E. NEW BUSINESS

2. ROW Vacation: KPB File 2022-076V Request: Vacate a portion of Hough Road, a 60' right-of-way and associated utility easement Petitioners/Landowners: Michael & Shila Hough City of Homer









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крв 2022-076 6/7/2022





Aerial View



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AGENDA ITEM E. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 2 - RIGHT OF WAY VACATION VACATE A PORTION OF HOUGH ROAD AND ASSOCIATED UTILITY EASEMENTS

KPB File No.	2022-076V
Planning Commission Meeting:	June 27, 2022
Applicant / Owner:	C. Michael and Shila A. Hough of Homer Alaska
Surveyor:	Stephen Smith / Geovera, LLC
General Location:	East End Road, Hough Road, City of Homer
Legal Description:	Hough Road, Tract F of Stream Hill Park Unit 2, HM 2008-048 and Tract 1 of Christensen Tracts 2009 Addition, HM 2006-44, Section 16, Township 6 South, Range 13 West.

STAFF REPORT

Specific Request / Purpose as stated in the petition: The existing road was not constructed within the existing ROW. The ROW is being re-aligned so that it is centered on the existing road. Only a portion of the existing ROW is being vacated, along with the adjoining 15 foot utility easements. New 15 foot utility easements are being dedicated adjoining both sides of the re-aligned ROW.

Notification: Public notice appeared in the June 16, 2022 issue of the Homer News as a separate ad. The public hearing notice was published in the June 23, 2022 issue of the Homer News as part of the Commission's tentative agenda.

The public notice was posted on the Planning Commission bulletin board at the Kenai Peninsula Borough George A. Navarre Administration building. Additional notices were mailed to the following with the request to be posted for public viewing.

Library of Homer

Post Office of Homer

Thirty-nine certified mailings were sent to owners of property within 300 feet of the proposed vacation. Twenty-three receipts had been returned when the staff report was prepared.

Public hearing notices were sent by regular mail to twenty-three owners within 600 feet of the proposed vacation.

Fifteen public hearing notices were emailed to agencies and interested parties as shown below;

State of Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game State of Alaska DNR State of Alaska DOT State of Alaska DNR Forestry City of Homer Emergency Services of Homer Ninilchik Traditional Council Alaska Communication Systems (ACS) ENSTAR Natural Gas General Communications Inc, (GCI) Homer Electric Association (HEA)

Legal Access (existing and proposed): The access will remain as Hough Road. The right-of-way is not constructed within the dedication. The owners are proposing to vacate portions of the right-of-way and then dedicate new portions to provide a realignment that will allow the existing right-of-way to be within the dedication.

KPB Roads Dept. comments	Out of Jurisdiction: Yes
	Roads Director: Uhlin, Dil
	Comments: No comments
SOA DOT comments	

<u>Site Investigation:</u> There are some wetlands associated with the right-of-way. The roadway is already constructed and has been for some time. There is sloping terrain in the area but the portion to be vacated is consistent with the slopes for the proposed realignment.

KPB River Center review	A. Floodplain Reviewer: Carver, Nancy	
	Floodplain Status: Within City of Homer	
	Comments: Located in an unregulated D Zone	
	B. Habitat Protection	
	Reviewer: Aldridge, Morgan	
	Habitat Protection District Status: Is NOT within HPD	
	Comments: No comments	
	C. State Parks	
	Reviewer: Russell, Pam	
	Comments: No Comments	

<u>Staff Analysis:</u> The proposed vacation is to remedy the alignment issues of Hough Road, a 60 foot right-of-way. The proposal is to vacate approximately a half width of Hough Road for 390 feet including the adjoining 15 foot utility easements. If approved, a dedication of additional right-of-way atop the constructed road, including 15 foot utility easements along each side of the new dedication, will be completed by recording a new plat.

The original access is depicted on Christensen Tracts Amended, HM 89-3 as a 50 foot private access easement (HRD Book 185 Page 349). The access easement was also shown on plat Christensen Tracts No. 4, HM 2006-44.

Christensen Tract No. 3, HM 2003-90, dedicated the eastern 30 foot of Hough Road right-of-way. Stream Hill Park Unit 1, HM 2006-54, dedicated the western 30 feet of Hough Road right-of-way.

Vacation of the dedicated right-of-way will not remove the private access easement. If they owners wish to remove the private access easement it will need to be done by separate documents and recorded with the Homer Recording District. If this is completed prior to the recording of the plat, add a plat note with the recording information that terminated the private access easement.

There are some gas lines within the associated utility easements. The final plat has been reviewed and an agreement from ENSTAR is required to make sure all their easement needs are being met.

This vacation and the associated plat were originally heard under KPB old code in 2010. The KPB Planning Commission heard the vacation on April 12, 2010. The Planning Commission approved the vacation by unanimous consent. The Homer City Council upheld the Planning Commission decision at their April 26, 2010 meeting. The plat finalizing the vacation was not recorded within one year.

The KPB Plat Committee approved the preliminary plat on April 12, 2010. Various time extensions have been granted for the preliminary plat. The last time extension was granted in 2020, with the consent of the City of Homer Planning Commission. The time extension was granted through June 8, 2022, subject to the plat being recorded prior to April 13, 2021 to be reviewed under old code. The original surveyor retired and a new surveyor has been hired.

Due to design changes, and the requirement to comply with current subdivision standards, the plat was brought back before the Plat Committee to receive new approval including exceptions requests. The Plat Committee heard the plat at the May 10, 2021 meeting and granted approval. The right-of-way vacation was heard and approved by the Planning Commission on April 26, 2021. The Homer City Council consented to the vacation on May 10, 2021. The right-of-way vacation must have been finalized by May 10, 2022. The owners were still working out other Page 2 of 6

details of the project and did not finalize in time. They have submitted a new petition and are requesting approval of the vacation.

If approved, plat Christensen Tract 2021 Addition will finalize the proposed right of way vacations. The plat received its approval on May 10, 2021 and the approval is valid until May 10, 2023. No time extensions have been required at this time but may be issued in accordance with KPB 20.25.110. A final was submitted for review on January 31, 2022 with a review letter being sent to the owner and surveyor on February 9, 2022. If the vacation is approved, there will need to be some revisions to plat notes to include new meeting dates.

The other petitions and applications had been reviewed by the City of Homer Planning and Zoning Commission. The surveyor was notified that we would require documentation from the City of Homer that was either minutes from the P&Z Commission or a memo stating that a new hearing was not required. Staff had not received any communication when the staff report was prepared. If information is provided to staff it will be included in the desk packet. Staff will not finalize the vacation until a letter of consent from the City of Homer Planning Department has been received that shows all theirs concerns have been addressed. The approval will require consent from the City of Homer City Council.

20.65.050 – Action on vacation application

- D. The planning commission shall consider the merits of each vacation request and in all cases the planning commission shall deem the area being vacated to be of value to the public. It shall be incumbent upon the applicant to show that the area proposed for vacation is no longer practical for the uses or purposes authorized, or that other provisions have been made which are more beneficial to the public. In evaluating the merits of the proposed vacation, the planning commission shall consider whether:
 - The right-of-way or public easement to be vacated is being used;
 Staff comments: The right-of-way is in use but not constructed in the dedication.
 - 2. A road is impossible or impractical to construct, and alternative access has been provided; **Staff comments:** Already constructed
 - 3. The surrounding area is fully developed and all planned or needed rights-of-way and utilities are constructed;

Staff comments: New easements will be granted along the new dedication

- The vacation of a public right-of-way provides access to a lake, river, or other area with public interest or value, and if so, whether equal or superior access is provided; Staff comments: N/A
- 5 The proposed vacation would limit opportunities for interconnectivity with adjacent parcels, whether developed or undeveloped; Staff comments: Will not limit, will only realign with constructed right-of-way
- 6. Other public access, other than general road use, exist or are feasible for the right-of-way; **Staff comments:** None of been requested or appear needed
- 7. All existing and future utility requirements are met. Rights-of-way which are utilized by a utility, or which logically would be required by a utility, shall not be vacated, unless it can be demonstrated that equal or superior access is or will be available. Where an easement would satisfactorily serve the utility interests, and no other public need for the right-of-way exists, the commission may approve the vacation and require that a utility easement be granted in place of the right-of-way.

Staff comments: If any utility easements are requested by providers shall be reviewed and unless the owner works out a resolution shall be granted.

8. Any other factors that are relevant to the vacation application or the area proposed to be vacated.

Staff comments: This is a road realignment.

A KPB Planning Commission decision denying a vacation application is final. A KPB Planning Commission decision to approve the vacation application is subject to consent or veto by the KPB Assembly, or City Council if located within City boundaries. The KPB Assembly, or City Council must hear the vacation within thirty days of the Planning Commission decision.

The Homer City Council will hear the vacation within 30 days.

Planner	Reviewer: Raidmae, Ryan There are not any Local Option Zoning District issues with this proposed plat. Material Site Comments: There are not any material site issues with this proposed plat. Review Not Required
Code Compliance	Reviewer: Ogren, Eric Comments: No comments
Addressing	Reviewer: Haws, Derek Affected Addresses: 4580 CRAFTSMAN RD 4630 HOUGH RD Existing Street Names are Correct: Yes List of Correct Street Names: CRAFTSMAN RD HOUGH RD EAST END RD Existing Street Name Corrections Needed: All New Street Names are Approved: No List of Approved Street Names: List of Street Names Denied: Comments: City of Homer will advise on affected addresses.
Assessing	Reviewer: Wilcox, Adeena Comments: No comment

KPB department / agency review:

Utility provider review:

HEA	No comments
ENSTAR	
ACS	No objections
GCI	

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on consideration of the merits as per KPB 20.65.050(D) as outlined by Staff comments, Staff recommends <u>APPROVAL</u> as petitioned, subject to:

- 1. Consent by Homer City Council.
- 2. Compliance with the requirements for preliminary plats per Chapter 20 of the KPB Code.
- 3. Grant utility easements requested by the Homer City Council and utility providers.
- 4. Submittal of a final plat within a timeframe such that the plat can be recorded within one year of vacation consent (KPB 20.70.130).

KPB 20.65.050 – Action on vacation application

- H. A planning commission decision to approve a vacation is not effective without the consent of the city council, if the vacated area to be vacated is within a city, or by the assembly in all other cases. The council or assembly shall have 30 days from the date of the planning commission approval to either consent to or veto the vacation. Notice of veto of the vacation shall be immediately given to the planning commission. Failure to act on the vacation within 30 days shall be considered to be consent to the vacation. This provision does not apply to alterations of utility easements under KPB 20.65.070 which do not require the consent of the assembly or city council unless city code specifically provides otherwise.
- I. Upon approval of the vacation request by the planning commission and no veto by the city council or assembly, where applicable, the applicant shall have a surveyor prepare and submit a plat including the entire area approved for vacation in conformance with KPB 20.10.080. Only the area approved for vacation by the assembly or council may be included on the plat. The final plat must be recorded within one year of the vacation consent.
- J. A planning commission decision denying a vacation application is final. No reapplication or petition concerning the same vacation may be filed within one calendar year of the date of the final denial action except in the case where new evidence or circumstances exist that were not available or present when the original petition was filed.
- K. An appeal of the planning commission, city council or assembly vacation action under this chapter must be filed in the superior court in accordance with the Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure.

The 2019 Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan adopted November, 2019 by Ordinance No. 2019-25. The relevant objectives are listed.

Goal 3. Preserve and improve quality of life on the Kenai Peninsula Borough through increased access to local and regional facilities, activities, programs and services.

- Focus Area: Energy and Utilities
 - Objective A Encourage coordination or residential, commercial, and industrial development with extension of utilities and other infrastructure.
 - Strategy 1. Near Term: Maintain existing easements (especially section line easements) in addition to establishing adequate utility rights of way or easements to serve existing and future utility needs.
 - Strategy 2. Near Term: Maintain regular contact with utility operators to coordinate and review utility easement requests that are part of subdivision plat approval.
 - Strategy 3. Near Term: Identify potential utility routes on Borough lands.
- Housing
 - Objective D. Encourage efficient use of land, infrastructure and services outside incorporated cities by prioritizing future growth in the most suitable areas.
 - Strategy 1. Near Term: Collaborate with the AK Department of Transportation, incorporated cities within the borough, utility providers, other agencies overseeing local services, and existing communities located adjacent to the undeveloped areas

that are appropriate for future growth, to align plans for future expansion of services to serve future residential development and manage growth.

- Goal 4. Improve access to, from and connectivity within the Kenai Peninsula Borough
 - Focus Area: Transportation
 - Objective B. Ensure new roads are developed in alignment with existing and planned growth and development.
 - Strategy 2. Near Term: Establish subdivision codes that dictate road construction standards to accommodate future interconnectivity and/or public safety.
 - Strategy 3. Near Term: Identify areas of anticipated growth to determine future access needs.

END OF STAFF REPORT



Wetlands

KPB File Number 2022-076V 6/17/2022

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