

By: Planning Department
Adopted: January 24, 2022
Yes: Brown, Graham, Johnson, Sullivan-Leonard, Velock
No: None
Absent: None

**City of Wasilla
Resolution Serial No. 22-04**

A Resolution Of The Wasilla City Council Establishing A Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee And Prescribing Its Duties.

WHEREAS, the Wasilla Planning Commission received a request from the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects to establish a committee to review the landscape standards in Wasilla Municipal Code Chapter 16.33; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee will be to provide recommendations to the Wasilla Planning Commission regarding amendments to the landscape standards in Chapter 16.33 of the Wasilla Municipal Code that are consistent with the intent and purpose of the landscape standards and the 2011 City of Wasilla Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the formation of the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee is authorized under Wasilla Municipal Code 2.44.010(B); and

WHEREAS, the Wasilla Planning Commission approved Resolution Serial No. 21-18 recommending that the City Council establish the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee with representatives from the following stakeholder groups: landscape architects, landscape contractors, developers/property owners, architects, engineers, and city residents; and

WHEREAS, meetings of the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee will be open to the public and subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act; and

WHEREAS, the city clerk, or designee, will advertise meetings of the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Wasilla City Council, that the Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee is established as follows:

1. **Name:** Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee
2. **Authority:** WMC 2.44.010(B)
3. **Term:** Terms of appointment shall expire upon completion of the special purpose but shall not exceed six months.
4. **Board Type:** Advisory. The committee has no authority to act on behalf of the City or communicate on the City's behalf other than to make recommendations to the Wasilla Planning Commission.
5. **Function:** To review and make recommendations regarding amendments/updates to the landscape standards in Wasilla Municipal Code Chapter 16.33.
6. **Composition and Quorum:** The committee will be comprised of up to 10 members and should include the following stakeholder groups: two landscape architects, a landscape contractor, an architect, an engineer, two property owners/developers (previously engaged in landscape review process), and two city residents. Once the initial authorized membership (composition) of the committee is established, the composition of the committee shall not be increased. Actions of the committee shall be adopted by a majority of the authorized membership of the committee.
7. **Residency Requirement:** Other than the city resident representative, committee members need not be residents of the city of Wasilla.
8. **Compensation:** None.
9. **Meetings:** A minimum of one regular meeting per month shall be held at Wasilla City Hall, Council Chambers. Actual meeting schedule to be approved by the committee at the first meeting.

10. Staff Support: The city planner, or designee, shall serve as staff support to the committee to include noticing meetings, preparing, and distributing meeting packets and minutes, and attendance and participation in meetings of the committee.

Effective Date. This resolution takes effect upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the Wasilla City Council on January 24, 2022.



Glenda D. Ledford, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jamie Newman, MMC, City Clerk

[SEAL]

**City of Wasilla
Legislative Staff Report
Resolution Serial No. 22-04**

Establishing A Wasilla Landscape Standards Review Committee And Prescribing Its Duties.

Originator: Tina Crawford, City Planner 
Date: 1/11/2022

Agenda of: 1/24/2022

Route to:	Department Head	Signature	Date
	Chief of Police		
	Public Works Director		
	Recreational Services Director		
X	Finance Director		1-11-22
X	Deputy Administrator		1/11/2022
X	City Clerk		1/12/2022
X	Mayor		1/11/22

Fiscal Impact: yes or no

Attachments: Resolution Serial No. 22-04 (3 pages)
Wasilla Planning Commission Resolution Serial No. 21-18 (2 pages)
Wasilla Planning Commission Draft Meeting Minutes – 12/14/21 (4 pages)
Letter of Support and recommendation from Alaska Chapter of ASLA (3 pages)

Summary Statement: During 2021, the Wasilla Planning Commission (“Commission”) conducted five Committee of the Whole meetings to draft specific landscaping regulations for industrially zoned lots and identify any clarifications/revisions needed since the 2017 re-write of the landscape regulations.

At the November 9, 2021 public hearing to adopt Resolution Serial No. 21-14, comments were provided by the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). They stated that additional revisions were needed and recommended that the Commission establish a diverse and inclusive committee to review Chapter 16.33, Landscaping Standards and provide recommended revisions.

The Commission agreed and subsequently adopted Resolution Serial No. 21-18 at their December 14, 2021 meeting. If the City Council approves establishment of the committee, the Mayor would then appoint members to be confirmed by the City Council. The first committee meeting would tentatively be scheduled in May 2022.

Proposed Action: Adopt the Resolution.

By: Planning
Public Hearing: 12/14/21
Adopted: 12/14/21

**WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 21-18**

A RESOLUTION OF THE WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE WASILLA CITY COUNCIL ESTABLISH/APPOINT A COMMITTEE/TASKFORCE TO REVIEW WASILLA MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 16.33, LANDSCAPING STANDARDS, AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION PURSUANT TO WMC CHAPTER 2.44.

WHEREAS, Section 2.60.010 of the Wasilla Municipal Code (WMC) directs the Planning Commission to periodically review WMC Title 16, Land Development Code and make recommendations to the City Council for amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recently completed a review of the industrial landscape regulations and determined that a thorough review of Chapter 16.33, Landscaping Standards; and

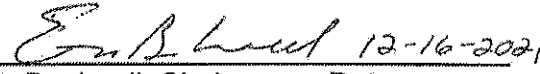
WHEREAS, in response to the most recent amendments, the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) requested that a task force/committee be established to provide an inclusive and deliberate stakeholder process that would review, refine, and recommend amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission determined that a task force/committee should be created that would include landscape architects, landscape contractors, developers, property owners, architects, engineers, and city residents to provide input to the Planning Commission regarding amendments that are consistent with the 2011 City of Wasilla Comprehensive Plan.

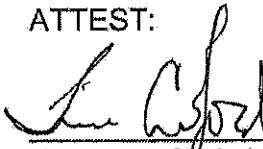
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Wasilla Planning Commission recommends that the City Council establish/appoint a committee/taskforce to review and make recommendations to the Planning Commission for amendments to WMC Chapter 16.33, Landscaping Standards.

ADOPTED by the Wasilla Planning Commission on December 14, 2021.

APPROVED:


Eric Bushnell, Chair 12-16-2021
Date

ATTEST:


Tina Crawford, AICP, City Planner

VOTE: Passed Unanimously

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Wasilla Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, in Council Chambers of City Hall, Wasilla, Alaska by Eric Bushnell, Chair.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present and establishing a quorum were:

Eric Bushnell, Seat A
David Seals, Seat B
Melvin Sage-EL, Seat C
Timothy Burney, Seat D
Alina Rubeo, Seat E (via teleconference)

Staff in attendance were:

Crystal Nygard, Deputy Administrator
Robert Walden, Public Work Deputy Director
Mike Schwarz, City Attorney (via teleconference)
Tahirih Revet, Planning Clerk

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Burney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

GENERAL CONSENT: The agenda was approved, as presented.

5. REPORTS

5.1 City Deputy Administrator

Ms. Nygard provided information on upcoming City activities and reported that Code Compliance and Planning are moving toward online application/complaint system.

5.2 City Public Works Deputy Director

No report given.

5.3 City Attorney

No report given.

5.4 City Planner

No report given.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Three minutes per person for items not on agenda)

No one stepped up.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

7.1 Minutes of November 9, 2021, regular meeting

GENERAL CONSENT: Minutes were approved as presented.

8. NEW BUSINESS (*five minutes per person*)

8.1 Public Hearing

1. Item: Conditional Use #21-09 (Reso. #21-15)
Applicant: Stephanie Martin, What Tattoo
Owner: Ruth Sanchez
Request: Approval to operate a tattoo and hair studio in an existing commercial building.
Lot Area: 0.48 +/- acres
Location: 260 E. Nelson Avenue
Lot 4, Block 2, Thomas Addition #2 RSB
Zoning: Commercial/Downtown Overlay District
 - a. City Staff
 - b. Applicant

Ms. Martin, owner of What Tattoo, provided information regarding the proposed shop at the requested location.

c. Private person supporting or opposing the proposal
Chair Bushnell opened the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Chair Bushnell closed the public comment portion of the public hearing as no one stepped forward.

d. Applicant
No other comments.

MOTION: Commissioner Burney moved to approve Conditional Use #21-09 (Reso. #21-15), as presented.

VOTE: The motion to approve Conditional Use #21-09 (Reso. #21-15) as presented, passed unanimously.

2. Resolution Serial No. 21-16: A resolution of Wasilla Planning Commission recommending approval of a 30-year lease to Michael Sandstrom, located at 4160 W. Aviation Avenue, Lot 18A, New Wasilla Airport Addition #2 Subdivision.

a. City Staff
Mr. Walden information regarding the request.

b. Applicant
c. Private person supporting or opposing the proposal
Chair Bushnell opened the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Chair Bushnell closed the public comment portion of the public hearing as no one stepped forward.

d. Applicant
No comments.

MOTION: Commissioner Seals moved to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-16, as presented.

VOTE: The motion to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-16 as presented, passed unanimously.

3. Resolution Serial No. 21-17: A Resolution of the Wasilla Planning Commission supporting the goals and initiatives for the Annual Capital Improvement Program.

a. City Staff

Mr. Walden provided a brief overview of the proposed annual Capital Improvement Program.

b. Applicant

c. Private person supporting or opposing the proposal

Chair Bushnell opened the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Mr. Stu Graham, city resident, stated that he is speaking as a city resident and not as a City Council member and is in support of the goals and initiatives for the annual Capital Improvement Program.

Chair Bushnell closed the public comment portion of the public hearing as no one else stepped forward.

d. Applicant
No comments.

MOTION: Commissioner Seals moved to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-17, as presented.

Discussion moved to the Commission.

VOTE: The motion to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-17 as presented, passed unanimously.

4. Resolution Serial No. 21-18: A Resolution of the Wasilla Planning Commission recommending that the Wasilla City Council establish a committee/task force to review Wasilla Municipal Code Chapter 16.33 and provide recommended revisions to the Wasilla Planning Commission pursuant to WMC Chapter 2.44.

a. City Staff

b. Applicant

c. Private person supporting or opposing the proposal

Chair Bushnell opened the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Mr. Graham, city resident, stated that he is stated he is speaking as a city resident and not as a City Council member and is in support of the proposed task force.

Chair Bushnell closed the public comment portion of the public hearing as no one else stepped forward.

d. Applicant
No comments.

MOTION: Commissioner Sage-EL moved to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-18, as presented.

Discussion moved to the Commission.

VOTE: The motion to approve Resolution Serial No. 21-18 as presented, passed unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

No statements made regarding the following items.

- 10.1 Permit Information
- 10.2 Enforcement Log
- 10.3 Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission agenda

11. AUDIENCE COMMENTS (three minutes per person)

No comments.

12. STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. Nygard provided information regarding the Wasilla Airport infrastructure.

Mr. Walden stated there are plans to upgrade city water and wastewater systems.

13. COMMISSION COMMENTS

14. ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

ATTEST:

ERIC BUSHNELL, Chair Date

TAHIRIH REVET, Planning Clerk
Adopted by the Wasilla Planning Commission -, 2021.



Planning Commission
City of Wasilla
290 E. Herning Ave.
Wasilla, AK 99654

To: City of Wasilla Planning Commission (planning@ci.wasilla.ak.us)
CC: Eric Bushell, Planning Commission Chair (bushnell@mtaonline.net)
Tina Crawford, AICP, City Planner (tcrawford@ci.wasilla.ak.us)

November 5, 2021

Re: Resolution Serial No. 21-14 (amendments to sections within Wasilla Municipal Code Title 16)

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is the professional association for landscape architects in the United States, with the Alaska Chapter representing landscape architects in Alaska.

Regarding Resolution Serial No. 21-14, we recommend that you do not approve this resolution.

Our members believe that while the proposed code amendments do contain some improvements, many changes are not ready to be implemented into the code. Our concern is that these changes (and existing code items that remain unchanged) are generally not consistent with the intent of comments provided by our members, nor are they compatible with what we have heard within the community.

Our recommended action is to create an advisory group that reports to the planning commission. To our knowledge, the development of code amendments did not include significant direct interaction with landscape architects. Since the code is predicated on the preparation of plans by landscape architects, this is a notable omission. Before code amendments are reviewed, there should be an inclusive and deliberate stakeholder process that includes professionals responsible for permit preparation, landowners/developers, and local businesses that install and maintain code-required landscape.

Should such an advisory committee be of interest, we recommend this committee include two landscape architects, an architect, a civil engineer, a landscape contractor, and two owners/developers (including someone who is only expected to have gone through the permitting process once, and a developer who has engaged with this process multiple times). The professionals should be selected by their professional organizations. The group would be responsible for appointing a chair, confirming the group's terms of reference, establishing an understanding of code intent, and developing a strategy to review, refine, and recommend amendments.

We thank you in advance for your consideration. We feel that an advisory group will be an excellent way to help develop a solid code that the community supports as being in the best interest of the City of Wasilla for its aesthetic, functional, and economic development. This letter is accompanied with an initial list of possible code-related concerns that the Planning Commission could consider for an advisory group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melisa Rik. Babb".

Mélisa Babb, Alaska Chapter ASLA President
907-360-1704

Attachments: Code Review Advisory Group Recommendations (2 pages)



RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CREATION OF A CODE REVIEW ADVISORY GROUP

This document is intended to support a letter provided by the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects regarding Resolution Serial No. 21-14, dated November 5, 2021. We recommend that you do not approve this resolution, and we recommend that you defer consideration of code amendments pending the creation of a Code Review Advisory Group and receipt of code amendment recommendations from this group. Additional information regarding that request is provided within the letter referenced above.

PARTIAL LIST OF CODE ASPECTS FOR POSSIBLE REVIEW

Below is a partial list of items that we would recommend this advisory group review (with recommended actions) in order to brief the Planning Commission and the Wasilla City Council and make recommendations for their consideration.

1. The code and its amendments include a higher than typical economic burden when compared to other jurisdictions. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: provide a comparative analysis of the cost of code implementation that includes similar Alaska codes (Anchorage likely) and perhaps other communities of a similar size to the City of Wasilla in the lower 48 (likely needing cost correction for location).
2. The code and its amendments include atypical requirements for plant sizing within the local market. 18" minimum is standard and available within our local market. There is a limited supply of Alaskan grown plant material, with most plant material shipped up from the lower 48 or Canada. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: provide a review of the local capability to provide adequate species quantities, sizes, and varieties of plant material required by code.
3. Code that is long and complex may have unintentional consequences, including but not limited to internal conflict, inconsistencies, or loopholes. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: review code to streamline and simplify where possible
 - b. ACTION: review the process and documentation required to create a permit set that illustrates code compliance, assessing the work needed to complete it.
4. While the code and amendments include a significant emphasis on maintenance, it explicitly excludes items that allow for easier/better maintenance, including the use of rock mulch within a very windy climate. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: review maintenance strategies and how code affects landowner success
5. The existing and proposed codes are prescriptive in nature. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: review code to determine where prescriptive standards should or should not be used. Assessment should include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Spatial standards for the placement of plant material
 - ii. Limitations on the uses of specific plant species
 - iii. Requirements for the use of specific plant types

(...continued next page...)

6. The existing code has resulted in a continually evolving process where it is difficult to predict outcomes. This impact on predictability has created a significant economic burden for those involved, with costs related to permitting effort and associated delays. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: Review the code and process to create a more predictable outcome.
7. The code may benefit from a review of other approaches to achieve the same or better intent. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: Review code intent and existing code requirements in light of alternative ways to achieve the same outcome. For example, the requirement of specific planting soil quality and quantities is one of the best ways to ensure plant establishment and long-term viability and growth.
8. Existing staffing may not be adequate to achieve code intent. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: Review staffing to ensure that there is adequate time, personnel, and/or expertise to guide applicants, review permits, inspect installed projects for permit compliance, enforce guaranty-period maintenance requirements, complete an inspection at the end of the guaranty-period for release of bonding, and perform ongoing or complaint-driven enforcement actions.
9. The requirement that the project landscape architect certifies a project as complying with permit requirements has significant limitations and is worrisome. City of Wasilla inspection is necessary as the City of Wasilla is the permitting and enforcement body. The project landscape architect has no leverage with clients, except when enforced by the City of Wasilla. Recommended actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. ACTION: Maintain the City of Wasilla as the inspecting entity.