

**Rogers Park Community Council Minutes**  
**7 PM Monday, May 9, 2016**  
**Rogers Park Elementary School Library**

**Board Members:**

Iris Matthews, President  
Clare Boersma, Vice-President  
Jim Wright, Secretary  
Marilyn Pillifant, Treasurer  
Bob Churchill, FCC Representative (absent)

**I. Welcome.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was present, with at least 16 members attending from the outset.

**II. Community Council Business.**

**A. Minutes:** Minutes from the April 2016 meeting were reviewed. Marilyn Pillifant moved to approve them. Annette Cartier seconded. Approved by voice vote, with no nays and no corrections.

**B. FCC Report.** FCC representative Bob Churchill was absent, so no report was presented this month.

**C. Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer Marilyn Pillifant reports that RPCC funds total ~\$202.

**III. Assembly Reports.**

Assembly Member Elvi Gray-Jackson reported as follows:

At the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Assembly approved the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Revisions: Highlights were:

\$1.07M for Vote by Mail Start-Costs which include equipment;  
\$425,000 to assist with Homelessness issues; and  
\$250,000 Attorney Fees.

Assembly approved amendments were:

\$5M property tax rebate, depending on availability of funds on or after  
September 1, 2016 and no later than December 31, 2016;

\$51K for a Code Enforcement Officer to assist with the marijuana industry regulation;  
\$83K for an additional Fire Inspector; and  
\$75K to 4A's to provide housing support for 13 clients.

The Assembly also set the 2016 Mill Levy as follows:

ASD Mill Levy - 6.73  
General Government Mill Levy -- 8.16  
Total Mill Levy -- 14.89  
Taxes on a \$350,000 home before exemptions - \$5,211.50  
Taxes on a \$350,000 home after \$20,000 Residential Exemption - \$4,913  
Taxes on a \$350,000 home after \$150,000 Senior Citizen or Disabled Veteran Exemption and \$20,000 Residential Exemption - \$2,680

The next Assembly meeting -- May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Dick Traini also noted that the Assembly is considering funds to allow vote by mail in municipal elections. The Accu-vote system is ~25 years old and dying, so it is time for a change. He understands that it will take ~\$1.2 million to buy and set up an appropriate system. Other cities report participation rates over 80% with vote by mail, as opposed to averages of 19-21% under the old system.

The May 10 hearing will address the marijuana tax. It will be 5% to start, and will be the first retail sales tax for Anchorage. The municipality can raise that tax by 2% every year until it reaches 12%. There will be one code enforcement officer. Dick noted that the area of King Street from 76<sup>th</sup> to Dimond Blvd. is "The Green Mile" qualifying as a permissible neighborhood for commercial marijuana operations.

Ann Lorber asked about changes to the housing code. Dick and Elvi said there will be a public hearing on May 24. The housing code on the municipal website is being revised to reflect 2016 updates. Dick will address questions and concerns. He can be reached at 250-6832.

Peter Mjos congratulated Elvi on being the new Assembly Chair, with Dick as Vice-Chair, working together.

There was a question whether vote by mail would be used by other entities or cities. Dick said that yes, once it is working, we will offer it out to others for a price.

Annette Cartier asked why the municipality is paving the alley behind 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Iris noted that RPCC pressed to have its alleys paved, generally. Jim Richardson said he'd inquired of the municipal engineers, and was told that there is no agenda -- it was just a random choice to get started. Dave Evans said that RPCC should have input as to alley priorities in its district. He asked Dick and Elvi to consider that. One member said the alley (27<sup>th</sup>) floods, so he favors paving it first. Iris noted that it doesn't have utility

undergrounding yet. Elvi said that priorities are keyed to cost, safety, and other proper considerations. Peter Mjos asked when we will have access to the CIP survey results for this year. Iris said it just went out, so results should be expected in a few weeks.

#### **IV. Presentations & Discussions.**

**A. The ML&P Undergrounding Plan** was presented pursuant to Title 21 (21.07.050) by Jake Moe, together with manager Mark Johnson and engineer Gary Agron. By 2005 ordinance all new electrical lines are to be installed underground, subject to specified exceptions for high transmission lines and certain areas. Electrical utilities like Municipal Light & Power develop a plan and present that plan to the public. A \$2 surcharge on consumers' bills reflect this change.

How long will this process of undergrounding take? At 1.5 miles each year, it is expected to take about 180 years.

How does ML&P prioritize areas for undergrounding? There are a number of factors, including: ML&P system betterment needs, safety code issues, the age of existing facilities, visibility, customer requests, Assembly-designated target areas, and other factors. One example of other factors is whether work on other projects, and/or by other entities, will make it desirable to schedule with or around those events.

Who is on the list? Members are encouraged to view the 5-year plan at [www.mlandp.com](http://www.mlandp.com).

What to expect during construction. There will be disruption with heavy equipment, a required inspection of interior wiring, to bring the system up to code. For example, they might have to move electrical lines relative to gas lines. Easements may have to be granted or revised accordingly. And there will be landscaping issues, movement of fences, sheds, trees, and shrubs.

Focusing on Rogers Park area, there was a 2015 project at Lake Otis and Maplewood. 100 houses were affected. Landscaping is to be completed. Pole tops were cut, preparatory to moving. There is a 2016 project along Bannister Drive, impacting about 50 houses. There will be a community meeting on May 13 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the park on East 20<sup>th</sup>. Northern Powerline Constructors is the contractor.

Is Rogers Park getting undergrounded? It has been determined that Rogers Park and Airport Heights will be most benefitted by that effort. College Village, though, is not in the five year plan.

Peter Mjos asked whether there would be lighting replacement as part of the 2016 work. Jake said 16 LED lights would be installed to bring it up to code.

Jim Richardson asked whether ML&P's work would be coordinated with paving efforts. Jake said they are trying to, but that it is an imperfect process.

Dave Evans asked about cell tower use on utility poles. Jake said the law requires ACS and GCI, the phone utilities, to underground when ML&P and Chugach Electric go underground. GCI opposes this, and said no as to the Bannister project. Elvi added that she and Dick, as Assembly members, will enforce the law. They will have a meeting with city attorneys to address this.

Marilynn Pillifant said there was undergrounding just behind her home and installation of a utility box. What happens with the ACS line to the utility? How do they connect? Jake said he'd have to see the particulars, but her service should be better with less outage time.

Iris asked about the process of employing joint use of utility poles for cell towers. Jake said there is a joint use statute that means if ML&P has a pole and a cell company wants to use it, the electric utility has little discretion in the matter. The cell company can go to RCS to apply for use so long as they pay for the usage. Jim Wright asked for a cite to the statute. Jake said he'd follow up with that information.

Annette Cartier suggested that, because the Municipality benefits from the lease of the pole, its motive is to allow such use. The speaker denied this, noting that the lease amount is small and not a meaningful factor. He gave the example of a lease for \$360 per year (~\$1 per day).

Dave Evans' neighbor has a kiln that involves surges of use. He semi-facetiously asked: Can he persuade the underground effort to extend to it? Response: ML&P has set priorities and has limited funds, so it's unlikely in the short term.

Jim Richardson asked if ML&P can deny use based on increased risk due to extended height of poles. Wouldn't an injured party still sue ML&P if a higher pole fell on a house and burned it? Jake said they look at that risk.

Marilyn Pillifant asked why they don't do all of the alley instead of part? General Manager Mark Johnston responded, saying there is limited money so they're pursuing the biggest bang for the buck. Iris noted that the CIP survey asks if an increased surcharge to increase paving and undergrounding is favored. She encouraged further questions be submitted via e-mail, given the time.

**B. Merrill Field Master Plan, RPCC Input.** Comments to the Master Plan are due by the end of May. Jim Richardson has a proposed resolution for RPCC consideration. The resolution disputes the master plan. The Master Plan draft provides that the Sitka Street park can be developed in five years. He proposes a resolution stating that: 1) the population forecast in the master plan is overstated; 2) the 20 year forecast is similarly overstated, and should instead account for declines in population and use; 3) the noise complaints data is not current (2010 being the most recent year), without mention of the helicopter noise protocol previously discussed; 4) RPCC has concerns about the Sitka Street park, to preserve it undeveloped, with its wetlands status, and continued use as a

snow dump. The master plan contemplates development for commercial purposes including medical office space, and to relocate 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue 80 feet to the south. 5) There is no mention of working with community councils other than Fairview. And 6) there is no mention of alternate fields such as Bryan Field.

Peter Mjos moved to approve the resolution. Jim Wright, Secretary, observed that it is a complex proposal, asking for a written draft. None being presented, Iris said the concept is the key. The motion was seconded by Pat \_\_\_\_\_. The motion passed, with 15 yeas, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions.

## **V. Legislative Report.**

All of our representatives are in Juneau, but Senator Berta Gardner's staffer Samantha presented. The GOP majority did an appeal of the Medicaid expansion lawsuit without a joint vote, which was required. Therefore, the appeal is not authorized.

SB 91, the crime bill, passed in the House. The Senate still has to approve it. Its goal is to reduce recidivism (repeat offenses), to restructure the law with an eye to prevention. About \$400 million in savings is projected from passage. *[It was not clear over what time period this savings would occur.]*

HB 156 is an education bill posed by Wes Keller to allow a pause on AMP testing. \$90 million in federal revenue could be lost if this passes. It is being revised to see if the feds would deny funding. Education cost-cutting would fall ~70% on instruction and 30% on other costs, such as maintenance and administration. This is not workable for many schools. Senator Dunleavy posed legislation to restrict sex education so that the credentials of any speaker on that topic would have to be vetted in advance by local school boards and citizens. This passed, and is awaiting Governor Walker's signature.

Peter Mjos observed that the law applies to anyone other than a credentialed teacher, and poses a chilling effect on informed sex education.

Jim Richardson asked if there was any progress on the budget. Samantha said the focus is now on oil tax credits. The conversations are slow and behind closed doors. Iris asked if there was consideration of new sources of revenue. Samantha said no, not really. She said the legislature would likely purchase the Wells Fargo building in midtown for ~\$12.5 million. It is assessed at ~\$12 million.

Nora, from the Mayor's office, was present. She had no report but offered to take questions. Pat \_\_\_\_\_ said that Next Door indicates that alleys in Rogers Park are targeted areas. The police are overwhelmed. What can we do to contain crime? Should we consider doing a community patrol or Neighborhood Watch program? Nora said that the prior administration cut theft and drug and gang units of APD. The new administration intends to bring these functions back. Elvi noted that community patrols are doing well in east Anchorage. She can put us in touch with them to assist in setting such a program up here. Another member noted that there seemed to be increased

begging, tents, and other indicia of homelessness in our area. Nora said that an ACLU lawsuit led to the requirement of 15 days notice before cleaning up a camp. This inhibits the ability to respond. If a campfire is seen, in spite of the burn ban, citizens should call that in for a quick response.

#### **VI. Annual RPCC Board/Officer Election.**

Peter Mjos, nominations chair, advised of the following:

- 1) Marilyn Pillifant is the sole candidate for President, to replace Iris Matthews, who is moving to Juneau.
- 2) Jim Richardson is the candidate for Vice-President, to replace Clare Boersma.
- 3) Clare Boersma is the candidate for Treasurer.
- 4) There is presently no candidate to replace outgoing Secretary Jim Wright, so that a vacancy will apparently occur. Iris and Jim encouraged members to volunteer.

Jim Brown moved to approve the panel of candidates. This motion was seconded by Annette Cartier (and others). The motion passed by the following vote: 19 yeas, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.

Peter Mjos thanked Iris for an excellent job during her time as President of RPCC.

#### **VII. Announcements.**

A. We have had about 80 responses to the pending APD survey.

B. Don't forget to also review and respond to the CIP survey done by Heather Ireland. It will remain open until the end of the month, and is limited to the top three priorities.

C. There is a meeting next week of area community councils with administration representatives about homeless camps on the Chester Creek greenbelt. There will be an ad hoc public safety and homelessness meeting on Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Assembly Conference Room at City Hall. Elvi noted that the meeting will be taped on-line for later listening.

D. Marilynn Pillifant announced that on Friday May 13 there will be an Assembly work session on cell towers from 1:30 to 3 p.m., at City Hall, Conference Room 155.

E. Jim Richardson announced that it would cost an estimated \$25,000 per property to do a Local Improvement District to expedite undergrounding ahead of the 180 year completion date.

The meeting was then adjourned.