

Scenic Foothills Community Council Minutes Jan. 7, 2010

Vice President Catherine Carte called the meeting to order 7 p.m. 38 people attended.

December 3, 2009, meeting Minutes were distributed and approved.

Lance Pruitt, Federation of Community Councils liaison, reported that FCC survived the Municipality of Anchorage budget negotiations and would be able to proceed normally, including sending postal mail meeting notices, which cost up to a third of the FCC budget. The new computers are in and in the process of being installed. Plans for the 2011 Neighborhoods Conference are proceeding and theme and art work are next.

Jerrienne Lowther, Publicity Chairman, asked whether anyone had received a January meeting notice via postal mail. No one had. It was delivered to FCC but apparently fell through the cracks again. E-mail notices were sent out from SFCC once, and twice more from FCC, using both their old and new e-mail systems. A meeting notice appeared in print in the Anchorage Daily News community section, as well as online.

Michele Pamer, SFCC Parks Committee, told of efforts to get surveillance cameras and motion detector lights installed in the Chugach Foothills Park playground. Sheila Selkregg, Anchorage Assemblyperson, urged that it be done through MOA channels and offered to help.

Michele then introduced Ainslie Phillips from Northeast Community Council to tell about the history of the land at the corner of Muldoon and DeBarr Roads, known as the old Anchorage Greenhouse property, that has been proposed as a Muldoon Park Strip at the Muldoon Town Center.

Eighty percent of future Anchorage population growth is planned to be in the northeast Muldoon area, she said. With this kind of high density residential growth coming, accessible park land will be much needed.

The property in question is about 30 acres, total, and the eastern one-third, adjacent to the Fort Richardson military boundary, is already dedicated -- but undeveloped -- park land, to be developed into ball fields eventually.

The middle third is "filled" ground that was formerly a construction dump and marsh land 23 feet below the surface of the filled portion. This piece of

SFCC MINUTES JANUARY 7, 2010

land is unstable and unsuitable for building. The water table is high. Chester Creek meanders through it.

The westernmost third fronts on Muldoon Road. The Municipality would like to re-route the portion of Chester Creek that runs through it away from the DeBarr intersection and offer the land for sale for commercial development.

Northeast Community Council (and Scenic Foothills Community Council) oppose re-routing the creek and developing this property, which would hide the park behind a wall of commercial building(s) and disturb a beautiful creek, where salmon spawn. NECC has passed a resolution to support the park strip and stop development until alternatives to such commercial development can be explored.

The property, which had been appraised at \$1.8 million, was purchased soon after by the MOA Heritage Land Bank for \$5.5 million, far more than the appraised value, with a loan from Municipal Light and Power. ML&P wants to be re-paid with a land swap, offering the middle third of the property in exchange for the Centennial Park Campground property, which they could use to expand the adjacent power plant near the Glenn Highway. NECC opposes exchange of valuable dedicated, developed, income-producing park land for the commercially unsuitable filled land of an old construction dump.

It was proposed that Northeast, Scenic Foothills and Russian Jack Community Councils call for a combined meeting in February to discuss the park proposal and explore alternatives before the plans for land exchanges, re-platting and zoning, creek relocation and land sale for commercial development proceed further.

Sheila Selkregg urged that this meeting be focused on the Muldoon Park Strip only and not take on more East Side planning issues at the same time, though several more issues are related, including land swaps, DeBarr Road extension to the military boundary and Highway To Highway (H2H).

Bradley Harris proposed a motion that Scenic Foothills Community Council support creation of a Muldoon Park Strip consisting of Lots 1, 2 and 3 of Muldoon Estates, including pursuing rescinding of recent re-zoning or re-platting that has taken place on that property, to allow for a contiguous park unit. The motion was seconded and passed with one dissenting vote.

Rep. Harry Crawford said he favored working to develop renewable power, such as hydro-power at [Lake Chakachamna](#) or wind power, rather than using

SFCC MINUTES JANUARY 7, 2010

available long-term capital to expand the MLP gas-fired power plant at Centennial Park Campground.

Rep. Crawford said he was leaving to testify at a Town Hall meeting MOA Assemblyperson Mike Gutierrez was running at the same time at Loussac Library regarding required ID checks of alcohol buyers, regardless of age. Paul Honeman had just come from that meeting and said that it was already over, with strong support for the proposed ordinance. This meeting was inspired by Northeast Community Council's resolution in October to require such checks as a condition of licensing a new Brown Jug liquor store in north Muldoon, as was discussed at SFCC's December meeting.

The Assembly voted November 17 to make such ID checks a condition of giving a zoning permit to the new Brown Jug, which opened November 27 in the Tikahtnu Commons mall at Muldoon Road north of the Glenn Highway.

The Town Hall meeting was about extending the same rules to all alcohol sellers in the Municipality of Anchorage. Under a 2007 law, sponsored by Rep. Crawford, Alaska Driver's Licenses and ID cards must carry a red stripe if the holder is under court order not to buy or consume alcohol. A liquor store clerk or bartender could not sell alcohol to anyone without ID, or with ID with a red stripe. Required ID checks would make the stripe effective.

It was suggested that the Municipality could save a lot of taxpayer money through preventing problems with a Municipality-wide ID check ordinance.

Will Theuer proposed a motion that SFCC endorse the requirement for liquor stores to check ID of patrons of any age. The motion was seconded and passed.

Sheila Selkregg (who usually teaches a class on Thursday nights and is then represented by Heather Ireland) said in the Municipal budget negotiations they had managed to restore funding for Boys and Girls Clubs and for a bus route that had been cut, though they still hadn't been able to restore bus service on a holiday that had been cut from the schedule beyond March.

She also said that affordable worker housing was an important issue, as losing workers to cheaper housing in the Valley greatly reduced the tax support for Municipal services.

SFCC MINUTES JANUARY 7, 2010

She is introducing a proposed ordinance regarding distracted driving, as talking on cellular phones while driving appears to be just as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol.

Roger Shaw said the mayor cut a lot out of the budget and the assembly restored a little and he wanted to know the net result.

Sheila Selkregg said the budget cut animal control and libraries, which were already below national standards, and cut health, already grossly understaffed and underfunded. Anchorage was already falling behind the curve and now everything is thinner, she said. Anchorage has the lowest municipal taxes in the country. I/M testing cost is equivalent to one tank of gas every two years and it takes a lot of carbon monoxide out of the air.

Don Burrell, Jr., representing Alaska Senator Bettye Davis, said there very likely will be CIPS (Capital Improvement Projects) in the budget. Senators and representatives submit projects at the community council level, starting on the Senate side, in February. (Now is the time to speak up.)

Gary Solin re-opened the discussion of the cellular phone tower erected at Wayland Baptist University. He said no final site plan had yet been submitted but the tower, already constructed, is out of compliance with municipal code. He requested that the SFCC rescind a December resolution that SFCC would not oppose a variance. (See [December Minutes.](#)) The Planning and Zoning decision on the variance will be made at their January 14 meeting.

Eric Ash explained all the ways the tower constructors had tried to site the tower in the least obtrusive way possible and color it to blend in with the surroundings, and all the reasons it needed to be where it was. This did not satisfy Mr. Solin as it still is in his direct view, from 204 feet away.

Gary Solin proposed a motion to rescind the December vote and Paul Honeman seconded it, to allow discussion to proceed. The motion failed.

Paul Honeman and Adam Trombley announced their intention to run for Assembly seats in the next Municipal election.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.