



# Rabbit Creek Community Council

P.O. Box 112354, Anchorage, AK 99511-2354



February 24, 2015

Ms. Robin Ward, Director  
MOA Heritage Land Bank  
PO Box 196650  
Anchorage AK 99519

Alaska Rugby Foundation  
c/o Mr. Ben Mohr  
1406 Patterson  
Anchorage AK 99504

At our Council's February 12 meeting, Ben Mohr, on behalf of the Alaska Rugby Foundation, presented a proposal to construct and maintain a rugby field and other recreation facilities on HLB land located in upper Potter Valley at the intersection of Potter Heights Road and Finland. Council members had numerous questions, and a detailed discussion ensued. The discussion culminated in a resolution of support with various conditions, as follows.

The Council received only about one week's notice of this proposal. The proposal is on a very fast track in order to capitalize on free fill that will be generated nearby in spring/summer of 2015. Normally, a project of this scope would appear on our Council's agenda several times, and word would spread organically among neighbors. The Council Chair suggests that further direct outreach to the neighborhood is important to ensure that more neighbors, especially those within the viewshed and those affected by traffic, have a chance to register any concerns. In addition, perimeter landscaping and the design and size of the parking lot were not discussed during the official meeting. Parking and traffic management merit further public input.

## **Resolution in support of Alaska Rugby Foundation's proposed park development**

The Council membership passed, without objection, a motion to **support the Alaska Rugby Foundation's effort to develop a public rugby field and other park amenities on HLB Parcel 2-144, which previous municipal plans have identified as future municipal parkland. This effort will entail a construction and maintenance agreement between the Alaska Rugby Foundation and HLB, and will capitalize on the use of fill from the construction of Potter Highlands subdivision and upgrades to Potter Valley Road in 2015. Conditions for the Council's support are as follows:**

1. The site plan must allow a zoning setback and dedication of half the right-of-way for Finland Street, which is shown as a future secondary access road in the HDP.

2. Prior to any agreement about the fill, calculate the quantity of fill available from the Potter Highlands subdivision & road project and the quantity of fill quantity required at the park site, in order to verify to the public that the project can be completed as designed.
3. Draft an alternate plan for constructing only the rugby field and not the soccer field. This allows the community to voice an opinion on whether some of the park should be retained as a natural area. It is noted that there is a 1997 resolution from RCCC stating that the area should become a park with a children's playground.
4. Before the site work begins, ARF should produce for review a construction timetable and budget to demonstrate that the fill can be placed in one season with vegetation planted and other surfaces finished in a timely manner to prevent wind-blown dust or erosion. The timetable should also specify that site access control will be installed in the same season, so that vehicles can't drive onto the field(s).
5. The design shall expressly specify that there will be no lighting, in order to preserve the dark night sky.
6. The design shall include a drainage plan to ensure that there will not be flooding, erosion of any new or existing slopes, or off-site drainage impacts.
6. The operating agreement will include details to ensure sanitation and security: and will specifically include:
  - portable toilets and bear-proof trash cans for the active field season, to be maintained on a regular schedule by the Rugby Club team under a written agreement; and
  - an operating agreement for opening and closing the gates to secure the parking areas off-hours. The operating agreement will allow for open public access and use of the field(s) during daytime hours when events are not scheduled.

## **Findings**

The concept of a public recreation facility is an asset to our Council area. Southeast Anchorage is deficient in developed public recreation sites, according to the *Anchorage Bowl Park, and Natural Resources and Recreation Facility Plan* (2006) and in the experience of residents. This will be a public facility with ample public access outside of scheduled use of the play field(s).

This specific site, the northern part of HLB Parcel 2-144, has been identified in HLB's *Potter Valley Land Use Analysis* as a future public park (neighborhood

park and multi-use trail). The *Potter Valley Land Use Analysis* was adopted as part of the MOA Comprehensive Plan in 1999.

The *Hillside District Plan's* Policy 6-B calls for “development of new neighborhood parks to serve the Potter Creek area.”

The Council has been frustrated by almost no progress on many recreation and parkland issues in our area, so this partnership with Alaska Rugby Foundation on a fast-track schedule is worth a try.

The Council wants to ensure that there is a detailed and realistic construction timetable and budget so that a useable, stable, and secure playfield is built; and this project does not become merely a fill site with possible problems from drainage, dust, security, or unmanaged use.

The Alaska Rugby Foundation appears to following the intent of *Hillside District Plan* Policy 6-B which specifies that “Parks development should be phased and scaled to fit the level of road service, the limitations of on-site-water and septic systems, and the rural character of the neighborhood. The design shall consider user and neighborhood safety and security and minimize overall impacts on the neighborhood.”

The Council notes that the site plan will undergo further revisions, and a construction and management/maintenance agreement will be drafted. The Council requests to be involved in contributing ideas and concerns as the design and work agreements are developed further.

Nancy Pease, Co-chair

Cc: Bill Evans and Jennifer Johnson, MOA Assembly; John Rodda and Holly Spoth-Torres, MOA Parks