

Rogers Park Community Council Newsletter, March 3, 2006

General announcements.

1. Mayoral candidates forum , March 29, 7 pm at the Wendy Williamson auditorium on the UAA campus. Volunteers needed. Contact: 277-1977.
2. Fireweed-LaTouche Upgrade, public meeting, Wednesday, March 15, 7-9 pm in the Rogers park Elementary multi-purpose room. Information: Kelly Brown, 562-2000
3. Reminder, applications due soon for the Rasmuson Foundation/Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge Grant applications. Maximum matching grant for park-related projects is \$40,000. 343-4492. See below.
4. Hearing before the Platting Board to discuss the proposed Bryn Mawr apartment complex has been rescheduled to April 5, 2006. See below.
5. The RPCC election of officers will take place at the April 10 meeting.

The RPCC convened on February 13 in the Rogers Park Elementary library. All officers were present. Also present were assembly man Dick Traini and APD Sgt. Stanton. Assemblyman Coffey was absent.

Title 21, the vitally important Anchorage land use rewrite, is in the final stages. Comments are due by March 3. Contact: Dave Tremont or Tom Davis, 343-7915.

APD Report, Sgt. Stanton presented the 2004 and 2005 RPCC statistics and a very comprehensive data base. No major trends. She urges any suspicious activities be reported. Reports may be online at MyNeighborhood or 911. We discussed the current situation in which APD makes some 2500 felony arrests each year, but only about sixty got to trial, as there are simply not enough state court staff and judges. Most felonies are subsequently either dismissed, pled out, or otherwise shelved. The mayor and other mayors have made remediation of this crisis a top legislative priority this year.

Assembly report. President Mjos noted and had available for members recent e-mails from Mr. Coffey and Mr. McGrath, both very upset over the inclusion in the agenda of an item taken verbatim from the Eagle River CC entitled "Protection of communities from unscrupulous landclearing practices by developers. AO 2005-179 sponsored by Shamborg and Ossiander" in the Federation of Community Councils newsletter dated January 18, 2006. Neither Mr. Coffey nor Mr. McGrath were in attendance for the discussion. Mr. Traini sad he could not speak for Mr. Coffey (see discussion which follows). Future assembly items include the sales tax (since placed on the ballot), school bonds (also on the ballot), the fate of the Fourth Avenue Theater, a land trade in Eagle River to allow access to Old Baldy Mtn., the land clearing ordinance referenced by the Eagle River CC, and further consideration of the Park Plan. Mr. Traini believes the South Coastal Trail Extension will be removed from the Plan. He declined to commit his support for keeping the Trail in the Plan. Several members and guests discussed a proposal by the same developer of concern to the Eagle River CC to build an 85 unit apartment complex development on three acres near Wesleyan Drive. This plan would necessitate that the muni grant a new road access to Northern Lights Blvd. and rerouting the bike trail. Members were strongly encouraged to present comments to Title 21 to address these conflicts in land use planning and zoning.

Federation of Community Councils report, Mr. Bob Williams. He noted the Eagle River CC presentation before the FCC in which the developer's actions flagrantly violated the spirit of the existing land clearing ordinance, and caused the ERCC to request "that all community councils provide strong written support" for the revised ordinance from Ms. Shamberg and Ms. Ossiander. Without the proposed ordinance in hand, and following considered debate, the RPCC unanimously passed a resolution, "The Rogers Park Community Council supports amending AO 2005-177 by strengthening and adding more definitive language to the ordinance which will prevent future wholesale mechanized land clearing without consideration for air and water quality, effects on neighboring parcels, and aesthetics of the community". Note: At the February 28 Assembly meeting, "AO 2005-179, an ordinance regarding mechanized land clearing of undeveloped contiguous lots, Assembly members Shamberg and Ossiander. After the clear cutting of ten acres in downtown Eagle River in 2005, enabled by the subdividing of this large tract by its owner, Ms. Ossiander and I decided to close this loop". Passed 8-3. (Shamberg Assembly report).

Ms. Teri Peters, Northeast Parks District supervisor. Her office now permanently resides in the Lydia Selkregg Russian Jack springs chalet. She noted the Challenge Grant application deadline is forthcoming, and a great many parks projects would qualify. The grants, as previously noted, also apply to in-kind labor and materials. Imagination enlisted. Community council endorsement ideal, but not necessary. This suggestion passed unanimously as a resolution. Finally, she urged that we give consideration to the forthcoming parks bonds. 343-4297.

Mr. Lee Coop, Associate muni traffic engineer. Traffic calming will focus on Annapolis Dr. speed bumps this summer. Several members commented that the speed bumps in use are ineffective, that higher and longer speed bumps are demonstrated as much more effective and yet do not "bottom-out" vehicles. The most effective method, mini-islands at intersections, are not embraced by the traffic department. Traffic calming measures continue to be appraised for the RPCC. Some "chokers" are in future plans. For current status and comments, Mr. Coop, 343-8479.

Finally, on the agenda for the March 13 meeting:

1. Final review 2006 Capital Improvement Project priorities list
2. ASD bond presentation, Mr. Roger Fiedler, 742-4151
3. Mr. Dennis Linnell, Anchorage Tomorrow, presentation of Roads and Drainage bonds, and parks bonds. 564-2120
4. Mr. Jerry Winchester, Architect for the renewal of East Anchorage High School. Project update.
5. Next meeting, Monday, April 10, 2006.

Respectfully,
Peter Mjos, President

"This above all else, to thine own self be true"

Wm. Shakespeare, HAMLET