

Minutes: Scenic Foothills Community Council Meeting

November 7, 2013

Meeting called to order at 7:00 by Roger Shaw, Vice President; Minutes approved

Roger Shaw: 12/5/13 this meeting room is not available. December 12th has been discussed as a possible makeup date.

Legislative Report:

Representative Lance Pruitt, House Majority Leader:

Just left a legislative retreat with good productivity. Was presented a governor proposed gas tax. More about this to come. At this retreat the finance committee chair shared on the budget. They are looking at three options for operating budget. If we go with 6.7% growth (same as now), we will eat through savings by 2022. Legislators know we're going to have to make certain changes.

There are \$300 million of already funded projects that need completion. One such project is Positive Train Control for railroad. There is a federal mandate to install Positive Train Control (PTC), an enhanced safety system to eliminate human factor errors for train and roadway worker operations on all railroads carrying passengers, including the Alaska Railroad (ARRC). PTC is expensive, affects all railroad operations, and is still in development. This is a \$60 million project. University of Alaska needs \$300 million for heat and electrical. They plan to update its plant and install a coal-fired boiler with the capacity to also burn biomass.

Capital budget will be constricted over last year, depending on decisions made. They are discussing PERS and TRS. The big cost driver for these plans is health care. The ARM board says the state has to give about \$2 million. Instead of putting 70% of our liabilities in each year, they are looking to 100% liability.

The legislature has discussed the Pleasant Valley road issues and are hoping that SFCC makes this a priority for our district.

Question: Roger Shaw - Has state funding for schools kept pace?

Answer: A task force has been created to discuss schools. Committee chairs have traveled to multiple districts exploring needs. In some cases school districts have built schools that require extra maintenance and operating costs, such as atriums increasing heat. This is being addressed.

Question: Has the capital improvements price for Pleasant Valley been considered? Answer: Have asked Gary Jones to give the \$15 million and have asked to break it into multiple appropriations. It will be thrown in with road projects.

Question: Chugach Electric has 1,400 megawatts of capacity. Chugach provides 40% of University of Alaska's power now and could provide more. A billion dollars have been invested in power plants like MEA, Chugach Electric and Homer Electric. These are gas boilers. Why not have these companies fill the UAF need?

Answer: Fairbanks is undersupplied. The coal plant will initially be more expensive, but in six years savings will be seen.

Question: Will there be more work done on the Glenn highway at Muldoon?

Answer: \$15 million is on the table to continue upgrades.

Senator Anna Fairclough, Assemblypersons Paul Honeman and Adam Trombley, and School Board Representative Bettye Davis were not able to attend.

East Anchorage District Plan: Thede Tobish, Planning Department and Roger Shaw, EADP Advisory Council:

Concerns have been brought up about Alaska Greenhouse property and connectivity of trails in the area.

East Anchorage District Plan process started 1-1/2 years ago. This is a comprehensive plan to show anticipated population growth to our area and demonstrate how this growth will be addressed. Intent of Anchorage 2020 Project was to provide for district plans. This plan revisits the Title 21 Land Use Codes. MOA Community Development Department is soliciting comments through December 6, 2013. Public comments will be assimilated and recommendations will be made and the plan will be reworked. It goes through planning and zoning before it can be adopted.

The planning area includes Muldoon from the Glenn Highway to East Tudor, and from Bragaw around the U-Med District east to the military boundary plus the Basher area (Stuckagain Heights).

Highlights - Vision Map created. Shows desired land use patterns and East Anchorage Vision. Where neighborhoods might expand and where new trail might be made. Last Comprehensive Development Plan was in 1982.

A Key element to the plan is the land use maps. The map serves as the basis for zoning and other discretionary actions in the District. Many are calling North Muldoon ripe for redevelopment. Many commercial buildings are older than 1970. The committee is looking to mixed use buildings. West Northern lights has an example of this from an old Chevron lot; the owner has business and townhouses. Committee is also looking at trailer parks. Another trailer park just North of DeBarr is being looked at for similar mixed use development. A hotel incorporated in this area is another possibility. Currently this mobile home park has 630 units. Newly planned developments could house 920 families. There are 12-15 trailer parks in district. Some will inevitably be sold. They can be rebuilt with lots of dwelling units or a mixture of commercial buildings with residential. This will mean 5-7,000 unit possibilities.

A perimeter bike trail has been looked at since the 80's. There are problems with JBER needing setbacks and they are not in favor it at all. Mr. Shaw suggests that the buffer has already been created when the fence on JBER property was erected. The perimeter is already established.

Question: Have increased school needs been addressed? If there will be an increase in housing, there will be more schools needed.

Answer: ASD projects for school needs through rezoning or creation of new schools.

Priority actions are needed to make this plan happen. One such action is to deal with the old Alaska Greenhouse parcel at the corner of DeBarr and Muldoon. It has yet to be determined what land use category to make this. There have been lots of recommendations. This property could be partially business to fund the park that most residents are in favor of. Community councils were wanting all park, but couldn't decide what to do with it. It is imperative that we make a master plan. The corner keeps getting busier and is a transit hub. Mr. Tobish recommends front end has business and mostly green behind. A member pointed out that at the EADP plan meetings, the public seemed to be loudly opposed to adding more businesses to the corner and thought what the strip needs is green. Mr. Tobish says there was some support for a small commercial building in front.

Northern lights and Muldoon is school and community institutional land. There was a suggestion from the floor to allow non-permanent businesses only on the old Alaska Greenhouse property, such as for food carts or farmers' market type vendors to keep the area as green as possible.

Go to EastAnchorageDistrictPlan.com to look over these plans.

Lois Hall - Pleasant Valley resident: Spoke with Alex about Pleasant Valley roads and he has since come to look at them. Harry Crawford and Lance Pruitt are familiar with the road issues. The subdivision was built in 1980's. Roads have been steadily going downhill since that time. Mrs. Hall presented letter addressing these issues to Gary Jones, MOA Planning and Assessments. Many are aware that the road was made with substandard materials and utility pipes heave from the asphalt and are then torn up by plows. Fifteen neighbors of 30 surveyed had to install sump pumps or regrade their property due to road water flowing onto their lots. The biggest issues are no drainage, snow dumped, pot holes,

There has been some talk of a 70/30 split for road work. Mrs. Hall doesn't believe the neighbors will go for this, so they think a Capital Improvement Project is the best. It would take \$3 million for assessment and design.

An attendee asked for clarification that the Pleasant Valley is more about substandard roads, not flooding issues. This is different from the JBER adjacent flooding discussed at previous meetings.

Lance Pruitt suggested that this be looked at as a separate CIP project than other road rehab. This needs to be done right.

Ms. Lowther comments that we need to do it right rather than put a thin layer of pavement on it. Mr. Shaw says he wants us to say we support it but not give it a priority. Participant suggests that we state we'd like this road done as well as Cherry Street was.

The following resolution was made and seconded:

Scenic Foothills Community Council strongly supports inclusion of Pleasant Valley roads and drainage assessment and design as part of the Council's Capital Improvement Projects request.

The motion passed unanimously.

Lead Code Enforcement Officer Rich Fern: Rich Fern describes his job as to address properties that are public nuisances, junk yards, junk cars, garbage. He follows Title 15. He gets 2,000-2,100 complaints a year. There are five people working from Eklutna to Girdwood. Ben Cogger is assigned to this area.

Title 21 is zoning code about to go into effect. Mr. Fern wanted to clarify that ugly is not a violation. You have to prove that condition of property is affecting value of other properties in order for there to be a citation.

To complain, call 343-4141 or

<http://codeenforcement.muni.org/cs/CustomerService/default.aspx>

With complaints, we respond in 24 hours. For cars, a letter is sent that they will be coming out in 10 days and if the vehicle is not moved tickets will be given.

Fines are 50-300 dollars per day. Mr. Fern says a large part of their job is education.

No limit on number of cars on a residential lot. If number of cars exceeds square footage of house that is a problem as a change of land use.

Cars don't have to move and can be parked on grass. For a car to be a violation it must be proven to be junked vehicles as defined by not currently licensed, has missing tires, missing fenders and is mostly inoperable.

As to illegal signs, such as the Indigo Furniture, call in to Muni and give location of signs.

Question: Do you take action on the people repeatedly doing this?

Answer: Right-of-way division might be able to cite but we generally just pick them up.

Question: Do you enforce covenants violations?

Answer: Neighborhoods have to enforce these.

Title 9: Car can be left on the street without moving it for 24 hours.

Pushing snow into right-of-way is a right-of-way complaint.

Are there limitations on commercial in residential? There are limitations on # of employees, square footage being used for it, and cannot show outside change.

Question: Hope Cottages has a building at both ends of my cul-de-sac. Vehicles choke the cul-de-sac. Are these allowed?

Answer: Mr. Fern says they are not a violation

Mr. Shaw says group homes will be discussed at a future meeting.

Ms. Lowther asks about fences built that block road visibility. Same thing is seen from plantings and snow piles and how does this fit in?

Answer: Clear vision area is a common complaint. On a corner, plantings must be lower than 18 inches and 18 feet from the apex of the corner.

Many meeting participants pointed out hoarders, with junked cars, Connexes, and other scofflaws. Mr. Fern says that people need to keep on them.

When Title 21 goes into effect, you can still have Connex (shipping) containers but by 1/15/2015, they must be painted and prettied up.

Motorhomes must be at least five feet from the property line and not encroach into the right-of-way.

Question: Can they force Foothills Storage to replace missing panels on fence?

Answer: No

Question: What if a neighbor is not ever finishing their home project?

Answer: Title 23 allows for a permit in a year. If they get an inspection a year they can keep a permit open.

Issues coming up:

Proposal from University Area Community Council to have us annex area between Boniface and Baxter. This will be decided by executive board.

Meeting next Wednesday about the Baxter Road resurfacing.

Bike trail issues - one associated with Campbell airstrip road. Karen Bronga and Jake Moe are looking at trails in general in our area.

Heritage Land Bank – comments can be made online.

Group houses – density / rules in our neighborhoods will be addressed at a future meeting.

Member announcement that there is a new home for runaways in Wasilla called “My House.” They help find jobs and house teens. An anonymous donor will match up to \$25,000 if donated by 12/31/13. myhousematsu@gmail.com

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.