

Bear Valley:

Where Anchorage meets with the spirit of the last frontier



Bear Valley Community Council

BVCC Website: <http://www.bvcc.info/>

Federation of Community Councils: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/>

BVCC Meeting Minutes– March 15, 2007 Council Meeting

Compiled by Jim Steele

Meeting Minutes are posted at two locations online: <http://www.bvcc.info/minutes.htm> and at <http://www.communitycouncils.org/> (click on the Bear Valley link, and then click on the Minutes link).

The council meeting was held in the Art room at the Bear Valley Elementary School, 15001 Mountain Air Drive and began at approximately 7:20 pm. 16 people attended including 5 BVCC members indicating a quorum of council members present.

Chair Howland started the meeting and introduced from **Turber Straight** with Anchorage Tomorrow. Mr. Straight wanted to bring attention to the upcoming road and park bonds. Handouts were provided, no questions were asked and Mr. Straight promptly left.

Mary Cary a member of the Facilities Department (Anchorage School District) discussed Propositions 4 and 5. Prop 4 is the Clark Middle School replacement, comes at a cost of \$65 million, and is approved for 60% state debt reimbursement. Prop 5 is a district-wide building system renewal, comes at a cost of \$20 million, and is approved for 70% state debt reimbursement. Taxes per \$100K of assessed property for 4 are \$7.57, for 5 is \$1.75.

Macon Roberts, Vice President of the Anchorage School Board, Emphasized that Clark middle school does not meet specifications for regular schools and needs a complete replacement – repairs won't help. Discussed where Clark students will be relocated if the bond is approved.

Joel Miller asked Mary how Prop 5 affected Bear Valley Elementary. Neither she nor Macon had any information specific to the BV Elementary.

Chair Howland introduced **Tom Knox** (Municipal Surveyor) and **Karlee Gaskill** (HLB) who discussed access issues to private properties in Section 36, which has been sub-divided into 3 tracts. Chair Howland asked about the timeline of the project. Tom explained that Design engineers and the Director of Project Management have met and are working to determine acceptable grade. 6% is ideal, 10% allowable with distance considerations. Emergency vehicles are the chief concern, i.e., large fire trucks. Once resolved, it will be submitted to the Platting office, which is usually in itself a 90-day process. Hopefully by summer's end we can see closure.

Chair Howland introduced **Val Baffone** who is a candidate for Assembly, South Anchorage and will be seeking Janice Shamberg's position. She encouraged us to participate in the Hillside District Plan workshops. There were no questions for the candidate.

Chair Howland introduced **Shawna Popovich**, regional park director who talked about Proposition 2. Totals \$5 million and covers citywide improvements. Talked about master planning for Section 36 – monies needed. Encouraged us to speak with our state legislators – Parks have done what they can.

Chair Howland pointed out that there are 3 designated parks in the Rabbit Creek Heights and View area. She showed attendees maps. Also discussed possibility of improving access to Little Rabbit Creek throughout Nickleen Park by creating/clearing pathways.

Also interested in thoughts around the "Unnamed" Park on Francesca and Nickleen St. – if there's enough community interest, a committee could be formed to determine direction. Shawna can help us through the process, including naming the Park. Today there is no name – and it would most likely get named after the nearest road – in this case Francesca.

Chair Howland introduced **Heather Stewart** and Tanya Iden from Agnew Beck Consulting who were present to discuss updates with the Hillside District Plan. Public participation is needed for the project to be a success. The Anchorage 2020 Plan predicts 4000-6000 new homes between 2001 and 2020.

Discussed Phase 1 – Issues, Opportunities and Constraints Report. Also includes 3 issue-scoping workshops aimed at helping the data collection phase. Data collection includes Land Use, Drainage, transportation, water and sewer, on-site, and household surveys. It also looks at existing system, i.e., roads, trails, and trends in use.

Phase 2 is the framework phases where land use alternatives are discussed and concepts are converted into implementation plans. There will be another series of workshops here as well – along with public review.

Phase 3 contains the Draft Hillside District Plan itself and the preferred land use plan. The implementation plan addresses road improvements, trails and sidewalks, transit. Options include reservation of routes, capital improvement priorities, management and development standards, maintenance and finance.

For more information, visit the website at www.hillsidedistrictplan.com. She also passed along a sign in sheet for those interested in receiving additional information via email.

Chair Howland introduced **Sue Barkwood** with the Anchorage Fire Department's Fire-wise group and **Joe Stam**, an AFD consultant who have put together a comprehensive list of all pending projects. Fire-wise receive monies via congressional appropriation. The last amount was \$15million and there's roughly \$3 million left. Funds are expected to dry up by 2009.

Discussed fuel reduction projects that have taken place in the past few years. 120 acres were addressed in 2006. Created fuel breaks on both sides of Heights Hill, the east side of Elementary, Jamie Street. Forsythe Park is next in May.

Both emphasized the need to be prepared – water, rakes, shovels, etc. AFD is still offering home assessments.

Wildfire Mitigation is made up of 3 components – fire-wise education, forest treatment, response capability.

Caryn Smith asked what she might be able to do to offset the grass growing where the alders used to be. Sue recommends planting more resilient grasses that outgrow the dry grass, i.e., nugget, and fescue.

Sue also announced that beginning May 12, seedlings would be available at REI. If anyone wants to reserve seedlings, they can email Sue directly at BarkwoodSU@ci.anchorage.ak.us.

Chair Howland asked what impact the snow and cold temps this late in the winter would have on our fire susceptibility this summer. Sue explained that it depends on how fast the snow melts and whether the soil can absorb the melting water. Joe added that it really has little to do with snow but more so the rains we get in May and June.

Scott asked whether the woodlot would be available this year – still in the works. Something is expected to be in place but Sue is unable to provide an opening date. She is sure that it will have limited hours.

Scott asked about protective clothing – where to get it? Joe said cotton jeans and a cotton shirt. Wool is better. Carhartt brand clothing is great.

Chair Howland introduced **Janice Shamberg** who provided Assembly updates from Tuesday, March 13th. Knik Arm crossing was the main topic and dominated the session. She covered some of the conditions of the project, i.e., use of funds, mitigation plans for affected communities, environmental studies, no building on the Anchorage side until funding is secured, etc.

Chair Howland introduced **Sgt Dennis Allen** with APD. Cindy Stanton has moved to the crimes against children unit. Sgt Allen Discussed Trail Watch, which is a volunteer program aimed at those of us that are hikers, bikers, and outdoor folks.

He also provided some statistics including the top 50 Anchorage Accident Intersections. Last month the APD averaged 650 calls per 24-hour period for an average of 23 officers on duty. Specific to Bear Valley, there were 8 calls logged. Chair Howland introduced **Teri Albrecht**, CIP Coordinator for the Department of Public Works. Teri was there to advocate attendance to the Town Hall meetings, the next of which will be held on the 20th of March at central Junior High School – covers all projects citywide. Door prizes, Q&A with the Mayor.

HALO Updates

Rodney Powell, Member-At-Large reported that the last meeting held was a candidates forum. No real information to provide.

FCC Updates

Scott Pexton, BVCC Vice Chair

General discussion of prevalent council issues. Scott submitted road maintenance, development process, and the transfer of Section 36 to parkland.

Assembly Liaison

Joel Miller

Referred to Janice Shamberg's update – last meeting was dominated by the Knik Arm Bridge discussion.

Closing Items

Brief discussion on the new cellular tower placed in the area. There were concerns over the brightness of the light. Jim Steele explained that it is a CDMA cellular tower owned and operated by Alaska Communication Systems (ACS). The tower provides wireless coverage for the hillside from O'Malley Road to Rabbit Creek Road as well as back into Bear Valley and Rabbit Creek Heights. It is data capable (meaning it provides wireless Internet connectivity) and has GPS functionality (meaning it can help emergency response personnel locate people in the Park).

Jim Steele made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. Scott Pexton seconded the motion. The motion was approved. These have been posted to the BVCC's website at www.bvcc.info/minutes.htm

End of meeting minutes.