



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0111, **Version:** 1

ITEM TITLE:

Approval of Conditional Use Permit Application #19-02 for a Proposed Fire Station at 401 West Pioneer Drive (Lot 1, Block 6, Block 20, Mineral Creek Subdivision)

SUBMITTED BY: Kate Huber, Senior Planner

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: N/A
Unencumbered Balance: N/A
Funding Source: N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve conditional use permit application #19-02 for a proposed fire station at 401 West Pioneer Drive (Lot 1, Block 6, Block 20, Mineral Creek Subdivision)

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

On February 1, 2019, the Planning Department received an application (see attached) for a conditional use permit (CUP) from the City of Valdez Capital Facilities Department and their contractor, Wolf Architecture, Inc. The proposed site for a new Fire Station 1 is located at 401 Pioneer Drive (Lot 1, Block 6, Block 20, Mineral Creek Subdivision) on the corner of Hazelet Avenue and Pioneer Drive.

The zoning designation of this parcel is single-family residential. The single-family residential district is intended to include primarily single-family dwellings, and allows for other noncommercial structures to meet the needs of residential areas.

On August 22, 2018, Valdez City Council voted to approve the selection of this site for a proposed new Fire Station 1. After site selection approval, the Capital Facilities Department worked with the Planning Department to determine the required land use actions necessary to proceed with the Council selected site.

On December 19, 2018, the City Council approved an amendment to the existing snow storage agreement for this area with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation. Following the approval of this amendment, on February 13, 2019, the Planning & Zoning Commission approved a re-plat of the parcel, removing lot lines that dedicated part of the proposed site to snow storage. The final plat approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission is attached.

The next step in the process of pursuing this site for the proposed Fire Station 1 is to obtain a CUP. Below is more information regarding the property and proposed use. The attached application addresses questions related to need for the conditional use and specifically why the site is suited to the proposed use.

Street Address: 401 West Pioneer Drive

Legal Description: Lot 1, Block 6, Block 20, Mineral Creek Subdivision

Property Owner: City of Valdez

Current Uses: Snow storage, memorial skate park, ice skating rink, and open space

Zoning District: Single-Family Residential (RA)

This district is intended primarily for single-family dwellings, excluding mobile homes, at moderate densities. Structures and uses required to serve recreational, religious and other noncommercial needs of residential areas are allowed as permitted or conditional uses subject to restrictions intended to preserve the residential character of the R-A district. (VMC 17.14.010)

Allowable Conditional Uses:

- Church services;
- Community buildings and halls;
- Private schools (not more than six students);
- Quasi-institutional homes;
- Water reservoirs;
- Buildings intended for the conduct of religious services along with customary accessory uses including parsonage, day nurseries, and meeting rooms;
- Child care centers (VMC 17.14.040)

Community buildings are defined in Valdez Municipal Code as “a building or structure owned and operated by an agency or political subdivision of the United States, state of Alaska, or city of Valdez providing service to the public.” (VMC 17.04.400)

Adjacent Zoning Districts: The lots immediately adjacent to and surrounding this parcel have a variety of zoning designations including; multi-family residential, single-family residential, light industrial, and general commercial.

A public hearing was held at the February 27, 2019 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed conditional use. The public hearing notice (see attached) was published in the online Valdez Star on February 13, 2019 for a period of two weeks. A 300 foot property owner notification (see attached) was mailed to all property owners located within a 300’ radius of the proposed conditional use on February 15, 2019.

During the public hearing Ms. Jan Whalen expressed concern about the potential impact of the location of the proposed Fire Station on a person who lives in the area for whom she serves as

guardian. This person suffers from seizures and could be impacted by sound and flashing lights. Ms. Whalen stated that she was happy to learn about measures being taken by the Fire Station design team to address these concerns, especially the possibility of visual screening and a berm on the North side of the Fire Station. She also asked a number of questions about the design and acknowledged that there would be some benefit provided by the proximity of the station in the event that this person experienced a seizure. There were no other members of the public who spoke during the hearing, however staff read two written comments received via email. The comments are from Mr. Tom Ramos, Jr. and Mr. Jeremy Robida, two property owners in the area. They both expressed their concern about the location of the proposed station and their desire to have the property used for residential purposes instead of this conditional use.

Staff has attached a Proposed Findings & Conclusions report for the commission with information to address the concerns expressed during the public hearing and to support our recommendation for approval.