RETURN COMMENTS TO:

Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department Current Planning Division PO Box 196650 Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650 Phone: 907-343-7943

CASE NO: 2025-0009

PLANNER: Elizabeth Appleby

- **REQUEST:** Request for Dimensional Variances from AMC 21.09.060B.1. Table 21.09-5: Table of Dimensional Standards Girdwood Residential Districts and AMC 21.07.020B.9. Table 21.07-1. Minimum Stream Setback Width Per Side to allow a garage addition to encroach into front setback and stream setback (Virgin Creek) and to allow the existing deck to encroach into rear setback.
- **SITE ADDRESS:** 1230 Timberline Drive, Girdwood, Alaska 99587

CURRENT ZONING: gR-2 (Single-Family/Two-Family Residential) District

ORIG SUBD/LEGAL: Lot 10A1, Block 31, Alyeska Basin Subdivision, Unit VII (Plat 96-122)

COMMENTS AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals Loussac Library Assembly Chambers 3600 Denali Street Anchorage, Alaska

| Hearing Date: | Thursday, February 13, 2025 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Agency Comments Due: | Thursday, January 16, 2025 |
| Council Comments Due: | Thursday, January 23, 2025 |

COMMUNITY COUNCIL(S): Girdwood Board of Supervisors

Application for Dimensional Variance

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

A

| Name (last name first) Miles, Lisa - Z Architects |
|--|
| Mailing Address PO Box 842 |
| Girdwood, AK 99587 |
| Contact Phone – Day Evening 907-957-1090 |
| E-mail Lisa@zarch-ak.com |
| |

Report additional petitioners or disclose other co-owners on supplemental form. Failure to divulge other beneficial interest owners may

| PROPERTY INFORMATION | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Property Tax # (000-000-00-000):07519 | 140000 | and the second sec |
| Site Street Address: 1230 Timberlin | e Drive, Girdwood | Pro |
| Current legal description: (use additional Alyeska Basin #7, BLK 31, Lot 1 | | |
| Zoning:gR-2 | Acreage: 13,410 sq ft | Grid #: SE5015 |
| and the particular second | - Khan Alberton A. Kalde | AL K R. |

PETITIONING FOR

Dimensional variance for a garage addition to an existing home to encroach 10 feet into the required 20-foot front setback and to encroach entirely within the 50-foot riparian edge zone stream setback.

Dimensional Variance to include existing deck built to the rear of the home in 1996.

I hereby certify that (I am)(I have been authorized to act for) owner of the property described above and that I am petitioning for variance 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 variance. I understand that the burden of evidence to show compliance with the variance standards rests with me, the applicant. I also understand that assigned hearing dates are tentative and may have to be postponed by Planning Department staff or the Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals for administrative reasons.

Owner (

Signature

Representative (Representatives must provide written proof of authorization)

| AI | len | Arno | Id |
|----|-----|------|----|
| | | | |

Print Name

| | | | 1. | |
|--------------|---------------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| Accepted by: | Poster & Affidavit: | Fee: | Case Number: | Meeting Date: 2 BEA: |
| | - | Å | 2025-0009 | 02/13/2025 |

ZDimV (Rev. 03/21) 2 pages

CODE CITATIONS

AMC 21. 09.060B.1. Table 21.09-5

AMC 21. 07.020B.9. Table 21.07-1

RECENT REGULATORY INFORMATION (Events that have occurred in last 5 years for all or portion of site)

Rezoning - Case Number:

Preliminary Plat Final Plat - Case Number(s):

Conditional Use - Case Number(s):

Zoning variance - Case Number(s): 2025-0009 Dim Var

Land Use Enforcement Action for

Building or Land Use Permit for

Wetland permit: Army Corps of Engineers Municipality of Anchorage

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

| (One of each applicable item is | s required for initial submittal, additional copies are required after finitial submittal) |
|---|---|
| 1 copy required: | Signed application (original) |
| 14 copies required: (Additional information may be | Signed application (copies) Variance narrative, addressing: The need for the variance, including when the need for the variance was discovered The effect of granting the variance An analysis of how the proposal meets the variance standards below As-built survey showing existing conditions, to scale (no more than 2 years old) Proposed plot plan or site plan, to scale (new construction) Topographic map of site Photographs |
| Coolitional mormation may be | requireu. |

VARIANCE STANDARDS

The Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals may only grant a variance if the Board finds that all of the following 8 standards are substantially met. Each standard must have a response in as much detail as it takes to explain how your property's condition satisfies the standard. The burden of proof rests with you.

- a. There exist exceptional or extraordinary physical circumstances of the subject property including, but not limited to, streams, wetlands, or slope, and those circumstances are not applicable to other land in the same zoning district;
- Because of these physical circumstances, the strict application of the code creates an exceptional or undue hardship upon the property owner, and would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district under the terms of the zoning ordinance;
- c. The hardship is not self-imposed, special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant, and such conditions and circumstances do not merely constitute inconvenience;
- d. The variance, if granted, will not adversely affect the use of adjacent property as permitted under this code;
- e. The variance, if granted, does not change the character of the zoning district where the property is located, is in keeping with the intent of the code, and does not permit a use not otherwise permitted in the district in which the property lies;
- f. The variance, if granted, does not adversely affect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the municipality;
- g. Persons with disabilities are provided with access as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and reasonable accommodation; and
- h. The variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land.



On behalf of Allen Arnold and Tonya Easeby 1230 Timberline Dr Girdwood, Alaska 99587

This request for a dimensional variance 21.03.240 is to allow for 10' of relief from the 20' front yard setback and riparian edge zone to allow for construction of a 400 sq ft garage addition to an existing home.

The property, located at 1230 Timberline Dr. BLK31 LT 10A1, Girdwood, is in a gR-2 zoning district. The existing grandfathered (per 21.13.040) structure built in 1981, plus driveway and shed, are all within the riparian zone due to AO No. 2018-67(S-1) ordinance establishing stream setbacks in 2018. The footprint of the proposed structure would replace a shed and occupy an existing gravel driveway, maintaining existing aesthetic and current usage (in accordance with 21.13.030) for vehicles and storage. The addition will connect to the existing 981 square foot (foot print) structure via a 72 sq ft stairwell and heated 88 sq ft skywalk at the second floor. The proposed developable area is 15 feet in elevation above Virgin Creek (which is in a gorge (see attached survey dated 6/13/2023)) and is out of potential flood area. The dimensional variance, if granted, will place the addition outside the 25' streamside zone at the rear of the property but allow it within the riparian edge zone. The proposed garage will have the same setback from Timberline Drive and Virgin Creek as the residence which was built prior to the establishment of current dimensional standards (21.09-5).

Existing 1996 deck:

When the residence was purchased in 1996, the owner wished to have a place to view and enjoy the creek, and built a deck in the 25' stream side zone. The owner did not know about the stream set back. The deck now has plant life growing under and around and acts as protection against erosion from foot traffic. The owner would like to include this existing deck in this dimensional variance. Total area of elevated deck within 25' stream side zone is 369 square feet.

The Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals may only grant a variance if the Board finds that all of the following 8 standards are substantially met. Each standard must have a response in as much detail as it takes to explain how your property's condition satisfies the standard. The burden of proof rests with you.

a. There exist exceptional or extraordinary physical circumstances of the subject property including, but not limited to, streams, wetlands, or slope, and those circumstances are not applicable to other land in the same zoning district.

The original residence was built in 1981. Later zoning R-11 in 1986 / 1987 placed the house within the front 20-foot front yard setback. Due to the adoption of AO No. 2018-67(S-1) in 2018, the property became 91% encumbered by a 50' stream setback. This ordinance was adopted to increase

water quality and to address floodplain issues. Virgin Creek runs through a gorge to the rear of the property and is well below the proposed garage elevation and the building site is not at risk of flooding. The purpose of a riparian edge is to protect habitats and the stream channel, however this riparian edge zone has an existing gravel driveway and developed structures at the proposed addition site. The 50' Virgin Creek stream setback now encompasses existing decks and the existing house.

With regard to the deck built in 1996; there is very little flat buildable area on the property, the majority is steeply sloping or creek. The main house occupies one flat area. The other flat area suitable for building is near the creek (see A0.1). This second flat area is where the owner elected to build the deck.

b. Because of these physical circumstances, the strict application of the code creates an exceptional or undue hardship upon the property owner, and would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district under the terms of the zoning ordinance.

Multiple setbacks encumber 100% of the property leaving zero square feet of developable land. This is a substantial economic hardship because of no reasonable use of the property available for structures. This property is unusual and unique due to the popularity of Virgin Creek Falls trail; there is no parking allowed within the cul-de-sac and off-street parking is needed. If granted, the Dimensional Variance would allow the property owners to have covered parking on their property and to be fully off of Timberline Drive. The property owner is planning to age in place and being unable to build a garage would be a hardship. A Dimensional Variance would allow the property owner to enjoy the benefits of a garage and on-site parking similar to neighboring properties.

With regard to the deck built in 1996: as noted above, setbacks encumber 100% of the property. In addition, access to most of the property is only achievable by traversing steep slopes. The existing steps and deck allow the owner to use otherwise inaccessible portions of their property especially as they age.

c. The hardship is not self-imposed, special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant, and such conditions and circumstances do not merely constitute inconvenience.

None of the conditions were caused by the land owner. The original construction took place before any local zoning and setbacks. Owner did not cause property to be 100% encumbered by setbacks. There is a burden to the owner because the physical features of the lot limit construction locations and options. Virgin Creek is free-flowing and natural in it's respective channel and flows through the property. Due to the physical nature of the property, the existing structure is in the 20 foot front yard setback and resides on the northwest corner of the property. Proposed garage would be located within this same front yard setback. With regard to deck built in 1996, the steep physical features of the property are not a result of the actions of the owner. Not being able to safely access or use most of the property is not merely an inconvenience

d. The variance, if granted, will not adversely affect the use of adjacent property as permitted under this code.

Proposed garage will not adversely affect use of adjacent property. In fact, developing on-site covered parking will help the neighborhood to reduce street side parking. The variance will not grant special privileges, increase traffic which is already excessive due to the trail head, will not change the character of the neighborhood or negatively impact the abutting property owners.

The deck built in 1996 does not adversely affect the use of the adjacent properties. We believe that it cannot be seen from any adjacent properties and to our knowledge none of the neighbors had complained about it.

e. The variance, if granted, does not change the character of the zoning district where the property is located, is in keeping with the intent of the code, and does not permit a use not otherwise permitted in the district in which the property lies.

The variance will not change the character of the neighborhood. Existing neighbors have garages which are allowed in the zoning district (gR-2). The variance will provide off-street parking that would allow the current residence to comply with neighborhood restrictions to on street parking. The land use will not change as a result of this variance.

The existing 1996 deck does not change the character of the neighborhood. Decks are common and allowed in this zoning district. The deck is elevated and allows rainfall to pass through. Stream edge foliage grows under the deck. The deck and elevated access stairs protect the stream edge and character from on grade foot traffic. The deck is in keeping with the intent of the stream setback ordinance as it reduces erosion from access paths down the steep slopes. Per AMC 21.07020B.9.d.vi, elevated walkways are a permitted use within the stream side zone. The existing deck is analogous to an elevated walkway. While the 369 sf deck is within the streamside zone, an example is set by the riparian edge zone where decks not exceeding 500 s.fr. are allowed.

f. The variance, if granted, does not adversely affect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the municipality.

There is no risk to public health, safety or welfare. No safety concerns are identified with this proposed development. The proposed driveway is clear of the cul-de-sac turnaround.

The existing 1996 deck does not adversely affect health safety and welfare. The deck does not affect the streamside environmental conditions and it does not pose a risk of damming or blocking Virgin Creek.

g. Persons with disabilities are provided with access as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and reasonable accommodation.

ADA requirements not applicable to single family residence. Proposed development will assist owners with future aging in place by providing covered and heated parking.

The existing deck allows easier access to the rear of the property where the banks are steep.

h. The variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land.

The proposed garage footprint is the minimum area that will provide the owners the same opportunity for development of a garage that is afforded to neighboring homes. The location was selected with considerations to the location of Virgin Creek, existing drainage and Streamside Zone, and impact to adjacent parcels and their existing structures. All development on this property will be completed in such a way as to minimize encroachment into the stream bank and stream setbacks, while also addressing concerns for preservation of the natural environment.

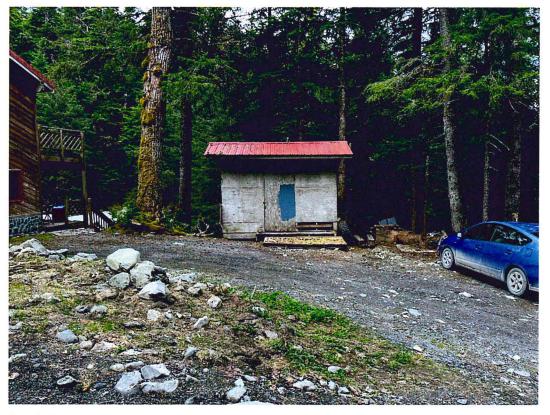
A variance for the entire existing 1996 deck is the minimum that allows for a reasonable and safe use of, and access to, inaccessible portions of the property. The deck has minimal impact on the stream bank and removing some or all of it now would disturb the stream more than leaving it in place.

Photos

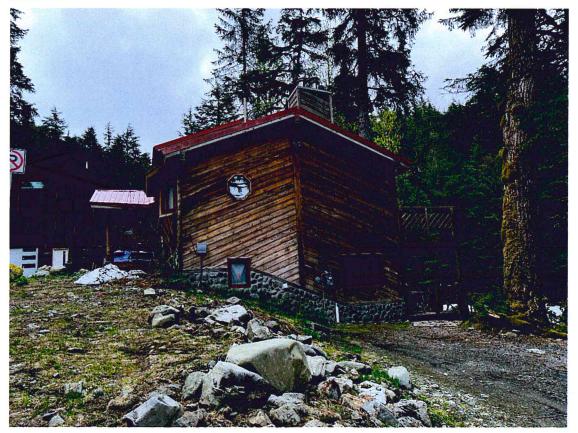


Photo 1: Front view of house.

Photos 2 & 3 Current shed and Driveway:



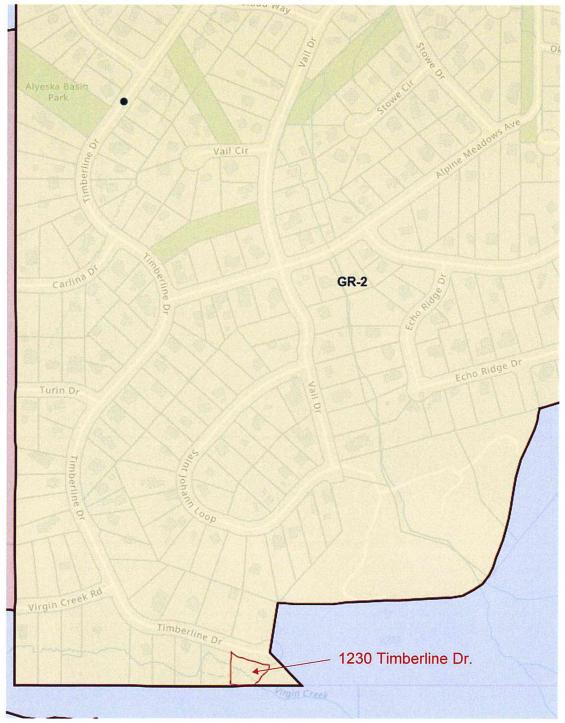
Rear Deck





Current Rear Deck Photo





Map 1230 Timberline Drive, Girdwood

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EASBEY-ARNOLD RESIDENCE

1230 TIMBERLINE GIRDWOOD, ALASKA



DRAWING INDEX

T1.1 COVER SHEET

RENDERINGS R1.1 R1.2

SURVEY

PLAT A0.0 GENERAL NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHITECTURAL

| AB0.1 | SITE PLAN | A1.1 | SITE PLAN |
|-------|-------------------|------|-------------------|
| AB1.1 | FIRST FLOOR PLAN | A1.1 | FIRST FLOOR PLAN |
| AB1.2 | SECOND FLOOR PLAN | A1.2 | SECOND FLOOR PLAN |
| AB1.3 | THIRD FLOOR PLAN | A1.3 | THIRD FLOOR PLAN |
| AB2.1 | ELEVATIONS | A2.1 | ELEVATIONS |
| AB2.2 | ELEVATIONS | A2.2 | ELEVATIONS |
| AB3.1 | SECTIONS | A2.4 | ELEVATIONS |
| AB3.2 | SECTIONS | A3.1 | SECTIONS |
| | | A3.2 | SECTIONS |

FULL SIZE DRAWING SHEETS ARE 22"X34". SCALES ON OTHER SHEET SIZES SHOULD BE ADJUSTED ACCORDINGLY

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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

| PROJECT INFORMATION THIS PROJECT IS A SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE. ADDRESS 1230 TIMBERLINE ROAD LEGAL DESCRIPTION Alyeska Basin Block 31, Lot 10 A1 MOA TITLE 21 21.09.060 DIVENSIONAL STANDARDS GR2 104:00 S0 FT MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR SINGLE FAMILY 15:000 S0 FT MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR SINGLE FAMILY 15:000 S0 FT MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR TWO FAMILY. SEWER REQUIRED | DATE: 12.05.2024 DATE: 12.05. |
|---|--|
| (11,180 SD.FT.ACTUAL) 70' MIN LOT WIDTH 20' FRONT YARD SCTBACK | |
| 10' SIDE YARD (FLOATING) 15' REAR YARD 35' MAX HEGHT 30% MAX LOT COVERAGE FOR LOTS < 15,000 SQ. FT. MAX FLOAR RAEA RATIO: 0.50 FOR LOTS < 12,500 SQ. FT. 50 FOOT RIPARIAN EDGE FROM VIRGIN CREEK | |
| Contractor Andy Hoyt, GLACIER VALLEY BUILDERS | |
| Structural T.B.D. | NCE |
| Mechanical T.B.D. | D RESIDENCE |
| Electrical T.B.D. | |
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| | EASBEY - ARNOL 1230 TIMBERLINE GIRDWO COVER S |
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| DESCRIPTION AREA % OF SITE TOTAL SITE AREA 13,392 S.F | |
| EXISTING STRUCTURE ± 981 S.F. 7.3 % DECKS ± 577 S.F. 4.3 % | - - |
| PROPOSED STRUCTURE 560 S.F. 4.2 % | |
| TOTAL AREA 2,118 S.F. 15.8 % | JOB NO. 23-19 SUBMITTAL: |
| | DRAWN BY: ET, CJ, LM Checked by: Maz Revisions: |
| | COPYRIGHT 2024 |
| 12–3–2024 PERMIT SET | T1.1 |

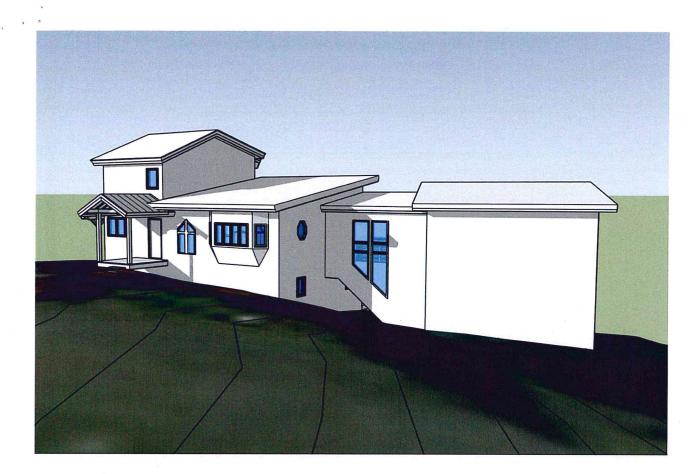






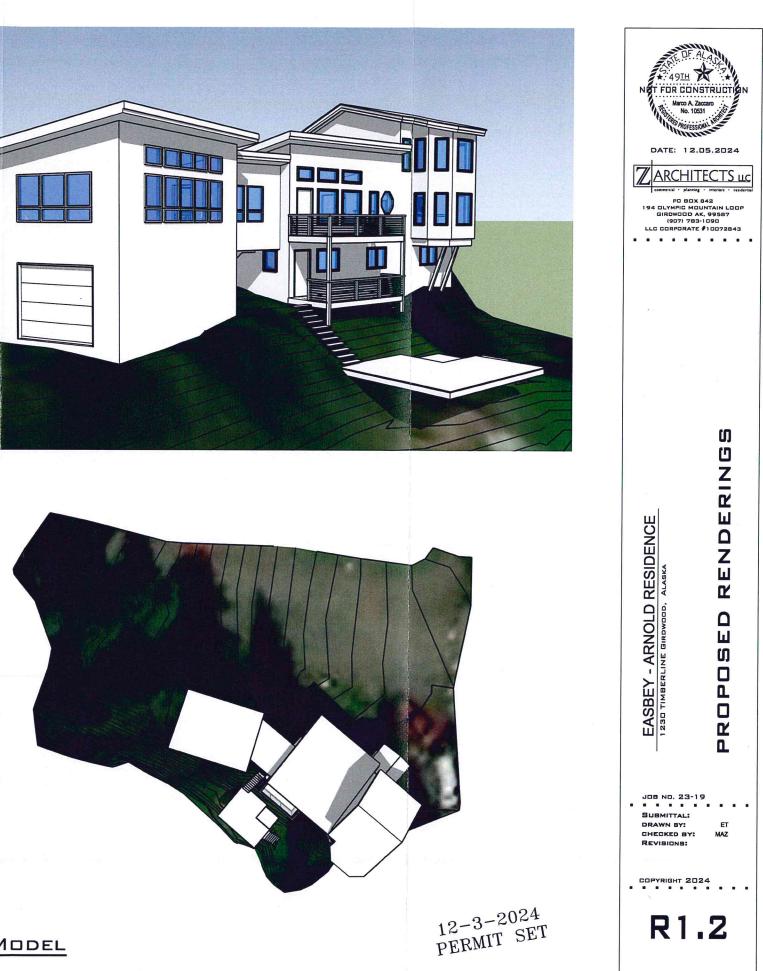




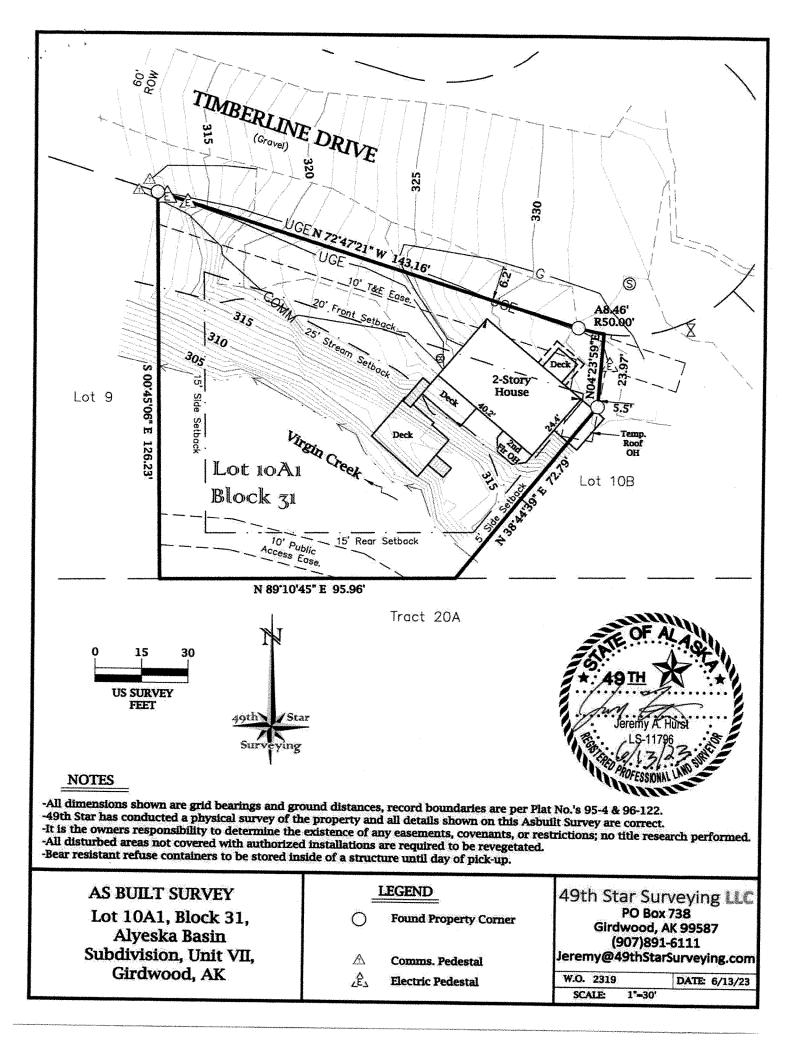


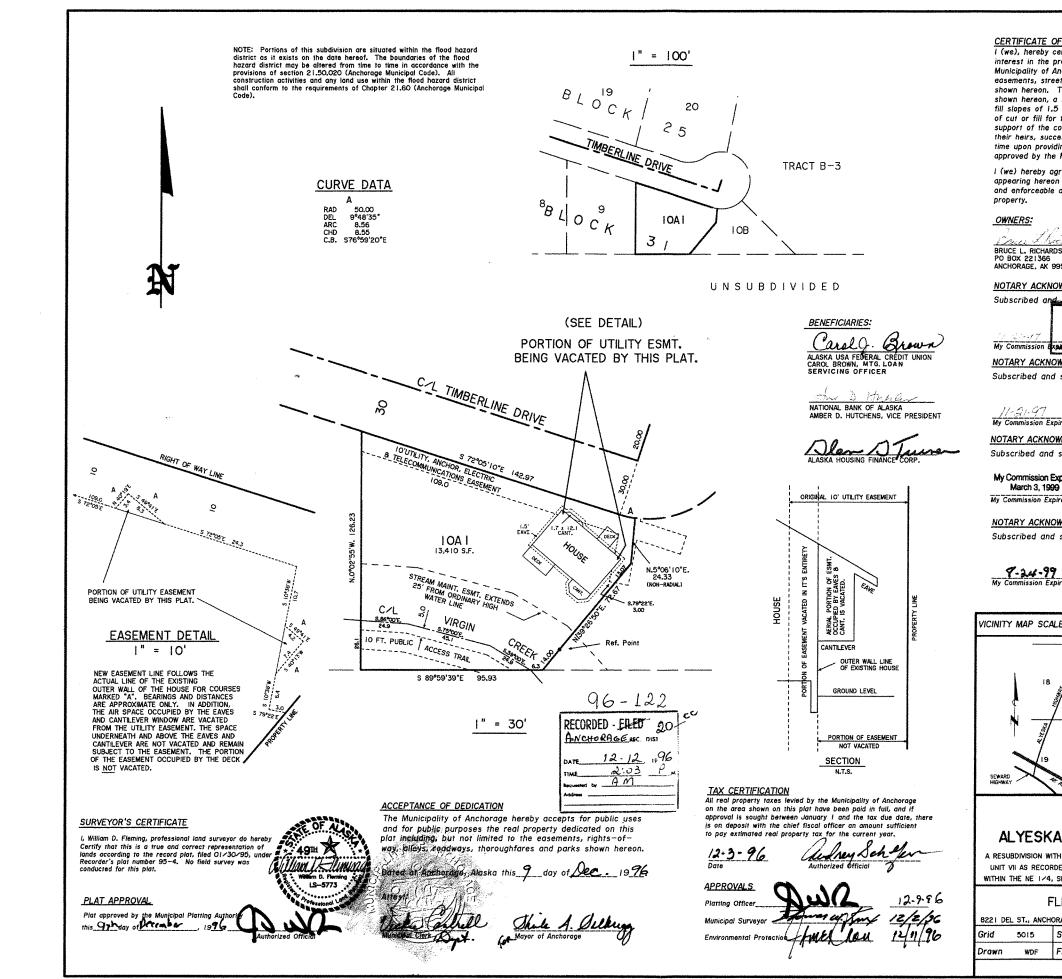








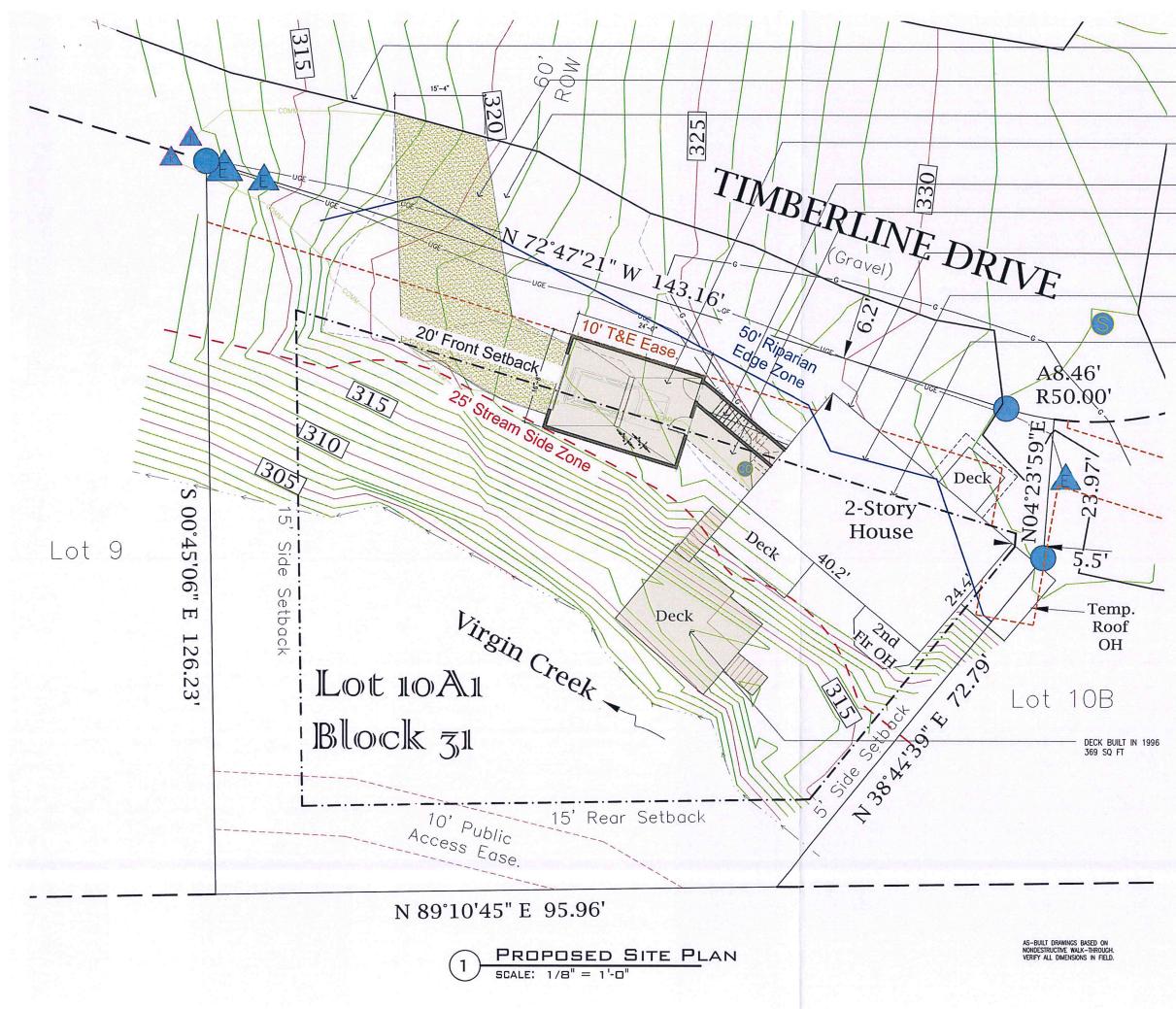




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| E OF OWNERSHIP and DEDICATION y certify that I (we) hold the herein specified property e property described hereon. I (we) hereby dedicate to the of Anchorage all areas depicted for use as public utility treets, alleys, thoroughfares, parks, and other public areas n. There shall be reserved adjacent to the dedicated streets n, a slope reservation easement sufficient to contain cut and 1.5 feet horizontal for each I foot vertical (1.5 to I) for the purpose of providing and maintaining the lateral e constructed streets. There is reserved to the grantors, uccessors and assigns, the right to use such areas at any oviding and maintaining other adequate lateral support, as the Municipality. | | | |
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PROPOSED GRAVEL DRIVEWAY EXPANSION AT GARAGE ENTRY

EXISTING GRAVEL DRIVEWAY

PROPOSED TWO-STORY STRUCTURE WITH FIRST FLOOR GARAGE AND SECOND FLOOR RECREATION ROOM (400 S.F. FOOTPRINT)

PROPOSED 72 S.F. FOOTPRINT FOR NEW STAIRWELL

- PROPOSED 88 S.F. SKYWALK CONNECTING ADDITION TO EXISTING STRUCTURE AT SECOND FLOOR

EXISTING 2-STORY RESIDENCE (981 S.F. BUILDING FOOTPRINT) -- BUILT IN 1981

PROPOSED STRUCTURE ENCROACHES IN THE 50' RIPARIAN EDGE

PROPOSED STRUCTURE ENCROACHES 10' INTO THE 20' PROPERTY SETBACK

SITE IS 100% ENCUMBERED BY SETBACKS, RIPARIAN EDGE ZONE, AND UTILITY EASEMENTS

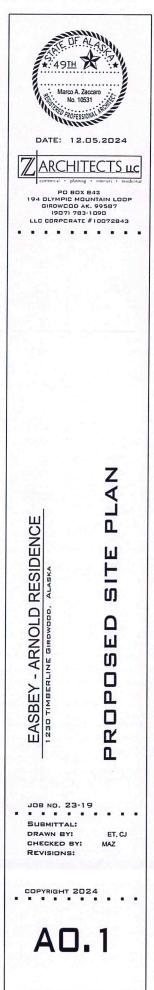
SITE AREA CALCS (FOOTPRINT ONLY)

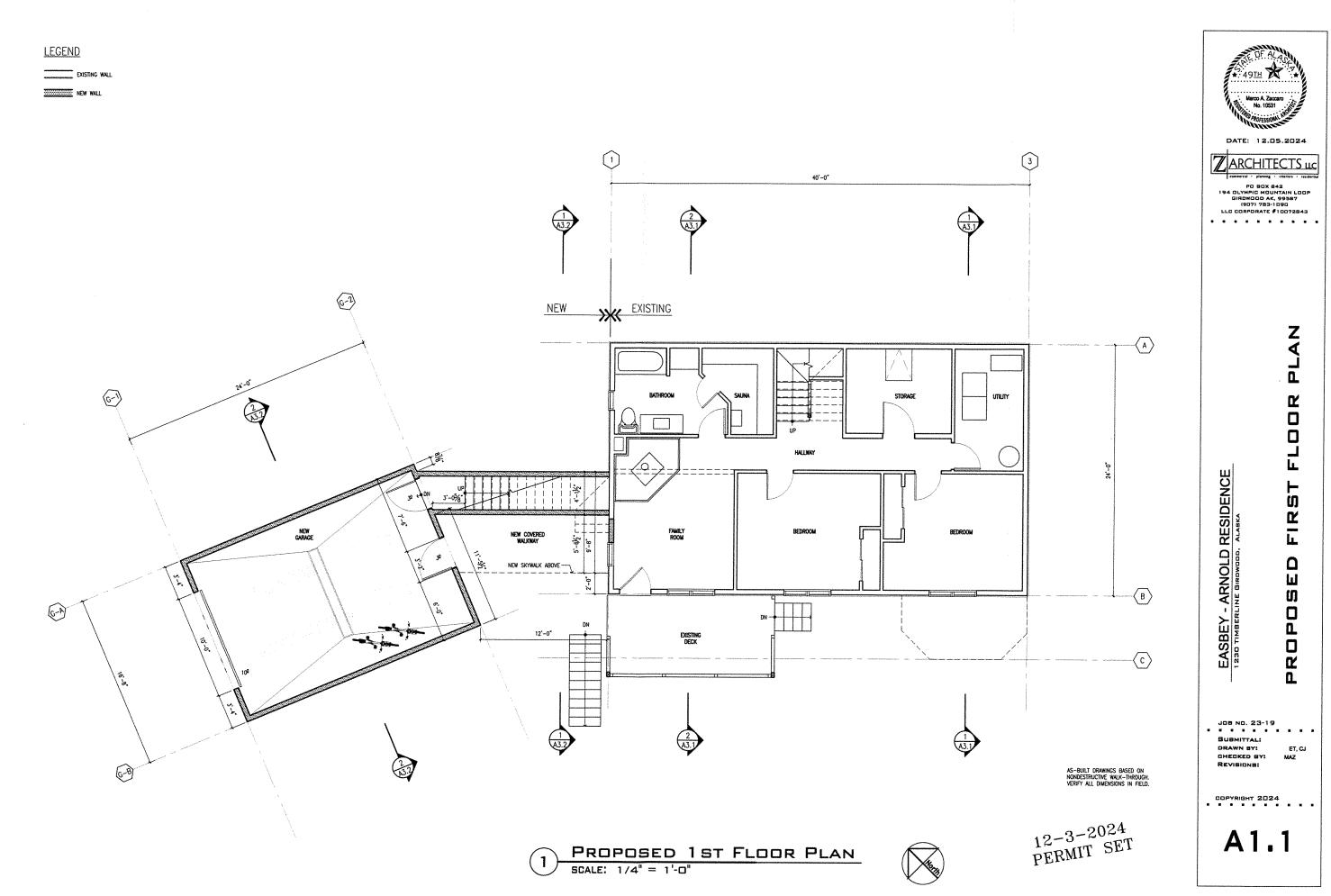
DESCRIPTION AREA % OF SITE

| TOTAL SITE AREA | 13,392 S.F. | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| EXISTING STRUCTURE DECKS | ± 981 S.F. ± 577 S.F. | 7.3 % 4.3 % |
| PROPOSED STRUCTURE | 560 S.F. | 4.2 % |
| TOTAL AREA | 2,118 S.F. | 15.8 % |

MOA TITLE 21 21.09.060 DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS GR2 10,400 SQ FT MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR SINGLE FAMILY 16,600 SQ FT MINIMUM LOT SIZE FOR TWO FAMILY, SEWER REQUIRED (11,180 SC. FT. ACTUAL) 70' MIN LOT WIDTH 20' FRONT YARD SETBACK 10' SIDE YARD (SETBACK 10' SIDE YARD (SETBACK 10' SIDE YARD (SETBACK 10' SIDE YARD 35' MAX HEIGHT 30% MAX LOT COVERAGE FOR LOTS < 15,000 SQ. FT. MAX FLOOR AREA RATID: 0.50 FOR LOTS < 12,500 SQ. FT.

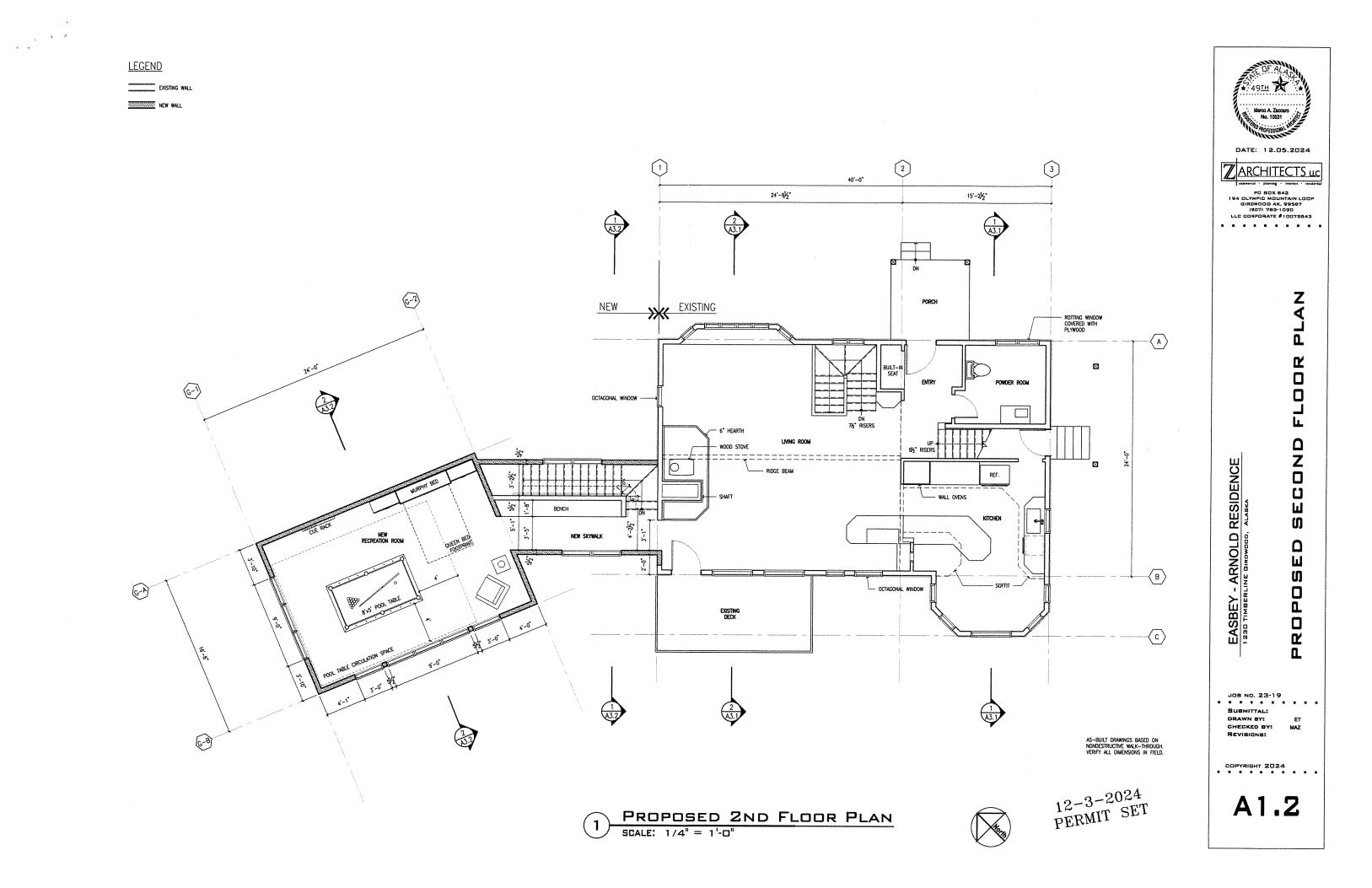
12–3–2024 PERMIT SET

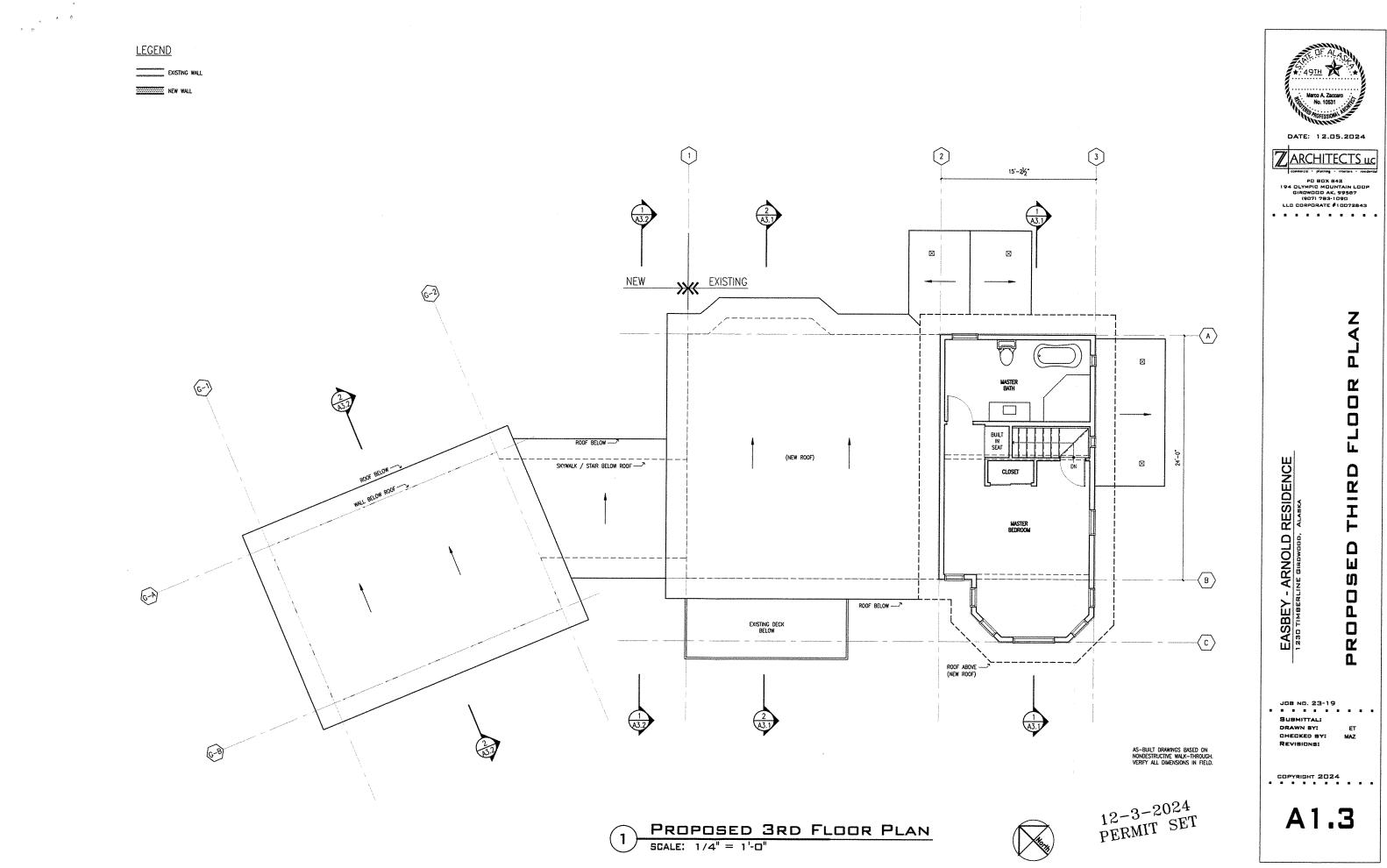




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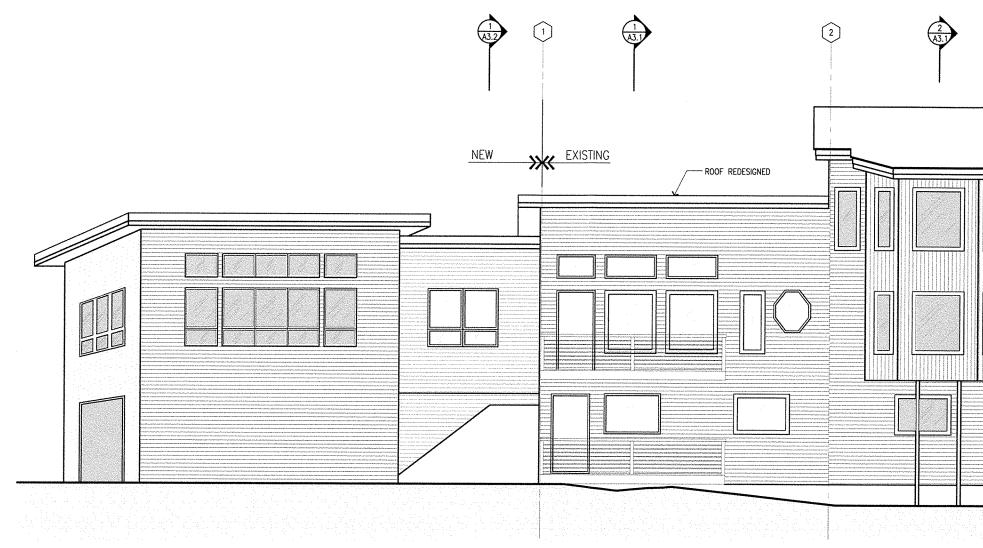
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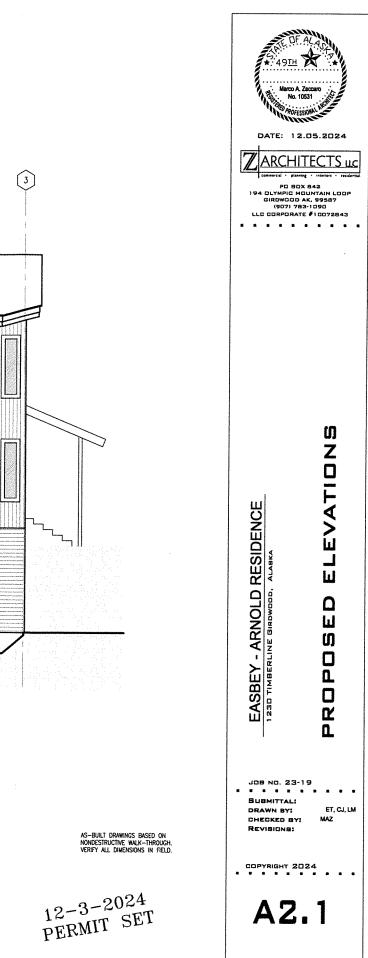


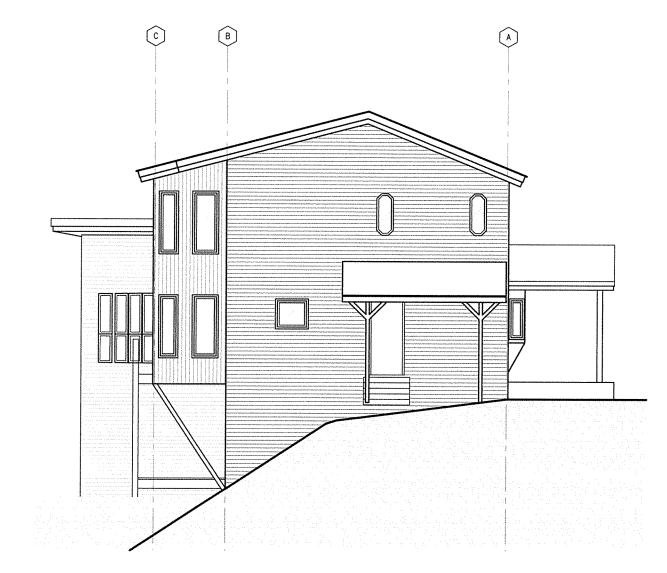


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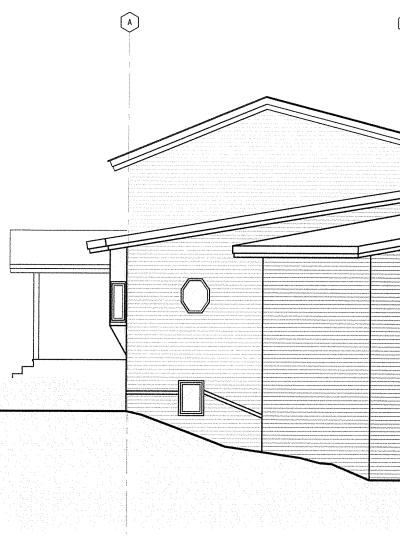






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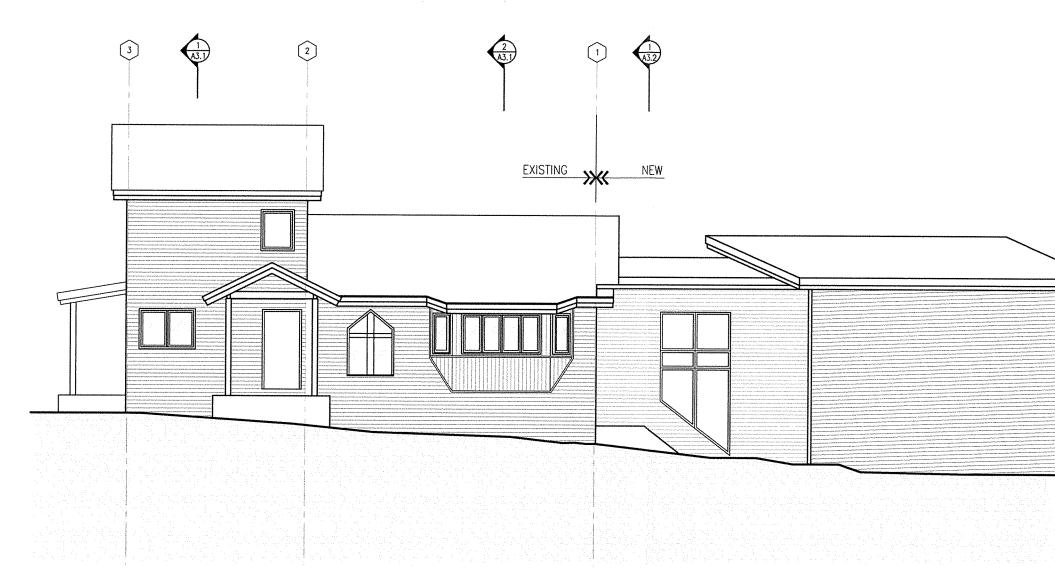






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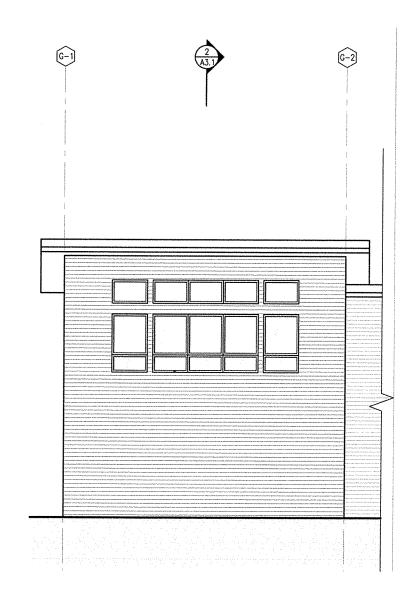


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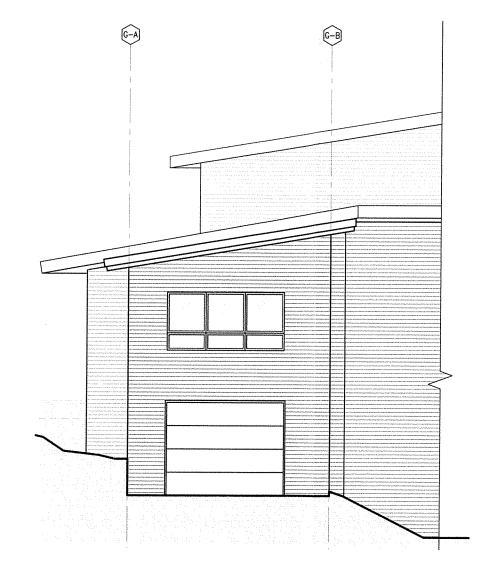
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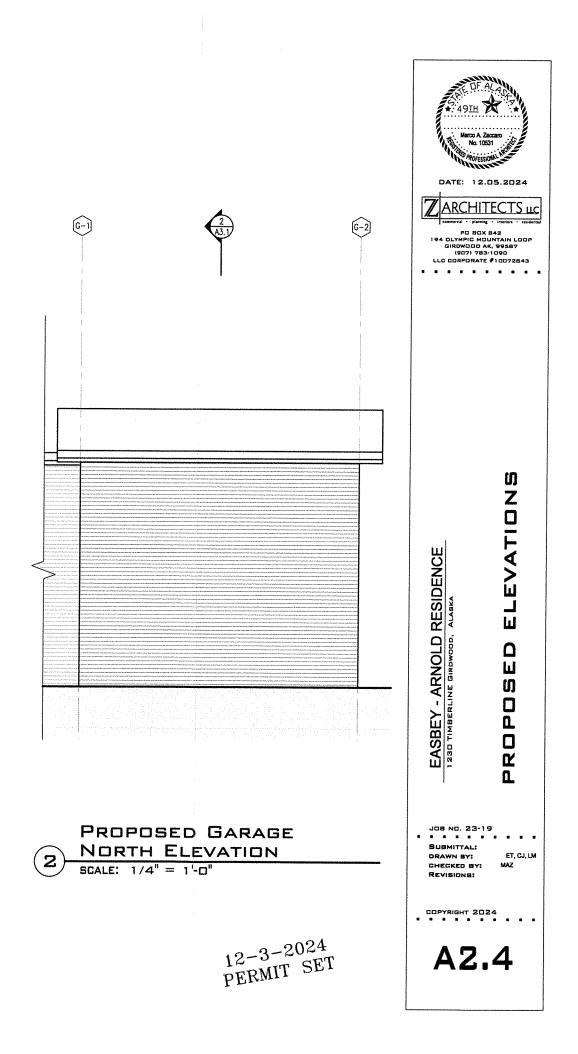


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PROPOSED GARAGE WEST ELEVATION SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"





MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT HERITAGE LAND BANK

| Date: | November 14, 2024 |
|----------|--|
| То: | File |
| Thru: | Tiffany Briggs, Real Estate Director |
| From: | Heritage Land Bank Staff |
| Subject: | Glacier Creek Embankment located on HLB Parcel 6-060 |

Issue

What is the history and status of the constructed embankment? What regulatory requirements at the local, state, and federal level apply? What monitoring, reporting, management, or maintenance is necessary?

Key Takeaways

- The embankment is not regulated by any government entity or subject to any reporting requirements by the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), State of Alaska, or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).
- During a 100-year flood event the embankment is likely to be overtopped.
- There are no known areas of active erosion or known weak points on the embankment.
- Neighboring private property owners access their lots by driving over the embankment, not in the platted right-of-way.

MOA Action Items/Recommendations

- Continue to perform annual site visits.
- Continue to collaborate with other agencies as appropriate going forward.
- Determine a path forward regarding unauthorized physical access to private lots, potentially through issuing an Intergovernmental Permit (IGP) to Street Maintenance for continued road maintenance on the embankment.
- Support GBOS if they desire to move forward with a possible courtesy inspection of the embankment from the Corps.

Property Information

- HLB Parcel Number: 6-060
- Parcel/Tax ID: 075-141-04-000
- Legal Description: US Survey 4805 Lot 2
- Location: In Girdwood along the Seward Highway starting at the west bank of Glacier Creek
- Size: Approximately 332 acres
- Zoning: Girdwood Open Space (GOS)
- Wetlands: Nearly all of this is parcel is freshwater wetlands on the inland side of the Seward Highway and tidal marshlands on the outer side of the Seward Highway.
- Existing condition and land use: This parcel is undeveloped vacant land. The property is subject to several exceptions including easements for rights-of-way, electrical, pipelines, etc. and is subject to Public Land Orders, Permits, and Alaska Division of Land decisions.
- Adopted Land Use Plan: Girdwood Area Plan (1995) shows this area as Open Space. The draft Girdwood Comprehensive Plan also shows this area as Open Space.
- Vicinity maps in Appendix A

Embankment History

On the west side of Glacier Creek, between the Alaska Railroad bridge and the Seward Highway bridge, there is a constructed earthen embankment on a parcel of land owned by the Municipality of Anchorage and managed by the Heritage Land Bank division. A limited history regarding the embankment has been formulated from conversations with many Municipal, State, and Federal agencies, and extensive research through digital archives and databases.

The embankment was constructed prior to statehood as a direct result of the Federal Aid Highways Project to construct the Seward Highway in 1950 (See Appendix B). No documents have been found that indicate any improvements or maintenance of the embankment was performed after initial construction.

During the earthquake of March 27, 1964, it is known that there was extensive damage to Old Girdwood, including an elevation loss of several feet, fire, flooding, and damage to the highway and railroad in the general area. However, there are no documents indicating whether the embankment, which was still under federal ownership at that time, was damaged. Alaska's Digital Archives contains photos of Corps personnel in the area building defenses against flooding along the Seward Highway in Girdwood after the earthquake (See Appendix B).

Until July 28, 1972, this parcel was under federal ownership. The property was patented to the State of Alaska pursuant to the Statehood Act of 1958, Patent 50-73-0028.

In 1975, the neighboring privately owned parcels, Girdwood Original Townsite Block 1 Lots 1A – 4, were replatted with a partial vacation of East Street. At the time, the parcel was still in the State of Alaska ownership and the State issued a statement of non-objection to the half cul-de-

sac to be on the State's property (See Appendix C). Further, the State did not require the cul-desac to be constructed, meaning that the MOA and the State knew the physical access was not in the location of the platted right-of-way.

This parcel transferred to the Municipality of Anchorage pursuant to the Municipal Land Entitlement Act of 1978 on December 19, 1984, Patent 7867. It was placed into HLB Inventory as Parcel 6-060.

In 1997, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors (GBOS) performed stabilization work on the stream bank directly next to the Railroad bridge. It is unclear whether this work was performed on the HLB Parcel or in the Railroad Right-of-Way. The work was done without permits and a violation was issued by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Starting in 2006, embankment repair was listed on the MOA's Capital Improvement Project list for a few years, however a project never advanced.

In Spring of 2024, a landowner in Old Girdwood contacted HLB Staff, the HLB Advisory Commission, and GBOS with concerns about the embankment's integrity, and potential flood risk. MOA staff performed multiple site visits and did not find any indicators of erosion or areas of concern. HLB Staff contacted State, Federal and Municipal agencies, and performed extensive research through digital archives and databases to gather information about the embankment.

Agency Involvement

US Army Corps of Engineers

The Corps was in the area in March 1964 right after the March 27, 1964, earthquake. Photos from the Alaska's Digital Archive indicate that Corps personnel stacked sandbags along the Seward Highway to prevent flooding of Old Girdwood from Turnagain Arm. In a Corps report from 1969, it is stated that the Corps built an emergency sandbag dike to protect Old Girdwood against high-tide flooding after the earthquake.

The Corps does not have any records that the embankment was a federally authorized levee built with consultation from the Corps. Since it is not a Corps authorized levee, it would be up to the MOA on frequency of inspections, on-going maintenance, or repairs. There is not a MOA code requirement or policy to inspect embankments like the one found on HLB Parcel 6-060.

The Corps maintains a National Levee Database which identifies all known levees, embankments, and floodwalls in the United States, regardless of their origins. This embankment, along with the adjoining Alaska Railroad and Seward Highway embankments, have recently been added to the National Levee Database. In conversation with the Corps Levee Safety Program Manager, this addition is based on Lidar data, did not include a site visit, and does not trigger any requirements for inspections, maintenance, or repairs. The embankment being listed on the database does not entitle the MOA to any technical support or funding; it is a database for informational purposes only.

The Corps offers courtesy inspections (as time and staffing allows); however, there is not a mandate by the Corps, generally or post inspection, to do regular inspections, maintenance, or repairs.

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

DOT&PF has reviewed their files, and they do not have any documentation regarding the embankment, despite the gated connection at the Seward Highway. It is believed that any further information regarding the original construction of the embankment as part of the Seward Highway project would be in the archives and would be challenging to locate. However, if any further information is unearthed about the original construction, the MOA will be contacted.

Alaska Railroad

The bridge that crosses Glacier Creek north of the embankment was built in the late 1920's. The bridge is routinely inspected, and ARR has no current concerns. There is no near-term replacement plan for the bridge.

Alaska Department of Fish & Game

On September 24, 1997, the State issued Girdwood Board of Supervisors a Notice of Violation for unpermitted bank stabilization with the placement of riprap with heavy machinery without a Fish Habitat Permit. There is no documentation that this work was permitted by the MOA.

MOA Watershed Management Services & Flood Hazard Administrator

The most recent flood study for Girdwood Original Townsite has determined the base flood elevation to be 25 feet mean sea-level. Furthermore, the height of the embankment is estimated between 23-26 feet of elevation (depending on location along the embankment), which would overflow at a 100-year flood event (also known as 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard). Given the timeframe of its original construction, the embankment functions and is treated as a natural riverbank. The original construction of the embankment, the Seward Highway, and the Railroad infrastructure all pre-date, and were not regulated by FEMA regulations (Code of Federal Regulations 44). Any new work below the ordinary high-water mark of Glacier Creek would be regulated by the Corps and potentially require a flood hazard permit from the MOA under CFR 44. All new construction in Old Girdwood must be built to above the base flood elevation (see contour and FEMA flood maps in Appendix A).

MOA Planning Department

The platted right-of-way of East Street was never constructed and lots 1A - 9 of Block 1 access their private property over the embankment. The State of Alaska submitted written comments not requiring the cul-de-sac to be constructed, which suggests that the MOA was aware that the right-of-way was not constructed, and that the embankment was being utilized for physical access (see Plat 75-135 in Appendix C).

MOA Public Works

Embankment work was identified as a Capital Improvement Project for 2006 - 2011 capital planning; however, the work was never scoped out, documented, or completed. The item was listed several times over a multi-year period:

- The 2006 Project was described as, "Dike Reconstruction, redevelopment planning, road access, and pre-construction.
- 2007 Capital Improvement Budget listed the item with zero dollars for the budget.
- 2010 Capital Project Needs List, the project appears again as a priority for Heritage Land Bank.

Girdwood Board of Supervisors / Girdwood Valley Service Area

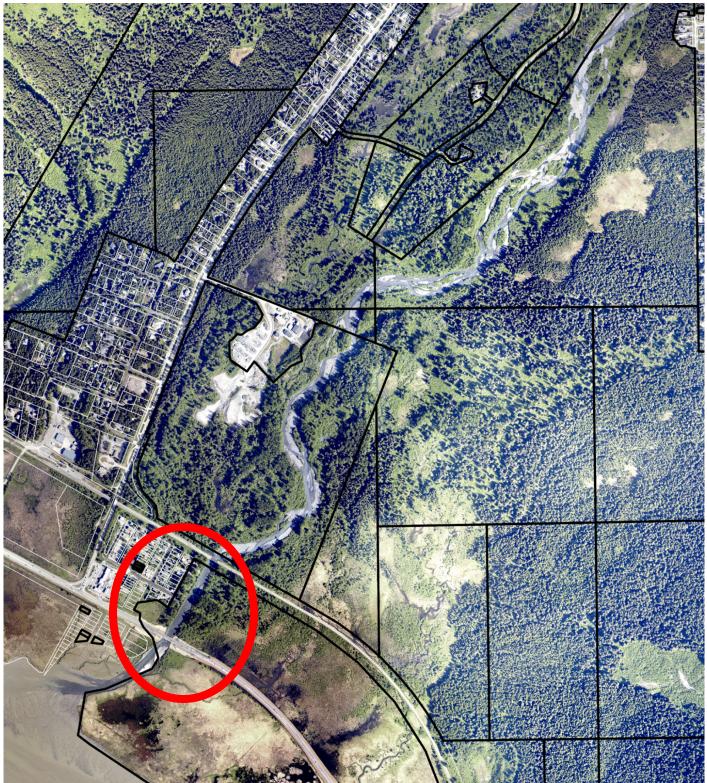
The Girdwood Valley Service Area has been maintaining the embankment as a drivable surface, including snow plowing. The location of the embankment is not within a platted right-of-way, easement, or intergovernmental permit; therefore, there is no legal right for access through this area. The legally platted right-of-way remains undeveloped.

GBOS has performed work on the embankment which was documented in 1997 by Alaska Department of Fish Game. No further information has been provided on the scope of that work.

Appendix A – Vicinity Maps Appendix B – Photos Appendix C – Plat 75-135

CC: Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission CC: Girdwood Board of Supervisors

Appendix A – Vicinity Maps



Municipality of Anchorage - Heritage Land Bank Lower Girdwood Valley

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

400 Feet



Municipality of Anchorage - Heritage Land Bank Parcel 6-060 (PID 075-141-04) US Survey 4805 Lot 2 0 100 200



Regulatory Floodway 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard

| 0 | 100 | 200 | | | 400 Feet |
|---|------|------|---|---|----------|
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Elevation Contours



Appendix B – Photos

2024 Aerial oblique imagery

Looking West



Looking North



Photo from "Photo Album: Original Construction of the Seward Highway and Sterling Highway, 1949 -1951"

Territory of Alaska Project No.: Section F2 Photo by: M. M. Flint Subject: View looking up Glacier River from highway bridge showing dike constructed between the two bridges to protect Girdwood from overflow waters. Division File No.: 7504 Route: Turnagain Arm Date: April 20, 1950 Looking: Subject: View looking up Glacier River from highway bridge showing dike constructed between the two bridges

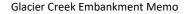


| Title: | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel build sandbag defenses against |
|------------------|--|
| | flooding in the Girdwood area. |
| Description: | View of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stacking sandbags to prevent |
| | flooding near Girdwood, Alaska, after March 27, 1964 earthquake. Land |
| | in Girdwood area sank after the earthquake, so flooding from Turnagain |
| | Arm waters occurred. March 1964. Photo by U.S. Army Corps of |
| | Engineers. |
| Collection Name: | AMRC. Woodman Photograph Collection |
| Identifier: | AMRC-b80-27-12 |
| Collection Name: | flooding near Girdwood, Alaska, after March 27, 1964 earthquake. Land in Girdwood area sank after the earthquake, so flooding from Turnagain Arm waters occurred. March 1964. Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. AMRC. Woodman Photograph Collection |



| Title: | Sandbag levee along Seward Highway |
|------------------|--|
| Description: | A sandbag levee constructed by soldiers of the 172nd Infantry Brigade, |
| | Fort Richardson, to prevent floating ice from entering the Seward |
| | Highway near Girdwood. Photo by PFC John Bacheller 172nd Infantry |
| | Brigade Fort Richardson, Alaska. |
| Collection Name: | William G. Sprowls photographs, 1964. UAA-HMC-1464 |
| Identifier: | uaa-hmc-1464-f2-22 |





Appendix C – Plat 75-135

