

Rabbit Creek Community Council General Membership Meeting – February 9, 2006
Rabbit Creek Community Church, Snowshoe Lane

The meeting was called to order by Susanne Comellas, Chair. Other board members present were, Donna VanFlein, Peter Johnson, Gretchen Specht, Wayne Skidmore, Peter Crimp, Dianne Holmes and Dick Tremaine. Excused board members were John Isby, Ky Holland and Charlie Barnwell. Present board members introduced themselves. A quorum was met and a general membership meeting was called.

Minutes: - Motion by Dick with a 2nd by Wayne to approve the January minutes. Motion carried with no objections.

Treasurer's Report – There are currently 84 paid members and \$403.84 in the bank account. Donna is working with Wells Fargo to reverse the client analysis fees that were levied on the account. Reminder to please pay your 2006 dues.

Legislative Report – Assembly member Janice Shamberg spoke about some of the 28 items up for vote on the agenda for the February 14th Assembly meeting which will include several amendments to the charter.

These changes include a proposal by Sullivan to change the sign law that was approved 2 years ago to grandfather in existing signs, increase space on signs for “changeable” type and increase the number of flashes per minute, among other changes. Mrs. Shamberg encouraged folks to contact the Assembly members with their opinions and noted she is against these changes.

Coffey has two sales tax proposals on the agenda, one each under new and old business. They may be pulled due to lack of support needed at election time as poles are indicating only 53% approval rating and 60% is needed to pass.

Stout and Sullivan have proposed a change to the mayoral run-off election which would require a winning candidate to receive more than 50% of the vote. The charter originally required 40%. Run off elections typically cost about \$100,000. Mrs. Shamberg raised a concern that people who voted for the losing candidate would get to vote again.

An ordinance is on the table to exchange Mirror Lake lands for Baldy lands to facilitate access to Baldy in Eagle River.

The Assembly will vote on the 4th Avenue Theater in April. The Mayor's vision is to keep it as a city treasure, which could serve as a home for art affiliated organizations.

The school bonds will probably not be on the ballot in April as the Assembly members do not think they will pass as written. If they are revamped they may be added to the April ballot.

Birch wants to adopt an instant run off voting procedure. Questions were raised about the cost to the city, unknown, and how will this affect absentee voters, also unknown.

The Forest Heights re-zone appeal will also be on the agenda.

Mrs. Shamberg encouraged people to write to the Assembly members. An email can be sent to all the members at WWMAS@muni.org

ASD Report – Jeff Friedman reported the budget has been finalized for next year and there are board members traveling to Juneau to explain the needs of the school district to the legislature.

Two work sessions were held with the Assembly regarding the bonds; the Assembly requested changes be made, but the school board was unclear as to what changes were requested so none were made.

The ASD board feels they need at least \$100,000 for high school projects. Chester Valley school is in desperate need of remodeling as it was built in the 1950's.

APD Report – Cindy Stanton brought statistics for the number of reports in 2004 and 2005 and noted that the number of reports actually went down in 2005. She clarified these statistics included “reports” only, which do not include all “calls”. Officers may not always file a report for each stop.

The Chief of Police wants to adopt a change to the charter to allow appointed non-sworn municipal employees to write parking tickets. Currently only sworn in employees are allowed to write tickets, and these people are paid more than non-sworn employees. The people who write parking tickets are generally police academy students waiting for the start of the academy.

The Chief would like to see an increase in tickets for illegal handicap and fire-zone parking. Currently a police officer has to be present in order to issue a ticket for these violations.

Ms. Stanton noted a police academy started on Monday with 26 candidates.

Announcements & Comments – Susanne will be volunteering for the 15th year to take care of the flowers in the Rabbit Creek triangle on the highway on-ramp. Please contact her to volunteer.

HALO will sponsor a candidates Forum on March 23rd at O'Malley's on the Green, time TBA

* A motion was made by Dianne, 2nd by Wayne, to donate \$25.00 for food for the forum to HALO. Motion carried with no objections. *

FCC will sponsor a Mayoral candidates question/answer session on March 27th from 6-9, location TBA.

Dianne mentioned the \$20,000 property tax exemption applies to 2006.

Old Business – *Forest Heights* re-zone appeal will be before the Assembly on February 28th. Donna submitted a proposed letter to send to the Assembly re-stating the Council's comments that were sent to the P&Z Commission and highlighting their unanimous opposition to the re-zone. Dianne will put the assembly packet on the web-site. Time was given to the membership to review the letter.

Views of Prominence the developers have requested a change to the plat relaxing the drainage and vegetation requirements. They started clearing the land without the Corp of engineers approval and there is currently a stop work order in effect. The RCCC is on record with their concerns stated in a letter sent 5/21/05 to the Municipality detailing 10 items for concern. On-line comments will be accepted and there was concern from the members that if the restrictions are relaxed it will set a precedent.

* Motion by Dianne, 2nd by Wayne, to re-submit comments from 5/05 letter and reiterate concerns about drainage, clearing and recommend denial of the request by developer for leniency. Motion carries with no objections. *

Land Use Plan Maps -is a companion issue to Title 21 and will form the basis for rezoning in the future. Only three councils submitted comments on the first draft; additional comments are due March 23rd. RCCC's prior comments reflected agreement with the draft LUP maps that a lower density should be reflected in Potter Valley, but there was discussion on mixed use development that is planned for the Huffman Commercial Center. Mixed use neighborhoods were defined by Dick as "apartments above strip malls". There was discussion by council about establishing a town center in Huffman; the definition of a town center was read by Peter Johnson from the 2020 comprehensive plan. It was pointed out by Dick that Anchorage currently has no town centers as currently defined and that they will only occur as part of the 2020 plan. It was also noted that development is not available East of New Seward. Further discussion was tabled until March 9th.

Forest Heights

* A motion was made by Donna, 2nd by Dianne, to submit the letter to the Assembly. Friendly amendment by Peter J & Dianne to include information on the Historic Moen Trail. Motion carries with no objections. *

Title 21 Committee Dianne suggests the Council make comments. Conversation included information that schools on 1 acre for less than or equal to 100 people would be allowed. Title 21 will be the development code and standards that implement the goals in the 2020 Comp Plan and it is very important to be involved. The text is available on-line. A request for volunteers to form a committee was made by the Chair.

New Business – Randy Eledge gave a presentation on *Ptarmigan Roost Estates*, a 5.843 acre parcel. They are planning to build 4 up-scale condos on this R-6 tract. He has requested an amendment to the HWMP to bring public utilities to the site. His reasons were 1) increased nitrates in water on the hillside 2) having public water would be less of a drain on the aquifer 3) and would also be less of an impact. He also pointed out plans to build the driveway around a large tree, rather than cutting it down. Concerns were raised from a direct neighbor about drainage and snow removal. The neighbor pointed out that once a tree is covered with enough dirt it will die. Mr. Eledge said they will design the road to slant towards this tree to provide more water to it and that would help the drainage issues. A direct question was asked – “why condos”? response – safety concerns, they fit their lifestyle and they don’t want to re-plat. The land would be owned collectively by the owners of the condos. A question was raised about allowing horses. Mr. Eledge had not thought about horses, but thought there would probably not be any horses, or stables on the land. Questions were raised about the rest of the land, Mr. Eledge stressed they want to leave it as natural as possible. People were concerned about what would happen after he sells and Mr. Eledge could not guarantee anything. Suggestions were made to write a conservation easement into the plat notes, or work with the Greatland Trust. Dianne reported the outcome of the lands committee meeting with Mr. Eledge. There were remaining concerns that there is no HDP, philosophical opposition to amending the HWMP until the HDP is completed. A fire hydrant that may be installed would benefit only the condos. The committee was split on a recommendation and needed more information on drainage issues. The general consensus of those present at the general meeting was there would be less impact to have the condos, rather than sub-dividing the tract. A question was raised as to whether or not the Council wanted to support the extension of water and sewer. Precedence issues were raised and Robin Ward and Lance Wilbur did not think it would set a precedent for further extension of public utilities.

*Mr. Eledge moved for the RCCC to embrace the main line extension amendment to the HWMP, Ted Pease 2nds. Friendly amendment by Peter Crimp: with the understanding the development of condos will not exceed the maximum permitted under R-6 zoning. Amendment accepted as friendly by Mr. Eledge. Peter Johnson 2nds. Friendly amendment by Jess Grunblatt: with additional consideration being given to drainage and run-off issues to protect adjacent properties. Motion passed with 2 opposed. *

*Motion by Dianne to extend the meeting for 30 minutes, 2nd by Peter J – passed

Parks & Recreation – Shawna Popovici along with Tom Korosei spoke about the connection of the Rabbit Creek trail from Griffin Park. There is a section line easement on the West side boundary so connection can be made. The trail will be 1 - 1 ^{1/2} feet wide, 10% grade in places, with climbing turns to minimize erosion. There will be signage for pedestrian use only. Contact Shawna, Tom or Monique with concerns. This trail is meant for neighborhood access and will not have parking.

Shangri-La East - Dee High presented plans for the development of 40 acres on the south end of the 80 acre tract. The plan presented was for 37 lots on 40 acres with access via Sandpiper. The drainage will stay on the tract and be directed towards the wetlands located to the North of the development. The new road has a 60 foot ROW and most will be cleared to accommodate a drainage ditch and separated unpaved pedestrian trail. The houses will all be 3000+ SF with 1 outbuilding and 1 garage allowed. The developer does not allow clear-cutting of lots and specifically mentions preserving hemlocks over 2" in diameter whenever feasible. They will try to keep the road at a 10% grade. The developer brings in equipment to re-use dirt on-site. They are working with Views of Prominence for road connectivity. Initial work is expected to begin this spring with a 2 year construction period expected. There were concerns from the council about the degradation of Sandpiper and 162nd and questions about the developer's responsibility for the upkeep of the existing roads. It was pointed out by Lance that it can be difficult to prove the repairs needed are a direct result of new development, especially if the road was not built up to standard initially. Mr. High pointed out the developer would like roads connected within the developments above Goldenview. Residents of the Sandpiper area who were present expressed concerns over the road being too dangerous as it is and they would like to see other alternate roads created.

* Motion by Dianne, 2nd by Dick – to submit a letter with the following recommendations: 1. Connect the trail system to the adjacent ones in other subdivisions; 2. Complete the drainage studies that have not been completed and then re-evaluate the size of lots; 3. Locate collector road to the north according to that planned for in the Hillside Sub-Area Transportation Study and in conjunction with any Corps of Engineer requirements; 4. Keep drainage on-site and use pervious surfaces as much as possible; 5. To control drainage, limit re-contouring and limit clearing of vegetation to no less than 70%; 6. Join the LRSA as soon as possible, help maintain Windsong and Sandpiper during construction as well as help control dust on adjacent roads during construction; 7. Consider greenbelt-type trail system perhaps behind the lots (since the electric utilities will be located there); 8. Strong covenants limiting tree removal similar to those for the original Shangri La Subdivision would be welcomed; 9. Consider community park perhaps near wetlands because there is no gathering place in either of the large Shangri La Subdivisions. Discussion: Peter Johnson asks what would the developer do if one of the lots did not perc? Answer from Mr. High was that all lots must be developable before submitting plat. Another question raised about the type of septic systems that will be used on site, answer, standard systems. Motion passed with 1 opposed.*

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm