER REPRESENTATIVE (if any)		
Name (last, first)			Name (last, first)		
Mailing Address			Mailing Address		
City	State	Zip	City	State	Zip
Contact Phone – Day		Evening	Contact Phone – Day		Evening
E-mail			E-mail		

*Report additional petitioners or disclose other co-owners on supplemental form. Failure to divulge other beneficial interest owners may delay processing of this application.

PROPERTY INFORMATION			
Property Tax # (000-000-00-000):			
Site Street Address:			
Current Legal Description: (use additional sheet if necessary)			
Zoning:	Acreage:	Grid #:	Underlying Plat #:

*Sites of wetland disturbance of less than one acre are approved administratively; Disturbance area of 1+ acre are approved by the Watershed and Natural Resource Commission.

WETLAND PERMITTING AND SITE INFORMATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> New Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment to a Wetland Permit - Original Case #	<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment to Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan
Type of Disturbance and/or Amendment Requested:		
Wetland Classification: <input type="checkbox"/> "A" <input type="checkbox"/> "B" <input type="checkbox"/> "C" <input type="checkbox"/> "D - Undesignated" <input type="checkbox"/> "P - Potential" <input type="checkbox"/> "U - Not Classified"		
Wetland Site # _____ or <input type="checkbox"/> Site is not identified within the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan		

I hereby certify that (I am)(I have been authorized to act for) owner of the property described above and that I petition for a wetland permit review in conformance with Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code of Ordinances. I understand that payment of the application fee is nonrefundable and is to cover the costs associated with processing this application, and that it does not assure approval of the permit.

Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Representative (Representatives must provide written proof of authorization)	Date
Print Name		
Accepted by:	Fee:	Case Number:
		Decision Date

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS (Only one copy of applicable items is required for initial submittal)

- 1 copy required:
- Signed application (original)
 - Watershed sign off form, completed
 - Jurisdictional Determination from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - Wetland Delineation approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (if applicable)
 - Anchorage Wetlands Assessment Methodology Form (if applicable)
 - Project narrative explaining:
 - Justification for the disturbance
 - Amount and type of material taken from and/or placed on site
 - Project Timeline
 - Revegetation Plan
 - Site plan to scale depicting, with dimensions:
 - area of disturbance
 - delineated wetland boundary
 - Photographs of the project area
 - Final drainage plan
- (Additional information may be required.)

MUNICIPAL WETLAND POLICY

In considering any disturbance to wetlands identified within the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*, the Municipality uses the following criteria to guide its decision:

1. The applicant has demonstrated minimized individual and cumulative impacts to the wetland unit through the implementation of best management practices; and
2. Disturbance of the wetland cannot be avoided to make reasonable use of the land; and
3. The wetland unit is subject to specific protections such as special limitations, easements, or has been designated for future public use for recreation, wildlife viewing, ecological function, and/or flood mitigation; and
4. Adverse impacts to adjacent or downstream wetlands, streams, aquatic resources, and drainage facilities will be mitigated to the best extent possible; and
5. The disturbance activity and/or development is consistent with the purpose and goals of the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*, as well as the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan.

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
WATERSHED & NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2024-01**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE UPDATED MUNICIPAL WETLAND PERMIT
POLICY TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**

WHEREAS, the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan* was adopted by the Anchorage Assembly on July 8, 2014, via AO 2013-132(S) establishing the Municipality's authority to regulate disturbance activity within identified wetland units throughout the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, regulatory authority was then delegated between the Municipality and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers based upon specified wetland class by the issuance of a general permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality's general permit expired on April 30, 2021, and was not renewed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage is legally obligated by the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan* and Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Title 21 to regulate disturbance activity within defined setbacks from the delineated edge of identified wetland units; and

WHEREAS, no formal policy guidance on how disturbance activity within wetland setbacks or within wetland units is to be permitted by the Municipality currently exists; and

WHEREAS, this policy will establish approval criteria to be considered and the review process in which a wetland permit will be evaluated. This will improve consistency between reviews and regulatory expectations of the Municipality of Anchorage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Anchorage Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission that:

- A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:
 1. The Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission serves as a technical liaison between municipal departments, the community and state and federal agencies having water quality, watershed and natural resources management responsibilities, programs to restore and improve fish and wildlife habitat and other activities to increase community stewardship of aquatic and other natural resources within the Municipality of Anchorage per AMC 4.90.010, and should be consulted on matters that may have adverse impacts on the function and health of our finite wetland resources.
 2. Finding on importance of wetlands
 3. Finding on changing regulatory structure and interpretation of Waters of the United States.

4. Finding regarding need to expedited process for lesser disturbances and need for review by the Commission for greater disturbances.

B. The Commission approves the Application for Wetland Permit or Amendment to Anchorage Wetland Management Plan. In considering any disturbance to wetlands identified within the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*, the Municipality uses the below criteria to guide its decision. In addition to this criteria, the Director shall consult the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission for a recommendation on a permit application disturbing greater than one acre prior to issuing a decision.

1. The applicant has demonstrated minimized individual and cumulative impacts to the wetland unit through the implementation of best management practices; and
2. Disturbance of the wetland cannot be avoided to make reasonable use of the land; and
3. The wetland unit is subject to specific protections such as special use limitations, easements, or has been designated for future public use for recreation, wildlife viewing, ecological function, and/or flood mitigation; and
4. Adverse impacts to adjacent or downstream wetlands, streams, aquatic resources, and drainage facilities will be mitigated to the best extent possible; and
5. The disturbance activity and/or development is consistent with the purpose and goals of the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*, as well as the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission on the 24th day of July 2024.

Craig H. Lyon
Secretary

Emily Creely
Chair