



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-0668, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Approval of (SUBD 17-05) Preliminary Plat for Blue Spruce Subdivision, Creating lots 1 through 20 and Tract A, Blue Spruce Subdivision. Applicant Brad Barnett.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Paul Nylund, Senior Planner/GIS Technician

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: N/A

Unencumbered Balance: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve (SUBD 17-05) preliminary plat for Blue Spruce Subdivision, creating lots 1 through 20 and Tract A, Blue Spruce Subdivision.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Brad Barnett has requested a survey within Section 12, Township 9 South, Range 6 West, Copper River Meridian described as follows: A re-subdivision of Tract 2C Northern Lights Subdivision Phase 2, Plat 2005-9 Valdez Recording District, creating lots 1 through 20 and Tract A, Blue Spruce Subdivision.

Brad Barnett is the property owner, and Ronald Hirsh holds a beneficiary interest in the land on which the development is to take place. Allen Minish, of Wrangell Mountain Technical Services, is the land surveyor on this project. The subdivision is scheduled to be completed in 2019. The construction on the Aurora street side will commence prior to construction of the new road and adjacent lots.

The purpose of this subdivision is to construct 10 single-family detached residential houses and 5 zero lot line style dwellings to accommodate 20 families total. This is a major subdivision defined in Valdez Municipal Code as: any subdivision with more than four lots, or that involves dedicating access, or involves a new street or road or the extension of municipal facilities. This subdivision will create 20 new lots, involves the dedication of a new street, and will require the extension of municipal facilities.

Much like the rest of the state, the City of Valdez is facing a housing shortage. This housing development, within the multi-family residential zoning district, is a significant step in the right

direction. These 20 lots maintain multi-family residential zoning, and be .3 acres in size.

In considering a major subdivision, the following supplementary information has been reviewed. No part of the proposed subdivision is within the regulated floodplain as designated by the Federal Insurance Rate Maps.

There is one road to be dedicated by this plat, Skidder Street. All roads will be built before the final plat. The applicant intends to have the City accept the road improvements, which will meet all the requirements of the City of Valdez standards and specifications for roads. There are no sidewalks planned within this subdivision, which is consistent with the other streets in the area.

This subdivision does not have access to tie into a public storm water collection system. Some areas will require ditching or French drains, and it is feasible for all building sites to have positive drainage away from building structures.

### **Issues to Consider & Conditions for Approval:**

In addition to considerations on the installation of water mains and on-site wastewater system designs, the applicant is requesting three design standard waivers on the subdivision plat. Per VMC, the Planning & Zoning Commission is given the authority to grant waivers via the platting process.

VMC 16.04.060 Variances.

When, in the judgment of the commission, it would be inappropriate to apply literally a provision of this title the commission may waive or vary such provisions so that substantial justice may be done and the public interest secured; provided, that in no event shall the requirement of filing and recording the plat or survey map be waived. (Ord. 96-27 § 1 (part): Ord. 93-03 § 1 (part): prior code § 24-6)

The following is a list of platting and design considerations that the Planning and Zoning Commission will need to consider prior to approval.

#### A. Water Mains

This subdivision will require the installation of approximately 20 residential service water lines and extension of the city water main. The developer will coordinate with the Public Works Department to make certain that the additions are consistent with the existing water infrastructure in the area, and compliant with prevailing building codes.

The Public Works Department expressed concern that the proposed water main along Skidder Street is a dead end. Instead, it should be looped back to the already existing main on Aurora Street. Dead end water mains tend to be problematic for water systems because stagnant water is more susceptible to bacterial growth and freezing. The developer should consult with the Public Works Department during the design phase of this subdivision in order to determine the recommended design for this utility extension. The applicant is working with the City of Valdez to come to an agreement on the connection of the loop of the water main. The City is in the process of drafting an agreement which would reimburse the developer for the extra cost of connecting the utility via the loop. Ultimately, the approval of this agreement is at the discretion of City Council. Final approval of the plat will require a utility easement along the south portion of Tract A for the installation of the looped utility.

#### B. On-Site Wastewater System Design

This subdivision will utilize on-site wastewater systems, as there is no public sewer system in the area. VMC 16.16.010 states that if the subdivision is not served by a public sewer and provision for such service has not been made, a proposed subdivision design shall conform to the standards of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation relating to lot size and lot elevation. In order to ensure that it is in accordance with these standards, the proposed septic plan was reviewed by VEI Consultants. The results of their review are

attached to this agenda item.

Staff recommends that the commission waive recommendations number four and five to the developer. Recommendations four and five require the developer to show locations on each lot for replacement absorption fields and septic replacement areas. The City has engineered design sets for the expansion of the City sewer system to this area. Although this project has not been approved as a Capital Improvement Project, staff consulted the city manager and economic development director, and they both agree that this expansion is a priority if the City wants to see further development in this area. Given the standard small lot size in the Robe River area, and the need for sewer system expansion in the future, staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission waive the consultant's recommendations four and five to the developer.

Unless otherwise discussed, staff will continue to work with the surveyor and applicant to ensure that the submittal requirements of items one through three are met before bringing this plat back to the commission for final approval.

VEI Consultants have recommended that the City of Valdez conduct nitrate modeling of the Robe River area. VEI also recommended that the City conduct a monitoring program with quarterly water samples gathered from surrounding wells and nearby surface water lakes and streams. Analysis would include: Nitrate-N, fecal coliform and total coliform, and chloride. Sampling would be quarterly for the first year and annually thereafter for an indefinite period. Staff recommends that the nitrate modeling and water monitoring program be implemented at such time that over one half of the subdivision has been built. The recommended mitigation efforts from the City would become null and void should City Council approve and allocate funding toward the expansion of the City sewer system to this area.

C. Cul-de-sac Design

Skidder Street, the proposed road that will border the subdivision on the South side, is a cul-de-sac road that measures 1240' in length. This is 340' longer than what is allowed in Valdez City code.

VMC 16.16.140 Design-Culs-de-sac.

Where topography and traffic circulation permit, the length of a cul-de-sac shall not exceed nine hundred feet. The length shall be measured from centerline of intersecting through streets to the radius point of cul-de-sac bulb or a line running from the radius point perpendicular to the street centerline.

Should the Planning and Zoning Commission grant a cul-de-sac length waiver, final approval will require a plat note waiving the design requirement.

D. Utility Easements

The utility easements along the rear of the proposed lots are shown to be 7.5' each, for a combined total of 15'. This is not consistent with VMC, as presented below.

VMC 16.08.030 Form and Content

S. Utility easements along rear lot lines shall be at least ten feet wide, or a total of twenty feet wide along adjoining rear lots. Utility easements along side lot lines shall be five feet wide, or a total of ten feet wide along adjoining side lots. Where a front-yard easement is needed to accommodate a transmission utility, the easement shall generally be ten feet wide. The platting authority may require wider utility easements along the rear lot lines of hillside lots. Whenever possible, utilities shall be placed in dedicated rights-of-way except where that placement conflicts with a city or state transportation project;

Should the Planning and Zoning Commission grant a utility easement width waiver, final approval will require a plat note waiving the design requirement.

E. Snow Storage Design

The City of Valdez requires a minimum of one square foot of snow storage to be publically dedicated for every one square foot of road surface built. This subdivision meets or exceeds the minimum snow storage requirements in regards to surface area. However, the proposed location of the snow lot is greater than the 1000' maximum distance away from another snow lot than is allowed per city code.

VMC 16.16.055 Design-Snow storage.

A. Snow storage areas shall be dedicated to the city. The size of the snow storage shall be equal to one square foot for every square foot of constructed street area, including sidewalks, with a minimum street width of thirty feet. The snow storage lots shall not be located more than one thousand feet apart. The location and layout of snow storage lots shall be designated after consultation with the public works director and approved by the commission.

Should the Planning and Zoning Commission grant a snow storage location waiver final approval will require a plat note waiving the design requirement.

**Notification:**

Notice was sent to all property owners within 300 feet of the property, per Section 16.04.090 of the Valdez Municipal Code, on December 1st, 2017. Notice was sent to the utilities on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Notice was sent to Copper Valley Electric Association, GCI, and Copper Valley Telecom on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

16.04.090 Notification requirements.

A. A notice shall be sent by mail at least ten days prior to the first scheduled meeting of the planning and zoning commission to consider the preliminary plat approval to each owner of property within a distance of three hundred feet of the exterior boundary of the lot or parcel described in the application for subdivision.

Staff has not received any comments on the subdivision from the public or the utility companies.

**Approval:**

Staff recommends the Planning & Zoning Commission grant preliminary approval of the plat. Staff will continue to work with the surveyor and landowner to insure all final plat requirements are met before bringing this plat back to the commission for final approval.