

**Fairview Community Council
General Membership Meeting
Hybrid-Central Lutheran Church and Zoom
October 12, 2023
7:00-9:00**

Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm. The meeting began with roll call, and the following members were present: Allen Kemplen, James Thornton, Karen Gonne-Harrel, Daniel Volland, Cliff Groh, Morgan M (HDL Engineers), Rich Sewell (Merrill Field airport manager), Sharon Chamard, Chris Constant. Online: Suzie Alexander, Brian Hopkins, Dan Owen (Alaska Transit), Kelly Ittenbach, Maria F, Monica Ratliffe (Fairview Elementary), Roger & Scott (Raven Bar), Stacy Shubert (Fairview Elementary), Stormy Jarvis (Chair municipal airport advisory), Nathan Clements, Suzy Pearson (AWAKE), Loki Tobin, Carl Jacobs, Lindsey Hajduk (Neighborworks). A quorum was established with individuals via Zoom.

Agenda:

The agenda was approved with no changes.

Approval of prior minutes:

No approval needed - former secretary, Loren Hill, resigned. In need of new secretary.

Elected Officials:

Representative Cliff Groh:

Homelessness big problem in his district. Did a ride-along with police. Trying to get more funding to relieve this issue as well as housing shortage issue as well as increase educational opportunities. Wants to bring back defined benefit pension system for public employees, including teachers. He is continuing his "Saturday milkshakes" at the Lucky Wishbone from noon to two pm until November 4th for anyone wanting to talk with him.

Senator Loki Tobin:

Went to Nashville and learn about high quality education. ASD was approved for rollout of pre-K program. Two highlights - offer reasonable class size and nutritious meals for pre-K students. Was appointed to commission while in Arizona that reviews SAT, ACT, and barrier standard tests - do we still need them? Talked about ethics and rules of AI, and how students are writing papers with AI, how should we be using AI in schools? Denver-National conference for state legislators youth homelessness fellowship where we learned about different interventions to interrupt homelessness. Upon return home, have been visiting different homeless shelters, sites, methadone clinic, Karluk Manor, Covenant House, and Neighborworks to talk about infrastructure we have created and can create. How do we disrupt cycles of homelessness? She and Senator Wilson plan to introduce legislation to make it easier for youth to access vital documents, as it is a

big challenge here in Alaska. Excited to see all the new folks that have moved into the district. Encouraging everyone to say hello to their neighbors.

James Thornton: How do national issues compare to ours?

Loki: “smack dab in the middle of it.” Biggest issue is affordable housing across the nation. Youth homelessness in Denver much worse than in Alaska.

Allen Kemplen: One thing that keeps coming up: “where is the money?” Is there anything the local government - the council or assembly can do to move the discussions forward in terms of increased funding, and do you think we can get funding this year?

Loki: met with mayor, assembly, Eklutna. Important to have every legislator on the same page for more effective strategy to get funding. We haven't been using our “coffee dollars” for youth aging out because of lack of employees at OCS. Met with governor who wants to make Alaska the best place to raise a family. The way to do that: making it where you feel safe, high quality education, and making it where you can buy a house. Hopeful that legislators can stick together to forward budget that includes all of the above issues and that the governor doesn't slash the budget.

Anchorage School Board:

Carl Jacobs: Primary goal increasing reading proficiency pre-K level. 1st set of results as part of the “Alaska Reads Act” back : amount of second graders proficient or above is 53%; third grade is 60%, students experiencing growth which is exciting. Awaiting standardized test results. Examining “cut scores,” which determines bar for level of proficiency. Alaska has some of the high bar sets in the nation. May get data in March. Board focused on improving attendance; some positive data to report: roughly 72% of ASD students are attending classes at 90% or higher rate. That is the highest mark since 2020 & roughly 13% jump since last year. Today there was a community event for select stake holders regarding the college career life initiative regarding career academies. They may be coming to larger high schools starting as soon as next school year. Will be an event in December to highlight these academies. New ASD partnership with UAA which allows students to graduate high school with an associate's degree as of this year. Next board meeting is November 17th at 6 pm for any individuals that wish to testify.

Assembly Member Christopher Constant:

Interested to hear about history of this documented proposal and the progress of any improvements interface between the Merrill Field and the neighborhood. The projects that were struck from the funding plan that we had. Umbrella route is over a residential neighborhood, which the last time this happened, the airfield took those properties and then promised it would never happen again.

Biggest item right now is the budget: 1st work session tomorrow on general government budget. 1st public hearing on the 24th of October on the budget. Another work session on the 27th. Second public hearing November 7th, then third work session on proposed amendments to the budget on 21st of November.

Today we authorized funding for land agreement to use the old solid waste transfer station administration building for non-aggregate shelter and we also established food supply services for the non-congregate and congregate service going into effect in the next 2 weeks. The goal is to move the 3rd Avenue folks into shelter by the end of the month.

Housing summit coming up in two weeks. Can go to muni site to "Housing Action Week" to look at what is happening.

Met with secretary of HUD, Marcia Fudge, at Covenant House, to talk about challenges to our communities in the context of the inequitable funding formula that we have identified. Houston Texas has about 3,100 homeless and yet they receive 47 million dollars, yet we have about 3,100 homeless people yet we receive only 4 million dollars. Anchorage has put in 10 million dollars into local taxes; the city of Houston spends 2 million dollars of local revenue. It's the reality we face.

The municipality as of Tuesday night updated its drug testing policy for the first time since 1998. The policy adopted which has a 30-day delayed effective date is to allow a shift from punitive position. Drug thresholds now match Federal standards.

James Thornton: What is happening to 3rd and Gambell's folks stuff and folks who don't want to abate?

Chris: property will be limited that folks can take with them into housing.

James: One tote was an issue at the Sullivan.

Chris: Not supportive of folks just camping anywhere and the reality is folks can't take everything with them. The law protects significant belongings.

Karen: It's a shame to pitch a perfectly good tent or belongings. In summer, now homeless have to buy another tent. Any office building that we can convert to housing?

Chris: continuing clean slate task force that is working on next year. Work ongoing. Solid Waste Transfer building being used, Covenant house investing in units, Have to have possession of properties in order to use them as shelters. Need money to buy and operate these facilities.

Rick: What access do these folks have to services: public entry, waitlist, walkup?

Chris: We never see that level of detail. Alexis is the person for homeless to talk to. Will probably be a waitlist. Will be three buses that will transport people where they need to go.

Assembly Member Daniel Volland:

Couple of projects I'm working on: 1st-ever transportation committee of the assembly meeting on October 18th. One of the topics we're talking about is the PEL (Seward to Glen connection) and reconnecting Fairview project.

Another project introduced would further define the role of the chief medical officer in Anchorage. Code is all over the place. Make role more uniform and what qualifications are needed for the job of chief medical officer.

Another project: should we amend the charter to require assembly confirmation of the chief medical officer.

Housing topic: two projects. 1. Home initiative: consolidate residential zoning districts from 15 to 5, using the 2020 plan use as a guide. Now, what are design standards going to look like? Hope to give builders more universality and flexibility in their projects. 2. Project to make it easier to build tri and four plexes in Anchorage. Want to make sure folks can afford to buy homes in Anchorage. This is one way we can address that. Right now, triplexes are too cost prohibitive to build. Cited several reason why. Should be like building duplexes, which are easier.

James Thornton: Will there be a public comment period on these issues?

Dan: Both have gone to planning and zoning, so there will be. Home Initiative will be more like June 2024. Hope is to get tri and four plex legislation passed before 2024 building season.

Karen: Do you mean home ownership or rentals? And is parking addressed?

Dan: Probably more rentals, but would love to see more owner occupied units. Parking not addressed.

Chris: Units can be both owned and rented - more about building multi-unit dwellings.

Allen: Something to keep in mind is that there will be a lot of investment properties and many owners will not be good stewards of the properties. Urged Dan to be cautious about what you're setting up for these neighborhoods, particularly R-3 and R-4 neighborhoods.

Dan: We need for more housing units - full stop. Missing the gentle density in Anchorage. Plenty of dilapidated single family homes as well. We are seeing a greater proportion of smaller households in Anchorage. Assembly passed AO 2023-50 that should help these issues.

Chris: I would caution that all investors care about is money - we're not necessarily going to see more affordable single housing.

Presentations:

Rich Sewell (Airport manager Merrill Field): Talked about flight procedures under contract with Hughes Aerospace. Talked about the three runways and basic airport information. Powerpoint presentation displayed runways along with runway protection zones. Talked about rules pilots should be following when taking off and landing. Takeoffs and landings occur at all hours of the day and night, including the hospital air traffic at Alaska Regional.

Six new procedures were developed regarding departure and approach rules. Publication scheduled for January 5, 2024.
Rick didn't think there would be an increase in air traffic in the next few years.

Morgan Merritt (airport engineer): Explained runway 34 helicopter approach procedure with runway protection zone (RPZ). Only category that changes the RPZ. Size of aircraft won't change. Approaches written for daytime only.

Keenan: (vice chair municipal airport): What are everyone's concerns?

Karen: Noise and additional traffic are concerns.

Keenan: New approaches will eliminate a lot of traffic over Fairview community.

Nathan: IFR plan for runway 7: why do we need more?

Keenan: New approaches provide much safer way to execute safer landings for both pilots and passengers. LPV guidance is technology based for safety. Current approach not as safe. New approaches offer most expeditious exit and entry for aircraft away from population.

Chris: helicopters don't tend to land on runway 7 and pilots don't "have" to do anything. No process for management to follow up with pilots who don't follow the rules. My main concern is the expansion of the new RPZ which appears to encompass 24 residential properties and two multi-family properties. Merrill Field will consume sections of the neighborhood. The last time, the airport took the east side of Orca Street. The promise was that would never happen again. We're now talking about dozens of folks who, over time, will lose their homes because the FAA, at some time, will dictate what residential properties will be inside the crash zones. I would like detailed list of the public process that was stated in this document that supposedly occurred over the last three years. This is the first local folks are hearing about this process and it sounds like it's pretty much a done deal. If I find this neighborhood was denied public process, I will call Pete Buttigieg.

Keenan: Re: runway 7 approach: They went over the least populated approach and this is for helicopters only which have completely different approaches. They stay high longer until drop off point in the trees. Design is incorrect; not designed for helicopters. Should be HPZ - helicopter protection zone. I challenged this document months ago to no avail.

Chris: This is a major problem if this diagram is incorrect; homes could be taken under this diagram.

Allen: These issues warrant a second meeting. Sounds like much more discussion needs to occur. Need to have clear understanding of what impacts are for our neighborhood. We'd like to see these concerns addressed in a substantive way.

Keegan: Municipal code overrules any FAA. He only owns inside the fence.

Dan: Is it a future possibility that homes can be taken by the municipality?

Rich: We have no plan, no intention of taking land.

Keegan: Do you have the power to take land?

Rich: I don't believe we do.

Dan: When we have this meeting, that needs to be addressed. We were awarded money for reconnecting our neighborhood (Merrill Field bisects our neighborhood) and Anchorage taking houses is a non starter. Set that as a baseline for the next meeting.

Allen: We need representation from the FAA - people who are knowledgeable about these issues. We want this meeting to be adequately advertised as well. Do we have your commitment, Rick, to a public meeting?

Rich: Absolutely. I'll work with you to find a date that works and perhaps at the Fairview Rec Center.

Move by Dan, seconded by James to extend the meeting to 9:15.

Community Reports (Ad-Hoc):

Homeless Committee:

No meeting of homeless committee, but one from the assembly strategy meeting this Tuesday. One thing that came out of this was that Northway Mall is being purchased by HOPE with intentions of doing something there. It was not noted what it was, but assembly members were interested in seeing what would come of it.

David: Info not corroborated. Haven't heard anything from the HOPE center.

Allen: We will be scheduling a homeless committee meeting in the next couple of weeks. Unfinished action items there.

Community Gardens:

Karen: it was suggested that we circulate a petition. Don't know how or where we'll do that, so that we can let the parks and rec folks know that we are serious about the lots and that there are people committed. Anyone here who would like to sign our copy feel free to. I have extras if anyone wants one. There is a QR code to help with the petition.

Allen: We will be persistent and do what it takes to make it happen.

Merrill Field:

Allen: We went over that - no need to talk anymore.

Grant Implementation (Challenge Grant, EPA EJ Grant, U.S. DOT Reconnecting Communities Grant):

Allen: Challenge grant: trees planted in Eastchester park along with a planter. Prepped ground for other planter box. Should be finished this weekend.

EPA EJ Grant: closed out.

U.S. DOT Grant (Lindsey from Neighborworks): no signed grant agreement. Still meeting with DOT. Placed cameras to count people on Gambell, Ingra, 5th and 15th and no count on Hyder unbeknownst to us or the bike path, so they are actually doing it right now and correcting the error. Camera set up on Hyder today for maybe the next three days. so walk along that corridor. The idea is to count people so they know how we use the area to design the future and not just have data from cars.

Public Safety:

Maria: Met October 3rd. Came up with plan to try to get accurate data out to the neighborhood. Also exploring National Mental Health Aid course so we can try to approach people in distress in a safe way. We are also working on what we want to focus on as a group and potentially starting four times a year if we can get partnerships to throw an event at the rec center for the neighborhood to continue our community goals.

Standing Reports:

Allen: Central Lutheran has been working on identifying a short list of neighborhood projects and how the Fairview rec center is understaffed and underutilized. They are adopting it as one of their priorities.

Another project is to develop a coffee shop and I met with SJ who has a vacant unit and possibly leasing it out. It would be a great space for something innovative - community space and coffee shop - some type of visual presence where info is readily available and educate people about the reconnecting effort. Pastor likes the concept - will take it to the church on Sunday.

Also, it's getting dark and folks need to be thinking about lighting. Fairview needs more sparkle.

Lastly, I want to emphasize we will have resources that do something special for Fairview. Our motto: Fairview: where people make the difference. All of us can make a huge difference in what Fairview will become. Think about how you can participate.

Old Business:

none

New Business:

Karen brought a resolution regarding the proposed implementation of instrument flight rules at Merrill Field.

Allen: at the next executive board meeting, we will look at it.

Community Comments/Concerns:

James: question: what is minimum height planes are supposed to be at over Gambell?

Sharon: 900

James: I was at a business lunch and there was no way this plane was even at 100 feet.

Sharon: They might have been crossing the inlet and when you cross the inlet, you can be below 500 feet or above 2,000 feet.

Allen: A number of pilots ignore the procedures. We see it every day.

James: The airport folks say that the technology is so accurate but there is no way they can tell who's lying.

Loki: Saturday is Mental Health Fair at the rec center from 1-4.

Sharon: Two items in the chat room: From Monica Ratcliffe: Fairview Elementary is going to have a Trunk or Treat event on the 19th of October, and then from Maria says the Bikes and Books Slow reading club will celebrate Halloween October 25th 4:30-6:30. Everyone is welcome to join.

Maria: Ak Regional Hospital is doing their drive through flu clinics.

Sharon: Move to adjourn.