

Rogers Park Community Council
Meeting Minutes
7 PM Monday, November 11, 2019
****BP Energy Center****

Board members present: Janet Bidwell (President), Linda Chase, (Vice President), Steve Lindbeck (Secretary), Ric Wilson (Treasurer), and Jim Wright (Past President).

I. Welcome

(Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm – quorum attained.)

II. Approval of Minutes for October 14, 2019

Gretchen Cuddy moved to adopt, and Dave McCargo seconded. No objection.

III. Treasurer's Report

Ric Wilson reported there were no expenditures and a receipt of 1 cent in interest. The council account now contains \$188.68.

IV. FCC Report

Julie Bleier reported on Federation of Community Councils meeting of October 16, 2019. She noted the council needs to request its \$75 FCC marketing allocation by December 5. Police Chief Doll spoke at the FCC meeting, noting crime and stolen vehicles are down. He also said there were 6-8 officers on bike patrol this summer. The meeting also featured a presentation on bike trails and connecting the trail systems, including a route all the way to Palmer. Regular updates of municipal events and activities are available on the FCC website:

<http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/content/home.html>

V. Committee Reports

A. Crime and Safety Committee

Committee Chair Linda Chase spoke in favor of a resolution before the Council entitled "A Resolution of the Rogers Park Community Council Urging the Municipality of Anchorage to Assure Adequate Emergency Shelter for Illegal Camp Abatement, Effective Prevention and Enforcement of Public Nuisance and Criminal Laws for Illegal Camp Abatement and Public Accountability." The resolution had been presented at the October meeting and emailed out with the November agenda. The goal is to get 11 community councils to approve the resolution to present to the Assembly and administration in hopes of influencing budget decisions. The broader goal is to stimulate a persistent effort to remove illegal homeless camps, provide safe transitional shelter and beds for homeless individuals, and shift the municipality's attention away from a comprehensive attack on homelessness to a more limited focus on enforcing public health and

safety laws. She called solving homelessness a “long-term community task,” noted efforts by United Way and other non-profits, and said government should limit its focus to public health and safety enforcement. She called for a show of hands of those who had suffered a break-in or stolen property; about half did so. Nearly everyone in the room raised their hand when she expanded the call to those who knew someone else who’d suffered a theft.

Jim Wright moved to approve the resolution. Gretchen Cuddy seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 19 votes in favor, 3 opposed, and 4 abstentions.

Residents commented on the difficulty of the process and thanked the committee for its work; state Rep. Andy Josephson noted a constituent who had been pleased with the municipality’s efforts on the issue.

B. Midtown Congestion Relief Committee

Steve Noble of DOWL Engineering urged residents to attend an open house describing project study outcomes to be held the following day at the library. The project envisions reconstruction of the Seward Highway from Tudor Road to 20th Avenue, seen as one of the state’s busiest and most hazardous corridors.

Public review of the draft Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study started November 1 and has been extended to December 20. Completion of the PEL study has been postponed to February to allow time for community councils to consider resolutions on the subject during December and January. DOWL urges as much public comment as possible by December 20, however, to provide time for informed responses.

Residents complained the project would bring dramatic changes to the whole neighborhood in addition to affecting homeowners whose property would be taken. Committee members Bob Butera, Jim Wright, and Dave Evans spoke highly of the “thorough and ongoing” public outreach process and responsiveness to questions by DOWL. At the time of the meeting, responses to two separate sets of questions from the committee were being finalized. Jim Wright also encouraged residents who could not attend the open house for any reason to look for a recorded version of the presentation on the project website. The website also contains background and source material for the project and the public outreach effort: www.midtowncongestionrelief.com

VI. Elected Representative Report(s)

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson (SD-1):

Sen. Gray-Jackson read her full report, attached at the end of these minutes. She also offered shout-outs to Assembly Members Felix Rivera and Meg Zalatel, as well as Steve Noble of DOWL, for keeping the legislature informed with quarterly meetings.

Representative Andy Josephson (HD-17):

Rep. Josephson offered a rundown of the diversity of issues and activities he's dealt with in the past 30 days: Legislative Budget & Audit Committee and hiring a Legislative Finance Director to replace the departing long-time director David Teal; attending the AFN conference in Fairbanks; observing oral arguments in the case of the Governor's targeted veto of courts funding; a "deep inquiry" into attorney general budgets; visiting the crime lab; looking at the experience of prisoners incarcerated outside the state; the Hillcorp buyout of BP Alaska; Forest Service Alaska Roadless Rule hearings; allowable age of teen marriage (as young as 14 in Alaska under limited circumstances); a nurse practitioner who had 19 patients die of opiate overdoses; a University Town Hall and university reorganization proposals that have split the legislature; and a proposal by the administration to allow the attorney general's office to defend three top officials against possible ethics complaints also prosecuted by the attorney general's office.

Representative Harriet Drummond (HD-18):

Rep. Drummond, Co-Chair of the House Education Committee, spoke of various challenges to public education in Alaska. She noted benefits of the Legislature's "long history" of forward-funding education. School budgets typically are needed in January, but the Legislature does not complete work until May or June. In a recent court ruling the judge said the Legislature was rational in doing forward funding for that reason. She said the practice of forward funding had not been challenged until Governor Dunleavy did so. She claimed the state has lost hundreds of education professionals in recent years. At a recent education conference, she learned 43 other states have increased investment in pre-school spending and services while Alaska has remained static. Alaska, she said, suffers the nation's highest rates of child sexual abuse and neglect, and that in some places kids' primary motivation to attend school is not to learn but to have a safe place to be.

Rep. Drummond opposed the Department of Corrections proposal to send prisoners to what she called "criminal university" at out-of-state prisons. She noted that in federal prisons the rule is that prisoners must be incarcerated no more than 500 miles from home.

Assembly Member Meg Zaletel:

Assembly Member Zaletel reported the municipality recently received a \$25 million federal grant for port construction and has approved phase 1 of Petroleum Cement Terminal. That project needs \$80 million total; the \$55m shortfall for phase 2 will be covered by a combination of tariffs and other sources. She said port modernization now can proceed with a reevaluation of the rest of the project. A consultant's report recommends reducing the cost and "right-sizing" the project.

Assembly Member Zaletel discussed adding \$850,000 for Mobile Intervention Team and parks and recreation seasonal employees to address homelessness. She noted a discussion about whether there is need for four APD positions for trail patrol and

noted 25 schools back up to trails. She also mentioned the importance of community councils weighing in on marijuana license renewals and violation notices.

Assembly Member Felix Rivera:

Assembly held a work session on the Midtown Congestion Relief Project and Assembly Member Felix Rivera commended DOWL for all its work listening and responding. The session addressed right-of-way acquisition, funding, and other matters. The state Department of Transportation asked the Assembly to formally weigh in on project and the Assembly is considering how to move forward. Dave Evans asked when the Assembly might act; Rivera said probably in January.

Assembly Members Rivera and Suzanne LaFrance have proposed a resolution urging a statewide bond proposal for coastal infrastructure; this is being pushed by the Alaska Municipal League. The Assembly is deep into the budget process, with multiple work sessions and public hearings. Among the issues receiving special attention are homelessness, fire department overtime limits, police academy, and proceeds of the Municipal Light & Power sale. He acknowledged concerns about public safety – including a need to “right-size” non-officer police support staff in order to get reports processed more quickly.

Report: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADUs, aka “Mother-in-Law Apartments”)

Assembly Member Rivera discussed many neighborhood calls received regarding an ADU recently approved at 2421 Redwood Street. He had talked with Director of Economic and Community Development Christopher Schutte and Planning Director Michelle McNulty. ADUs are permitted in all residential zoning districts. This project originally was proposed as a yoga studio but later was changed to an ADU. There are no outstanding issues with utilities or roof height. No specific public notification is required. (Residents can look up building safety permits online if they wish to be informed.) Required permits are in place and there are no outstanding issues with building code or Title 21 compliance. There is a requirement that ADUs have to be compatible with the character of the neighborhood, and Assembly Member Rivera “made plain” he didn’t think this ADU was – but there is no definition of “compatible” in Title 21. The planning department will provide a formal presentation on ADUs in January.

Neighboring property owner Dan Rosenberg had brought the issue forward. He noted Rogers Park Community Council had opposed detached ADUs before the law was passed in June 2018. Showing photos of the Redwood Street ADU, he discussed issues about building height, shadowing, setbacks, loss of privacy, overuse of utilities, and enforcing residency requirements. He said the definition of neighborhood character actually cannot be defined, so the requirement actually gives a false sense that someone will look out for the neighborhood’s interests.

Dave Evans asked whether the Assembly would consider modifying requirements for detached ADUs. Assembly Member Zalatel recommended bringing all the concerns to the January briefing and then consider putting forward a resolution

giving direction to our Assembly representatives. She said it would be beneficial to see the conversation happen now that ADUs exist and the community has actual experience to draw upon.

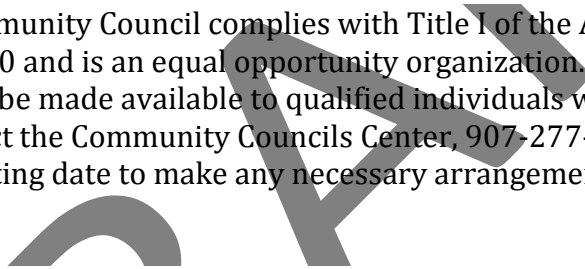
VII. Announcements and Member Comments

A. RPCC Winter Party will be held Monday, February 10, 2020

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.



The Rogers Park Community Council complies with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and is an equal opportunity organization. Reasonable accommodations will be made available to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Please contact the Community Councils Center, 907-277-1977, no later than 10 days prior to the meeting date to make any necessary arrangements.



Further Information:

Rogers Park Community Council: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/content/28.html>

Federation of Community Councils: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/servlet/content/home.html>

Municipality of Anchorage: <http://www.muni.org/pages/default.aspx>



Roger's Park Community Council – Senator Gray-Jackson's Report November 11, 2019

- **Senator Josh Revak was sworn in by Lt. Governor Kevin Meyer on Saturday, November 2nd at the Legislative Information Office here in Anchorage. Senator Revak was in the House last year and was nominated to fill the seat vacated by the death of Senator Chris Birch.**
 - **During last session, my Caucus worked well with the Senate Majority, and I look forward to continuing this working relationship with Senator Revak.**

- **Alaska Hire- the State Attorney General has refused to defend the Alaska Hire Law, which requires private contractors working on state-funded projects to hire qualified Alaskans as a percentage of their workers. The Law has broad bipartisan support over its 33-year history and has not been ruled unconstitutional by a judge. Therefore, it's unfortunate that the State Attorney General does not defend the law.**
 - **Alaska currently has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the nation and there is a great deal of demand for developing our infrastructure, so we should look for ways to hire more Alaskans, not less.**

- **Lastly, before I head back to Juneau for the Start of Session, I will be hosting a constituent coffee meeting in early December. More details will be announced in my next e-news and on my Senate Facebook page.**

I hope you are enjoying my monthly E-newsletter. If you're not receiving them, please send your email address to my staff at Keith.Bauguess@akleg.gov.