

# **Rogers Park Community Council**

## **Minutes**

### **Monday, September 11, 2006**

#### **1. Announcements**

A. Northern Lights Sound Barrier: On the afternoon of September 11, 2006, Heather Ireland received an email message from Rebecca Campbell, CRW Engineering. The email explained that “because of the late start and the escalating prices of materials, the bids came back higher than expected.” Therefore, construction would only be possible on one section of the sound barrier, from LaTouche Street to Redwood Street – on the South side of Northern Lights. After reading this email, the group had a lengthy discussion about how the council should proceed. It was confirmed that a quorum was present. Carl Ward made a motion, seconded by Bob Williams that **Rogers Park Community Council urges the legislative representatives of the council area to contact the Municipality of Anchorage Department of Public Works and request they NOT award the contract to complete construction on any section of the Northern Lights Sound Barrier this fall.** A vote was taken and the members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion. As explained in a letter to the legislators, the council hopes that re-bidding the project this spring, with adequate time to order supplies and build the sound barrier, would potentially lower expenses. This might allow for the construction of two of the designated portions of the overall project to be completed in 2007.

**UPDATE:** The offices of Representative Gara and Representative Gardner contacted the Municipality and the project has been temporarily put on hold until Spring 2007. The council will need to revisit how each section was prioritized and determine if the building order is still representative of the need and wishes of the council. The item will be discussed further at the next meeting - October 9, 2006. The RPCC President would like to thank all of its elected officials for their hard work in obtaining funding for this project and apologizes for the late confusion created by this resolution. It is hoped that this will make the best use of limited resources.

B. Traffic Calming in College Village: Two projects are scheduled to be completed this fall --

- 1) Connect the sidewalk from Annapolis/La Touche east on Annapolis to Redwood and North on Redwood to Zarvis Pl.
- 2) Install a raised crosswalk at Zarvis Pl and Cottonwood St.

**UPDATE:** It was confirmed that construction is scheduled for this fall. It was delayed because there was utility work in the area.

C. UMED Fest: Whole human health festival -- Sept 16 at Goose Lake Park. Representative Cissna attended the meeting and explained that this is the first annual

celebration for health *education*, in an attempt to address the health care issues our community addresses.

D. Noise Control Discussion: October 18, 2006 1:30-2:30, L St – 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

E. Fireweed and La Touche...2007 Construction. Utility lines in the construction area will be buried in conjunction with this project.

F. 2007 Capital Budget projects funded.

1. Maplewood/Drake Sidewalk - \$200,000 (portions completed August 2006). Some council members expressed concern over landscaping choices such as planning trees to closely and planning tall trees under utility lines.
2. Northern Lights Sound Barrier - \$100,000 additional funds allocated.
3. Glenn/Seward Connection (see below)
4. Discretionary funds for all council area schools (\$50,000 Total)

G. Jacobson Park Update. After receiving a grant from the Anchorage Parks Foundation, Art Eash approached the Boy Scouts to assist with trail improvements. Zachary Klutz is interested in spearheading the project for his Eagle Scout. He plans to trim the trail, remove brush and lay gravel. In addition to the Park Foundation grant, equipment and time will be donated.

2. **Assembly Report:** Mr. Coffey and Mr. Traini or their representatives were not present. The president was not contacted with updates to share with the council.

### 3. **Legislative Updates**

A. Representative Cissna reported that it has been a difficult summer including two special sessions and the North Slope corrosion issues. The natural gas pipeline is an important decision for legislators and Alaskans. Please contact you legislators to let them know how you feel about the project. Finally, the FBI investigation of legislators and lobbyists is disturbing. Representative Cissna feels that the policies regarding lobbyists have to change. For example, some lobbyists have keys to the capital building.

B. Tom Obermeyer attended the meeting on behalf of Senator Bettye Davis. He encouraged council members to email updates and concerns about ongoing and future projects.

C. Darcy Dugan reported that Representative Gara has been working on the natural gas pipeline as well as other issues that arise. Many neighbor contacted him regarding the placement of the Northern Lights Sound Barrier. He forwarded their concerns to the Municipality.

D. Iris Matthews gave an update for Representative Berta Gardner. Rep. Gardner arrived later in the meeting. Both spoke about the plan to expand the Seward Highway between 36<sup>th</sup> and Rabbit Creek, creating 6 lanes total, 3 north bound and 3 south bound. A public meeting was held September 12.

E. Senator Ellis' office was represented by Kate Herring. She reiterated the comments of the others and noted that people can contact their office with comments, questions and concerns.

**4. APD Report: Sgt. Stanton:** During the summer months Sgt. Stanton was put on patrol, but has since returned as council liaison. The Police Department is adjusting to their New Chief of Police and other positions recently filled, including a Business Administrator who will ensure that the department is making the best use of available funds. No neighborhood has been identified as an area in which it is acceptable to have people camping. If APD is aware of a site they will work on it, including collaboration with Ed O'Neil. One council member noted that people who pan handle have become more aggressive. Sgt. Stanton encouraged residents to call APD's non-emergency number with the location and description. Please contact Sgt. Stanton with questions or concerns: 786-2668 or [cstanton@ci.anchorage.ak.us](mailto:cstanton@ci.anchorage.ak.us)

**5. Federation of Community Councils report**

- A. July: The FCC approved adding a fee for grant administration.
- B. No August meeting.

**6. Rogers Park Elementary School.** Randy Ribble, Project Manager with the Anchorage School District and Alex Prosak, USKH Engineering presented a "reduced scope" version of drafts presented at the May 2006 meeting. The purpose of the project is to reduce traffic and parking issues at the school, especially during drop-off and pick-up times, lack of ADA accessibility, vehicle exhaust, and cut-through traffic. Traffic issues are compounded by the fact that Rogers Park is a collector school for the IA program.

Mr. Prosak reviewed a map including the following suggestions to improve the concerns:

- ADA ramp
- Realigning the SE driveway with Cottonwood Street, for buses. An estimated ten trees would need to be cut to make this change.
- At the SW corner make the existing driveway an entrance only while adding an exit driveway to the west.
- A speed hump and textured crossing area to the main entrance.
- Tightening the island at the NW corner of the school to prohibit traffic turning around there during peak times.
- Adding additional parking spots where possible.
- Improving the flow of traffic in and out of the Northern Lights entrance by adding an oblong median between lanes just south of the sidewalk.

Council members had a number of questions following the presentation:

- Was it considered to cut-off access to Northern Lights from the school property? Mr. Ribble explained that this might compromise fire safety and could force traffic through the neighborhood.
- Has the district considered moving the IA program to a larger school campus? Mr. Ribble said that he would forward that question to other administrators.
- Could additional parking be added to the inside of the bus drop-off area? Snow removal limits this possibility.

- How will the new raised sidewalk to be constructed this fall be impacted by aligning the driveway with Cottonwood Street? USKH and ASD first learned of this plan at this meeting.
- Turning left (east) out of the new driveway might be unsafe. Could the district make this exit only to the west, if only at peak times? Possibly.
- What no-cost solutions are being pursued to reduce traffic? Parents and staff at the school were not present at the meeting to report about these efforts. It was recommended to review programs implemented at Sand Lake Elementary School.
- Could the school district incorporate improvements to the pedestrian overpass to make it ADA accessible? In addition to the high costs, the overpass is not on district property.

**UPDATE:** Heather Ireland followed up with Municipal and State officials regarding the overpass and received these responses:

Dave Post with DOT: “Usually a project to reconfigure a ped overpass to accommodate bikes is not a minor project but essentially reconstructing the overpass and approaches. Depending on whether ROW would be needed and other factors this could be as much as the \$8 million that was recently estimated for the ped/bike overpass near to connect the Campbell Creek Trail across Lake Otis Boulevard (hopefully it might be done for significantly less since some of the design elements and most of the right-of-way is in place).”

Lori Schanche, Municipal Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator: “We do have that project nominated as one our Pedestrian Plan project improvements. ...perhaps this project could be some kind of retrofit of adding in a flat surface that bike tires could be wheeled up and down on. We do realize that this is a priority request and have it on our list.”

Mr. Ribble will follow-up with the council regarding the outstanding issues. A cost estimate is due to the district by the end of the month. The project has only been funded through concept. Design and construction money may be solicited through school bonds (Spring 2007) or through a request from the State.

**7. Survey Results.** Council members are encourage to review the detailed survey results found at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/DisplaySummary.asp?SID=1035256&U=103525653335>

The 2006 Capital Improvement Project List for RPCC and other councils can be seen at:

<http://www.muni.org/omb/CommCouncils2006.cfm>

**8. Glenn/Seward Highway Connection:** Anne Brooks explained that linking these highways was identified in the Long Range Transportation Plan. The possibilities and constraints of this link will be studied. A consultant will be selected within a few months, which will then be followed by outreach and public input. The council will stay informed and involved since this project will have a major impact on our community.

Future meeting topics include the Northern Lights Sound Barrier, the Glenn-Seward Connection, Under-grounding utility lines, and Homeless Camps. Additional ideas are welcome!

Minutes prepared and submitted by Heather Ireland, September 15, 2006.