City and Borugh of Wrangell, Alaska

DATE: October 15, 2015

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Carol Rushmore, Economic Development Planner

RE: Public Hearing and Discussion on the Preliminary Plat review of the Mitchell-Buhler Replat, a replat of Lots 6,7,8 and 9 USS 2589, creating lots 6A and 6B, 7A and 7B, 8A and 8B, 9A and 9B USS 2589, zoned Industrial and Waterfront Development, requested by Mark Mitchell, owned by DB AK Enterprises LLC.

Background:

Mr. Mitchell is seeking to buy land on the eastern (landward) side of Zimovia Highway which is part of the former Silver Bay Logging Mill. However, the legal lot is actually split by the Highway, and a portion of each lot (Lots 6-9) is located on both sides of Zimovia Highway. In order to sell the portion of each lot on the eastern side of the highway, a subdivision must be recorded to split each lot into two lots.

Findings:

The proposed replat of Lots 6-9 USS 2589, creates two separate lots of each of the 4 original lots currently split by Zimovia Highway and owned by Dick Buhler. This will allow the lots on the upland side of the highway cross from the mill site to be sold separately to the prospective buyer Mr. Mark Mitchell.

A copy of the preliminary plat is attached, as is a copy of the plat with additional access/utility easements that Staff is requesting be added. An explanation of these easements is below.

Utility easements: On the lots on the eastern (upland) side of Zimovia Highway, staff is requesting 10 foot utility easements centered on mutual property lines be added between each of the lots, and a 5 foot utility easement be added to the outside property line of Lot 6A and Lot 9A. Mental Health Trust owns all of Lot 3 behind these lots and in some distant future, additional development could be possible and utility easements will be in place.

For the lots on the waterward side of Zimovia Highway, staff is requesting two 10' utility easements centered between Lot 7B and 8B and between 8B and 9B.

Access/Utility easement: Staff is also requesting a 30 foot access and utility easement centered on the mutual property line between Lot 6B and Lot 7B. Mr. Tullis on behalf of Mr. Buhler indicated today that access will be provided to the full site via the existing access through Lot 8B. However, just a couple of weeks ago Mr. Buhler had indicated that he was considering selling off some of these lots bordering the highway. If Mr. Buhler were to reconsider and move in that direction again with existing access to the former mill site lost by individual property sales, the site loses its development ability.

As the platting authority, guaranteed access should be provided to the parcel in a stretch of highway with turning visibility. If an easement were to be placed in the actual access location, it would cut lot 8B in half, but it is an option. If all of Lots 6B, 7B, 8B and 9B were sold separately as indicated as a possibility earlier this month the only other access could be through Lot 20 or Lot 10 located in a blind curve area.

The site has always been considered one parcel until recently. If the status of the site located waterward of the highway is no longer considered as one parcel, there are some illegal lots without any guaranteed access to them.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the plat with the additional utility and access easements as described.



