

South Addition Community Council
November 16, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:08 p.m.

I. Minutes from the October 16, 2006 meeting approved.

II. Reports

President's Report – Bonnie Harris:

- a. There is nothing new for SACC on the Planning and Zoning web site.
- b. Two Regulatory Commission notices were received. AWWU proposes a sewer rate change amounting to fractions of a penny. Enstar proposes increase in the gas cost adjustment rate of 35%, or approximately \$31/month for the average home.
- c. Sgt. Stanton was not available; crime statistics will be presented in December.

Assembly Report – Assemblyman Allan Tesche:

- a. Final action on the ethics code is scheduled for the next assembly meeting. The code has taken years to develop and is generally a good code with the exception of one provision that will not allow the Mayor to run for office while in office. The Assembly will consider removing that portion. The code also deals with conflicts of interest, gifts and gratuities, consulting contracts, and etc. All MOA staff, elected, and appointed officials will be subject to the new ethics code.
- b. Youth violence and gangs is a big issue. A recent community-wide meeting included state, municipal, and ASD officials to discuss solutions and coordinate efforts. There will be another meeting on Monday, November 27 at St. Anthony's Church. It will include a visioning session and discuss methods to solve gang problems.
- c. The legislative package wish list includes a crime package to deal with youth gangs and give people more tools to deal with youth violence. The list of capital projects will depend on available monies. The Municipality is asking for \$22 million, which will result in a total of \$44 million for property tax relief in 2007. Someone questioned whether the current \$20,000 deduction would continue, Allan responded that it would.
- d. The Downtown Plan is in progress. Consultants are coming back in early December with drawings and narrative and will start to get community feedback. Much of the work is about connections, including between downtown and SACC. Assemblyman Tesche can be reached 276-3284 for details and dates.
- e. Questions for Allan included the Park Strip and the review process that was to be voted on by the Assembly. Assemblyman Tesche indicated it was on hold pending a new proposal from the Mayor's office that includes some compromises. There is a 68 page Park Strip master plan document now available for review. It was prepared by MOA Parks, independent of the committees working on the Park Strip. There was discussion and concern for the relationship between the Parks Department and residents, especially those working on related committees.
- f. The Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) was brought up. Assemblyman Tesche indicated that KABATA is looking at a diverse financing package of loans, crossing tolls and grants to come up with the estimated \$580 million needed to finance the \$600 million estimated cost to build the project. KABATA is looking at tolls, bonds, and State funding. The issue of the KAC siphoning dollars from other more important projects was discussed. A SACC member attended a meeting where he heard that the SACC was in

support of the KAC. Reading of the October resolution and discussion affirmed that the SACC does not support the KAC. (Bonnie, I think Allan was trying to make the point that raising 600 million from 90 million is somewhat of a joke)

Legislative Report – Kate Herring (Senator Johnny Ellis’ staff) is continuing work on substance abuse treatment laws for the State. She indicated the special session is underway and answered several member questions with regard to the length of the session, which could continue for up to 30 days. She was asked if the House and Senate had been organized. The Senate has not been organized, however the House has.

III. Old/New Business

a. **Jody Karcz, Director of Public Transportation, MOA People Mover**, reported that there were 4 million trips per year on the system. Four plus years ago the system was reviewed by a professional who recommended minor route adjustment, pulse scheduling and \$4 to \$5 million of improvements. People Mover has applied for Federal grants to improve services. Ridership continues to grow from 10,700 riders per day in 2002 to 13,711 riders per day in 2005 (a significant increase). WiFi has been tested on one bus and while not marketed, it has received positive comments. People Mover has two legislative grant requests. One is for the UMED area for major improvements to stops including pedestrian walkways, in-pavement lighting, wider sidewalks and similar amenities to improve safety and user comfort. The second request is for dollars to match Federal funds for vehicle acquisition. The Federal government will pay 80% with a local requirement of only a 20% match. People Mover would like to replace 18 busses.

AnchorRides is a program that assists seniors and the disabled. It is a custom service where the rider calls in 24 hours in advance to get a ride. People Mover would like to increase the use of busses and reduce AnchorRides because busses are far more efficient and less costly. There is a Federal program to help do this and coordinate programs similar to AnchorRides, including private and non-profit vans and busses.

People Mover hopes to build a new paratransit facility on Tudor Road; they have a portion of the funding but still need an additional \$1.5 million.

Car Pool/Van Pool program: Almost 500 people take advantage of the car pooling/van pool program People Mover operates.

Questions from the membership included: What is the 5-year and 10-year plan? Jody said she ultimately would like to see busses operate every 15 minutes; they are currently at 60-minutes for most routes. She said they have not yet achieved 50% of the goals in their 2002, 5-year plan. What about light rail? Jody said transit supports “rubber rail” (busses) because it offers more flexibility and can better accommodate future land use changes to allow public transportation to follow growth. There was discussion of hybrid busses and alternative fuels and the big expense of changing the current operations of people Mover busses. Jody noted that new busses are getting cleaner and better in terms of fuel. One member commented on the need for the MOA to keep sidewalks cleared of snow to accommodate busses. It was noted by several individuals that People Mover is doing a good job and that bus drivers in Anchorage are exceptional. Special program options were discussed, including the Free Rider Zone in downtown. Jody said the bus drivers were very happy to see that program end, but People Mover is always trying new ideas to improve transit. The use of busses during off peak periods by classes

going on field trips (\$50 pass for teachers to take their classes) has been very successful, as has the Books-on-busses program.

b. **Kelly Blumer presented a proposal for SACC to support naming the stairs at N and P Streets after adjacent residents Frank and Maxine Reed**, who have a long and active history in Anchorage. She is filling out paperwork and following the MOA process for naming public facilities. There was a question about the historical name of the sledding hill that existed before the stairs were built and a suggestion to do some review of the site's history before a vote on the issue. The President suggested more information was necessary such as what the plaque will look like and exactly what it will have on it, noting also that the vote would occur at the December meeting. The proposed resolution is attached.

c. **Cammy Oechsli Taylor presented information on the recently released draft Delaney Park Strip Master Plan**. There will be a December 5 public workshop on the draft plan. The master plan, which was not presented to the Park Strip Citizen's Advisory Group for review, is out for public review; it is available on the MOA's web site. It includes items the Citizen's Advisory Group was not aware of, such as a recommendation to spend \$1 million on the Pope Memorial. The next Advisory Group meeting is from 12-1 on Tuesday November 28. People should review the master plan document and send comments to the MOA. It will eventually be reviewed by MOA Parks Commission and the Planning & Zoning, and then the Assembly, possibly as soon as March, 2007. There was some concern by SACC members that the Parks Department was not working with the Citizens Advisory Group. On December 8th there will be a joint work session on the Delaney Park Plan with Parks and Recreation and the Assembly.

IV. Community Comments

a. Some members want to receive SACC meeting notices only by email. If you want your name taken off the postal mail list and receive SACC notices and agendas by email only, notify the president, Bonnie, at Tavi2@gci.net. It saves money to receive community council information via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.