

Government Hill Community Council Meeting

Minutes of the January 16, 2003 Meeting
Government Hill Elementary School Library
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

1. Introductions of visitors and members.
2. No changes to November minutes. Stuart Hall clarified that the physical boundaries of GHCC noted on the December minutes would include Defense Fuels only when it is turned over to the Muni.
3. Ship Creek Trail Project: Jeff Potts and, Joanne Mitchell from USKH gave an update on plans for the Ship Creek trail, which has been in the planning stage for 7 or 8 years, and they hope to have the design finished by the end of 2003 or early 2004. They hope to lay more asphalt this summer; they did 600 feet last summer! The trail begins at Chugach Electric dam, and crosses the Railroad tracks & Ship Creek east of the dam. Their plan now includes a long rise and bridge to get over the RR tracks and will have tunnels under Post Road and Reeve Blvd. There will be some relocation of Viking Drive, including parking and will end at Tyson Elem. Sch. in Mountain View. This summer's work will start on the east side from Tyson. Work for 2004 includes the bridge over the railroad track. Work for 2005 includes the connection to Government Hill. Their plan includes a new pedestrian bridge parallel to the old, lower C St that crosses over Ship Creek, and includes at-grade crossings of the railroad tracks. Design for the Government Hill connection to the coastal trail was not finalized. They had a couple different options to get from the Ship Creek Flats up to the GH bluff, including switchbacks underneath the Port Access overpass, which will not be bicycle friendly, and will need to have retaining walls. Other ideas included: a path that would parallel Loop Road on the South side, involving new retaining walls over the Railroad yards; or crossing under the port access road, and paralleling the North side of Loop Road. They did look at the possibility of adding on to the main A/C Street Bridge, but DOT has said that the bridge cannot take any additional stresses, as the design is already marginal for earthquakes.

There were comments from the community wanting to make sure that the Government Hill connection is coordinated with the AMATS plan, and the ever-shifting multitude of Ship Creek Master plans. The fact that the MOA and ARR has not decided on a master plan is one reason why USKH does not have a final solution in mind for either the East Connection through to the trail to Eagle River, and the West Connection to the Coastal Trail.

4. Legislative Report. Assemblyman Allan Tesche reported on 4 items: 1.) The Assembly was able to restore Squad 1 to the downtown fire station, critical to GH because that truck would be a primary responder. 2.) Historical preservation ordinance. Allow for voluntary registered for historic status by communities. The owners could propose to local Historical Preservation Board, if they meet the criteria, the building would be given historic status. 3.) School Bonds and Parks & Rec bonds are coming up on the April Ballot. They include a new ASD Admin building, construction of a new Eagle River High School, along with renovations to Chugiak, Service, Bartlett, and East HS, and several large maintenance projects to other Schools. 4.) Did pass a new law to keep Capital Improvement Projects from having their funding disappear if they are not completed as scheduled. State Representatives were unpacking boxes in Juneau and not available for updates.
5. Discussion of revisions to the boundaries for Government Hill CC was postponed to Feb. meeting.
6. Petition to re-zone part of the lot occupied by Wrightway Auto Carriers. Jim Sahill and Brad Rickey from Lounsbury Associates discussed the petition. Part of their lot is presently zoned as PC, (Planned Community), as part of Lo-Patin Ship Creek dream. Only part of their lot was rezoned, other part is I2, the same as the remainder of the Railroad lands. They have a 25-year lease, and they are considered a strategically located industry, and require close access to the port. When they tried to re-build their shop after last winter's fire, they found they could not have a truck maintenance

facility in PC zone. Want to go to I2, the same use as the RR. This would be for their own maintenance, not a commercial shop, and would be slightly bigger than the building that burned down. Questions included what kind of fire suppression and construction would be used:

A motion to draft and issue a letter of non-objection to re-zoning was proposed and unanimously passed as long as there is an appropriate fire suppression system, and landscaping that meets the proposed ship creek development zone. (I2 zoning will require 8 ft buffer between I2 and PC, which would require landscaping all along Whitney Rd.

7. Community Council Boundary Review Report. Stuart Hall offered a resolution that GHCC support the Planning and Zoning recommendations in part, but oppose them insofar as they would add areas south of Ship Creek to our Council area. P & Z came up with a plan that would take the industrial area that is presently part of Mountain View CC, and what is not presently in any CC to the GHCC. A resolution to strongly object to adding any of the industrial area south of Ship Creek was presented, and passed unanimously.

8. Community Forum: Stuart Hall proposed to send a congratulatory book to Sen. Lisa Murkowski, with plans for a future community picnic at a convenient time.

Bill Bobrick: Lobbyist for Williams Petroleum. Raised the idea of Co-Sponsoring a Mayoral Debate as an opportunity for Candidates to hear and be heard.

Suzanne DiPietro: Will bring a resolution to support the Coastal trail South Extension at the next community council meeting.

Wendy Lindskoog: Public Relations for the ARR. The railroad does have safety concerns with the Coastal Trail South Extension, as they would have trains going 55 mph, only 25 ft from the trail. They want to have the trail in the outer 30 ft of right of way, with grade separated crossings, proper fencing, and a clear definition of who has liability to keep trespassers out of the tracks.

Thomas Pease: Anchorage Neighborhood Housing last 2 summers did rehab work along with the MOA, Cook Inlet Housing Authority and World Changers. They are looking for comments or recommendations that we would like to see in GH. Their work in Mountain View, Fairview, Muldoon last summer took different approaches. Take a block, paint & polish, or target 3 to 5 homes that are neglected, focus on elderly housing, or work on general fences, landscaping. Ideas from the floor included: Street signs, improve buffer zone between Elmendorf and GH along E Bluff, Repaint Water Tower, and are open for more ideas from the community.

Thomas also stated that Out North Theater would like to occupy the Wireless Communication buildings. Out North is re-negotiating w/railroad for theater space along Ship Creek, and got Ford Foundation grants. We asked Jay Bruse to present their proposal, but it apparently includes restoring all buildings following national historic guidelines. One Bldg as residence, one bldg as museum, 3rd bldg undecided. Wireless is on national historic eligibility list, but not on the register.

9. Nominating Committee Report and Election of New Officers. The nominating committee, were unfortunately unable to get any commitments for President. The following were elected!

Mike and Melissa Abbott declined for co-president, but were elected to at-large members.

Stephanie Kesler and Jim Dunlap for co-Vice President.

Diane Miller and Bob French co Secretary/Treasurer.

Dan Lowery as Web Master.

Belinda Breaux for at-large member. Williams.

Caroline Higgins for at-large member. TOTE worker & Resident

There are plans to sit down and brainstorm to figure out how to make this work.

10. Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Revised to reflect corrections from 2/20/03 Meeting