

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**October 24, 2007**

Chair Guenther called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 259 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cary Guenther, Chair  
John Dewhirst, Vice Chair  
Janice Freeman  
Jim Young  
Don Henderson  
Michael Bowman  
John Reed

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager (arrived at 4:06 p.m.)  
Brian McIntosh, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Director  
Frances White Chapin, Cultural Services Manager  
ReNee McRae, Recreation Coordinator  
Rich Lindsay, Parks Maintenance Manager  
Karin Noyes, Recorder

**BOARD MEMBERES ABSENT**

Judith Works (excused)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBER HENDERSON MOVED THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13, 2007 AS CORRECTED. BOARD MEMBER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

**Jim Underhill, Edmonds**, advised that he lives in a neighborhood that is located adjacent to Stevens Hospital and down the street from the Edmonds/Woodway High School. He recalled that the homeowners in his neighborhood previously approached the Board with a request that their neighborhood be rezoned from Mixed-Use Residential to Single-Family Urban. He reported that on October 10, 2007, the neighborhood submitted an application to the City for a Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezone. He noted that the neighbors all shared the cost of the \$2,000 application fee. Their application would most likely be considered by the Board as part of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendment package.

Mr. Underhill requested the Board deal with their application as early in 2008 as possible before they get heavily involved in the waterfront redevelopment issue. The neighborhood has done everything the City asked them to do. He explained that the neighborhood is almost a half century old, and has always been developed as single-family. While the current Mixed-Use Residential zoning was placed on the properties in 1961, it has never been an appropriate zoning designation. The neighbors are requesting the City change the zoning to be more consistent with the current neighborhood development.

Chair Guenther reported that he and Vice Chair Dewhirst recently met with Mayor Haakenson, who indicated that it would likely be eight to ten months before the City starts working on the waterfront redevelopment process. The Board should be able to handle all of the Comprehensive Plan amendment requests before that time. Mr. Chave emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan can only be amended once a year, so all amendments for 2008 would have to be approved by the City Council at the same time.

## **PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Brian McIntosh, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director, reported on the following items:

- **Parks, Recreation & Open Space Comprehensive Plan:** The consulting firm Hough, Beck & Baird was selected as consultants to update the department's Comprehensive Plan. As a sub-consultant 4CULTURE would be updating the Cultural Plan in parallel. The first meeting of the 23 citizen Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group was held on April 18<sup>th</sup>, and they have met monthly since that time. Public workshops were held on June 18<sup>th</sup> and September 19<sup>th</sup>. The Parks Department would provide further details when they provide their update of the draft plan to the Board on November 14<sup>th</sup>. They anticipate a public hearing before the Planning/Parks Board on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, with a second public hearing and final adoption by the City Council later in the winter. A lot of work still needs to take place on the Comprehensive Plan, but staff has received a lot of good information from the public and the Advisory Group. They also solicited comments from other City departments, and a SEPA review would be required, as well.
- **162<sup>nd</sup> Street Park and 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue West/75<sup>th</sup> Place West Walkway Project:** On August 28<sup>th</sup> the City Council authorized Gray & Osborne, Inc, Consulting Engineers, and Susan Black & Associates, Landscape Architects, to begin the final design phase of these projects. Staff expects to have another community meeting in January, and the plans, specifications and cost estimates would be completed and ready to bid by March 1, 2008. It is anticipated construction would take place in the summer.

Mr. McIntosh referred to the drawings and photographs that were provided in the Staff Report. He said the proposed plan is much the same as the one that was presented earlier, but the walkway along 75<sup>th</sup> Place West was moved towards the west so the existing parking would be more defined. This parking space would be a tremendous asset for park visitors, as well as those who want to enjoy the overlook from their vehicles.

Chair Guenther said he lives nearby the proposed walkway project. He noted that, at times, there seems to be an overwhelming demand for the parking because it provides access not only to the park, but to Meadowdale Beach, as well. Mr. McIntosh agreed that there is access to Meadowdale Beach Park from the parking area; however, the City does not know what will happen with this level crossing in the future.

Mr. McIntosh referred to the diagrams that illustrate the current conditions in the area, as well as the impact of the proposed improvements. He noted that most of the walkway would be on the east side of the street until closer to the park where it would cross over to be along the park frontage.

Board Member Young inquired if this project would fall under the category of linear parks, a concept that was discussed by the Board and staff a few years ago. Mr. McIntosh answered that it would not, but the Comprehensive Plan talks about the need for more bicycle and pedestrian connections. Board Member Young questioned if this element of the Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Cultural Plan would identify where the City plans to make these connections in the future. He expressed his belief that pedestrian connections are important to the citizens of Edmonds.

- **Edmonds Interurban Trail Project:** Engineering Consultants, KPPF, continue to work with property owners to establish trail easements in the old interurban trail corridor going back many generations. Currently, there are only a couple of deeds remaining to be collected from heirs of original owners. Once they have been collected and recorded in the next few weeks, the acquisition process should be complete. A neighborhood meeting has been scheduled for later this year to update all interested parties. The project is eligible for 2008 competitive grant funding through the Recreation

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and Conservation Office (RCO), which was formerly known as the IAC. Award and legislative procedures would enable a September 2009 construction start date at the earliest.

Vice Chair Dewhirst inquired if the City ended up losing grant funding for the Interurban Trail because they could not meet the required deadlines. Mr. McIntosh answered that the City had obtained an IAC Grant in 2003, but they had to give it up because it took too long to obtain the necessary easements. However, the project would likely score high on the grant application criteria, so staff anticipates some grant funding for the project in the near future.

Vice Chair Dewhirst pointed out that once the City of Edmonds completes their segment of the trail, there would only be small gaps in Lynnwood, Everett and the County. Otherwise, the trail would provide an uninterrupted connection from Everett to Seattle.

- **Acquisition Grants – State:** State RCO Grants for Shell Creek acquisition (\$100,000) and the Old Woodway Elementary School (\$500,000) were formally approved in the late spring. The process for collecting the money is much slower now, so staff does not anticipate the City collecting the money until 2008.
- **Old Woodway Elementary School Park Acquisition, Demolition & Park Development:** Abatement, demolition and underground storage tank removal was completed on budget at the end of August with no extraordinary circumstances. The successful bid for the abatement and demolition was less than half of the consulting engineer's estimate of \$800,000. The total cost, including abatement, demolition and engineering consulting services, was \$420,000. Two public meetings were held on park design in the spring, and many alternatives and options were discussed. Public hearings were conducted at both the Planning/Parks Board (September 12<sup>th</sup>) and City Council (October 16<sup>th</sup>) to review and discuss the preferred plan. The City Council decided to delay their decision until November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Reed inquired if staff has obtained any cost estimates associated with the proposed plan. Mr. McIntosh answered that because the plans are still conceptual in nature, no cost information has been provided to date.

- **Former Woodway High School Development:** Funding requests of \$3 million for this local community project were submitted for both the 2006 and 2007 legislative sessions, but they were not funded despite considerable lobbying efforts by local legislators and organizations. Discretionary funding of \$30 million was available in 2007 for projects across the state, and there were \$500 million in local requests. As a result, only 6% of the requested projects were funded. The organizing network would meet this fall to develop a strategy for moving the project forward.
- **Hatchery Channel:** The Willow Creek Channel was severely altered by the storms of late 2006. Working with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Edmonds Laebugten Salmon Chapter, and PENTEC Environmental, staff has developed a restoration plan that would be constructed beginning July 1, 2008. The work would be contracted in partnership with volunteer project supervision from PENTEC and stream work by the Salmon Chapter and other volunteer organizations.

Vice Chair Dewhirst noted that this project was not identified in the City's approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mr. McIntosh agreed and explained that this is an emergency project that resulted from the severe storm in 2006. The project would be relatively small, and volunteer help would be utilized. The consultant fees would likely be between \$3,000 and \$4,000. He referred the Board to the proposed project diagram that was provided in the Staff Report and explained that a lot of erosion occurred upstream during the storm and spread until the stream bed was gone. The project would restore the stream in this location.

Vice Chair Dewhirst asked if the stream has been identified as salmon bearing. Mr. McIntosh replied that the fish hatchery uses this stream. Vice Chair Dewhirst inquired if the culvert under SR-104 is part of the lawsuit in which the tribes are attempting to block fish from going up stream. Mr. McIntosh answered that he did not know. Board Member Young pointed out that, regardless of whether it is part of the lawsuit or not, the Washington State Department of Transportation has a special budget for replacing streams. He suggested the staff consider approaching them in the future for projects of this type. Mr. McIntosh concluded that staff sees this project as a good opportunity for the community to become involved, and PENTEC has volunteered to supervise the volunteer work, as well.

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- **Edmonds Memorial Cemetery and Columbarium:** With the availability of over 1,100 gravesites through the State reclamation process and the new columbarium, the Cemetery Board reached its 2007 sales goal in September. In the first year, 81 niches have been sold in the columbarium, at an average price of about \$2,500. This has allowed them to already collect about two-thirds of the loan that was required to build the columbarium. The staff and Cemetery Board are working with the Rotary Club of Edmonds Noon Group to develop and install a new sign for the Edmonds Cemetery/Columbarium at the corner of 15<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup>. Staff would continue to work with the Cemetery Board to develop effective marketing strategies.
- **South County Senior Center:** Upcoming projects that are moving forward include kitchen remodel and replacement and vestibule and walkway canopy redesign and remodel. The kitchen construction work should be completed in the spring and design work for the entry would get underway at that time. Both of these projects are substantially supported by funding from the County's Community Development Program Grants. The Senior Center has already received authorization for a \$200,000 Community Trade and Economic Development Grant in the last legislative session for Senior Center Improvements. In addition, they have received a substantial grant from Boeing to help with the kitchen project.

Rich Lindsay, Parks Maintenance Manager reported on the following items:

- **Skate Park:** The addition of the skate park at the Civic Center Playfield has proven to be very popular with all ages of skateboarders. After some initial behavior problems and late skaters in the spring, the facility enjoyed a busy summer. The layout and design by the young men in the Skate Park Work Group has worked out very well. The installation of noise curtains on the north side of the park helped somewhat to "take the edge off," especially on summer nights. Future improvements would include plantings, a drinking fountain, and viewing benches on the south side.

Board Member Henderson asked if the City has received significant complaints from neighbors of the skate park. Mr. Lindsay answered that the City did receive a few complaints from neighbors on the north side of the park, but the complaints have tapered off over time. He said the area was vandalized by taggers, but the City removed the markings immediately. They also received complaints about skaters using the park during the dark evening hours, and the Edmonds Police Department took care of this enforcement concern. He noted that the park should become easier to maintain, and those who cause problems would typically be forced out over time. The materials used in the construction of the park are easy to maintain, and they are also noise resistant. He concluded that the skate park has been a real benefit to the children in the City.

- **Fishing Pier Interpretive Panels:** A new system of interpretive panels (43 x 60 inches) has been designed for the fishing pier and fabrication is currently underway. The panels were designed by City Interpretive Specialist Owen Caddy, and are very nice. They provide a benefit for not only the fisherman, but people who walk along the fishing pier, including children.

Board Member Reed asked if the City has any plans to place interpretive panels at other parks along the waterfront. Mr. Lindsay noted that interpretive panels have also been located on the north side of the restroom wall at Olympic Beach. Mr. McIntosh added that the interpretive panels are spectacular, and staff is planning a similar system of panels at the marsh, as well as some at the fish hatchery.

- **Playground Replacements:** Three playgrounds would be replaced within the next three to four months, including both the upper and lower City Park elements and the playgrounds at Maplewood Hill and Mathay Ballinger Parks.
- **Olympic Beach/Fishing Pier Restrooms:** The restrooms would be gutted this fall to make way for all new fixtures and tile in place of the current dark and uninviting concrete walls. The project would update and brighten the facility. Staff is working with contractors on this project, which should get started soon. Staff elected to do the project in the fall and winter, when the park and fishing pier are not used quite so heavily.

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- **Eagle Scout Projects:** The Parks Division works with approximately six Eagle Scout groups annually to provide meaningful and challenging projects to these future leaders. Recent examples are trail restoration projects in both Yost and Maplewood Hill Parks and the double fencing enclosure area at the off-leash park at Marina Beach Park.
- **Viewing Scopes:** Viewing scopes were installed near the restrooms at Olympic Beach and at the end of the jetty at Brackett's Landing North. A third scope with handicapped accessibility was installed midway on Olympic Beach near the Senior Center. Small stairs are provided at each viewing scope so small children can access the equipment, which is offered to the public free of charge.
- **Holiday Decorations:** This is the time of year that staff begins to prepare for decorating the City for the various holiday celebrations and festivities. The Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony would be scheduled for the last week in November.

Frances White Chapin, Cultural Services Manager, reported on the following:

- **Dayton Street Plaza Renovation Project:** The Dayton Street Plaza is located along one of the most well used walking routes between downtown and the waterfront. The plaza is at the north end of the Public Works building at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Dayton. Current plans are to renovate the existing plaza area to create a welcoming public space along a popular walking route. The plaza would also reflect the growing arts focus of the community by providing a small outdoor venue for both occasional performance art and temporary sculptural installations.

Ms. White Chapin explained that the building south of the plaza houses two art business tenants: the Driftwood Players' Rehearsal Annex and the Edmonds Arts Festival Foundation's Art Works. The existing park site at the north end has a small plaza/fountain area that would be redesigned and renovated. The old fountain would be removed to make room for a larger plaza area. The goal of the project is to create a public space that is inviting and accessible, incorporates a visual art/interactive element, serves as an extension of the interior space for use during arts related events or activities, and provides space for temporary displays of sculptures in the planting area adjoining the plaza to the east.

Ms. White Chapin advised that the City's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department has budgeted \$50,000 for this project, which includes a \$25,000 contribution from the Edmonds Arts Festival. The City also received a \$5,000 contribution from the Hubbard Foundation. Staff hopes to get the design work completed so the project can start in the spring of 2008.

- **Edmonds Streetscape Plan – Way-Finding and Directional Signage:** The adopted recommendations regarding way-finding and directional signage in the 2006 Streetscape Plan have been further developed by the sign design firm Forma to create a family of sign standards that would gradually replace existing way-finding signs that have been installed by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. The new signs would be fabricated and maintained over the coming years primarily through the City's sign shop. The goal is to reduce sign clutter and create way-finding signage that is easier for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic to comprehend.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor Project:** The City received a \$50,000 Federal Preserve America Grant for matching funds to develop plans for the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor, including an implementation and funding plan. The City would select a consultant for the planning phase in early 2008.

Vice Chair Dewhirst asked if the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor design process would include a public element. Ms. White Chapin answered that it would, but she cautioned that the City has not finalized how the public element would take place.

- **Highway 99 International District Enhancement Project:** Preliminary engineering for the installation of new street light poles with pedestrian arms and signage elements for the Highway 99 International District Enhancements Project would be completed this month. The City applied for additional funding through the Enhancement Program for cost overruns. While the project is on the recommended list, funding would not be confirmed until the end of the year. Staff anticipates the project would go out to bid after the budget is confirmed. The artist, Pam Beyette, would work with the sign designer to coordinate the pedestrian arm light design and the identification signage for the new light poles prior the bid process.

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- **22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Write On the Sound Writers' Conference:** The event was presented by the Edmonds Arts Commission earlier in the month. The 2½-day conference drew about 200 participants, mostly from the Northwest, but from nine different states, too. The event was staffed by the Cultural Services Division but was only possible because of the hard work of numerous volunteers and generous support from community businesses.
- **Best Book Poster Contest:** 40 posters for the Best Book Poster Contest for Third Graders would be on display at the Frances Anderson Center main hall during November. The Arts Commission partnered with Friends of the Edmonds Library and the Edmonds School District to sponsor the program.

ReNee McRae reported on the following items:

- **Frances Anderson Center Seismic Structural Retrofit:** On October 16<sup>th</sup>, the City Council awarded a construction contract to Northwestern Construction of Washington, Inc. in the amount of \$1,610,631 for the Frances Anderson Center Seismic Structural Retrofit Project. The project would be paid for with a FEMA Mitigation Grant of \$782,190, and the remaining funding would come from additional revenues and/or ending cash balances from real estate excise taxes (REET-1). The project is set to begin January 2<sup>nd</sup> and would require the closure of sections of the building for three to six weeks at a time. The project would impact the tenants, building users, and programs at the facility for the majority of 2008, but the outcome would far outweigh the impact. Staff would work diligently to ensure the facility remains as accessible as possible during the project.
- **Recreation Programs:** The City is nearing the midway point of fall quarter for recreation programs. The Christmas Ship Sing-a-Long, the City's last fall event, is scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Edmonds Fishing Pier. Staff is currently programming the January-April CRAZE, which would be available on November 30<sup>th</sup>. They are also starting to work on the summer camp offerings, as that information is made available to the public on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Vice Chair Dewhirst recalled that when the City approved the Point Edwards Condominium Development, it identified a series of public easements and access points for view. He asked if the City has taken steps to secure these easements and viewpoints. Board Member Henderson pointed out that the viewpoints have been established. However, Board Member Freeman questioned if the property owner would be required to guarantee public access to the viewpoints. Mr. McIntosh said he has not been involved in this, but he would get an answer for the Board. He suggested that perhaps the viewpoints should be identified on the City's park maps.

Board Member Young said he was impressed with the work done by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Department staff over the past several years. He questioned if staff has ever contemplated the possibility of seeking voter support to fund a laundry list of park projects. He noted that the City of Seattle has had tremendous success with park levies because people are generally eager to support park projects. He suggested that staff keep this concept in mind when they work on updating the Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Cultural Services Plan. Mr. McIntosh agreed this is a concept the City should consider. However, he noted that project management is generally more of an issue for the City. The current staff is handling as many projects as they can right now. Funding is not really a problem for the City; the issue is more related to the amount of staff time required to manage each project.

Mr. McIntosh pointed out that Yost Pool is near the end of its life and they must talk about what they want to do with this facility in the long term. Board Member Young suggested the Senior Center is another facility that needs further consideration. He recognized that the programs at the Edmonds Senior Center are very popular, but the building needs a lot of work. Mr. McIntosh agreed that a lot of money has gone into maintaining and renovating the building over the last several years. Board Member Young suggested that rather than continuing to make renovations to the facility, the City could consider the feasibility of replacing the building.

Board Member Young expressed his belief that when asked about the quality of life in Edmonds, most citizens would agree that the City provides a disproportionately high amount of recreational facilities compared to other communities of a similar size. He concluded that the citizens would likely support funding to do additional park programs and projects.

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## **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

The Board reviewed their extended agenda for the remainder of the year. It was noted that the November 14<sup>th</sup> agenda would include a discussion and update on the code re-write project, an update on the Parks Comprehensive Plan, and an update on the Design Standards for the BD1 zone. Mr. Chave added that the update on the Shoreline Master Program would be postponed to the November 28<sup>th</sup> or December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Guenther announced that a public meeting about downtown sidewalks and walkways has been scheduled for November 1<sup>st</sup>. The event is sponsored by the Public Works Department.

Chair Guenther reported that he and Vice Chair Dewhirst met with Mayor Haakenson on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Vice Chair Dewhirst advised that the main topic of discussion was the code re-write project and Harbor Square/Antique Mall Redevelopment Plan. The Mayor and senior staff have assured them that the Harbor Square/Antique Mall Redevelopment application would not likely be submitted for City review for at least 8 to 12 months. He said he expressed his concern to the Mayor that the City Council get through the code re-write approval as soon as possible, since the changes could have an impact on future redevelopment plans for the Harbor Square/Antique Mall properties. He said he also expressed concern that the City provide sufficient staff to handle both of the issues in 2008. The Mayor agreed to do his best to keep the staff and City Council on track with the code re-write project so they can get through the amendments before the redevelopment application is filed.

Board Member Freeman inquired if the Mayor is still interested in implementing code amendments to require or encourage green and sustainable development. Chair Guenther said that is one of the Mayor's goals for the City, but the issue is very broad at this time.

Chair Guenther cautioned that Board Members should be careful when they talk to people about the potential contract rezone application related to the Harbor Square/Antique Mall properties. Because contract rezone applications are quasi-judicial and require a Planning Board public hearing and recommendation to the City Council, the Board Members should avoid potential conflicts of interest or exparte communications.

## **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board Member Freeman announced that she and Vice Chair Dewhirst attended a forum related to the impacts of global warming and climate changes, which was presented by Dr. Richard Gammon from the University of Washington. The presentation was worthwhile.

Board Member Freeman read an excerpt from an article in the most recent issue of the Planning Magazine, in which the City's former Economic Development Director, Jennifer Gerend, described her difficult experiences with the City of Edmonds. Board Member Freeman expressed her belief that it absolutely essential for the City to have good planners on staff, but it is often difficult to fill all of the positions. She suggested the Board should be seriously concerned about the current situation and consider opportunities for change.

Board Member Young said it is difficult for cities to staff their planning positions because the private sector pays much more. In addition, those planners who are not interested in the monetary rewards like to go where planners and their work are respected. He expressed his belief that getting anything done on the legislative level in the City of Edmonds requires a painful process. He questioned why a planner wouldn't want to go to a different community that was actually interested in the future.

Board Member Freeman noted that last year there was an article in the Planning Magazine, making the City the laughing stock of the community because they wouldn't deal with their height issue in the downtown. These situations reflect very

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badly on Edmonds and they need to do something about it. They need leaders who think more about making positive changes in Edmonds than getting reelected. The City is getting a very bad name for themselves. Board Member Young agreed that the City needs a legislative body that wants to look forward.

Vice Chair Dewhirst said that in talking to a candidate for the Snohomish County Council, he learned that the Steven's Hospital Board is seriously considering the option of relocating their facility to Lynnwood because it is a better location and the existing facility needs major work. They are considering whether it would be more feasible to relocate or renovate the existing facility. He said he was stunned to learn this information, and he has not had time to verify the facts. If it is true, he suggested it would behoove the City Council to address the issue instead of spending so much time on less important issues. He noted that Stevens Hospital is one of the largest economic engines for the community. The City Council should have a desire to find out more information and consider what the City could do to encourage them to stay in Edmonds. Board Member Freeman noted that Stevens Hospital is the City's largest employer. If the concept of relocating the hospital is on the Stevens Hospital Board's agenda, then the City Council needs to be involved in the discussions.

Board Member Reed asked if anybody from the City participates on the Stevens Hospital Board. He said it would be helpful for the hospital board to communicate with the City Council if they feel there is some way for the City to make the decision to stay in Edmonds more economically attractive.

Board Member Reed announced that a public meeting related to the Harbor Square/Antique Mall Redevelopment Project is scheduled for October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Brackett Room of City Hall. He noted that the Port of Edmonds' website provides updated information and public comments about the project.

Board Member Bowman agreed with the comments made earlier by Board Members Dewhirst, Freeman and Young.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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