

Fairview Community Council
Executive Board Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2007
Fairview Recreation Center

Meeting started at 7:03 pm.

Board Members Present: Darrel Hess (President), Sharon Chamard (Vice President), Harry Deuber (Treasurer), Paul Benson (At-Large), Allen Kemplen (At-Large), Lee Ross (At-Large)
Other Persons Present: Dwayne Adams, Betty Caudle, Ken Chapman, Vesta Elliott, Dan Loring, Claris Syren

Treasurer's Report:

Beginning Balance 4/14/07		\$5,543.60
Deposits		
5/3/07	Membership dues	\$15.00
5/4/07	Alaska Sales and Service	\$5,000.00
Total Deposits		\$5,015.00
Expenses		
4/17/07 #1095	Lee Ross – Patrol Scanner	\$284.16
5/4/07 #1097	AK Best Water – APD substation	\$70.00
5/7/07 #1096	ACS – Patrol hotline	\$38.81
5/7/07 #1098	S.B.S. – Plant Sale	\$69.86
5/14/07 #1099	Lee Ross – Patrol Camera and Recorders	\$584.97
5/14/07 #1101	Harry Deuber – Plants	\$156.62
Total Expenses		\$1,204.42
5/14/07 Ending Balance		\$9,354.18

Vesta Elliott, a homeowner on Orca Street, presented some issues concerning an apartment building neighboring her at 11th and Orca. Apparently she found a crack pipe in her backyard, and believes children from the building have vandalized her fence. Further, she claimed that there have been repeated incidents of verbal fights from one of the units, and that a pit bull belonging to tenants in another unit often runs loose. The balconies of the apartment building are also allegedly being used by tenants as long-term storage. She said she has contacted the building manager in the past, but found him to be uncooperative. She claimed the sign with his phone number on it has been removed from the side of the building. Other persons at the meeting advised Ms. Elliott that although they are sympathetic to her situation, the ultimate responsibility for dealing with irresponsible landlords and building managers falls on adjacent landowners. They suggested that Ms. Elliott continue to report incidents to the police, contact Land Use Enforcement concerning storage on the balconies, and systematically document any goings-on at the property. Sharon Chamard and Lee Ross said that the Public Safety Committee and Community

Patrol will try to find out who owns the apartment building and contact that owner concerning the alleged problems, and will also find out if that property has a lot of calls for police service. Ms. Elliott raised issues of a neighboring business, Potelcom, which apparently unloads their trucks on her side of the street, practically in her front lawn. Further, she reported that trucks going to that business are going too fast, especially because of the proximity of Fairview Elementary School. Darrel Hess said the Council will look into the matter of truck traffic along 12th Avenue, and if appropriate, will write a letter to Potelcom encouraging them to confine loading and unloading of vehicles to their side of Orca Street. Finally, Ms. Elliott complained about noise from planes taking off from Merrill Field. Allen Kemplen recommended that she call the Merrill Field control tower when there is unacceptable noise. The Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission keeps track of noise complaints, and if there are none, assumes there are no problems.

Dwayne Adams from Land Design North, Ken Chapman from the State Department of Transportation, and Betty Caudle from Brooks and Associates attended the Executive Board meeting as the fourth of a series of public input sessions concerning landscaping for the 5th Avenue project. The project involves the widening of the Glenn Highway in front of Merrill Field to three lanes each way, with a median running the distance from Airport Heights Drive to Karluk Street. The plan so far calls for fencing in front on Merrill Field on the south side of the roadway. The “Welcome to Anchorage” sign will be moved to a green space on the north side of the roadway at the approximate location of the current Laserwash. The project may include running water to the Blue Star Memorial site. There will be a focal point on the Alaska Sales and Service property where 6th Avenue jogs north. There will likely be landscaping on both sides of the project area. Regarding the median treatment, there are proposals that go beyond stamped concrete, but these can be expensive and hard to maintain because of transpiration from the plants and the need to get water to them. It is a better “bang for the buck” to have a number of focal planting elements. Darrel Hess asked about an irrigation system. Dwayne Adams said you would certainly need that for the median, and that there is a precedent along C Street. This would be a capital expense. He added that a landscaped median is important, but the Department of Transportation wants a commitment on the maintenance; landscaping can fail without this maintenance, and as a designer, he would not want landscaping if it will fail. Road bond money would be needed to supplement the current budget. A draft of an agreement between the municipality and state concerning landscape maintenance went out today, and he is committed to pursuing this agreement. Darrel Hess pointed out that this is a crucial road leading into the downtown. He thinks the mayor supports landscaping and that something should be able to be worked out. Allen Kemplen said that the Council would like be kept informed about other design elements that will be a part of the project. Dwayne Adams replied that the deadline for the pre-project scoping and engineering document is next week, so by then, they should have a good idea about what will be part of the plan, pricing, and so on. Allen Kemplen stressed that the Council wants to be a part of this discussion. He said that the median landscaping isn’t supposed to put in until 2009. The Fairview Community Council has a good record of securing funding, so he urged the presenters not to feel constrained by their current budget. Darrel Hess said he has talked to Les Gara, Johnny Ellis, and Allan Tesche, and they all support median landscaping. Allen Kemplen commented that he was hearing a commitment from the presenters to involve the Council; Dwayne Adams replied that this was correct.

Darrel Hess reported that he met recently with Fairview Elementary principal Marc Robinson, the Anchorage School District’s Elementary Education coordinator Patricia McRae, and the School District’s Title 1 coordinator Marjorie Waggoner, about the issue of hiring a new community outreach staff member at Fairview Elementary. Hiring such a person would require cutting one teacher position in addition to the one position that has already been cut for next year. This loss of two teachers will result in big increases in class sizes. A recent survey of parents found that two-thirds are most concerned about class size. The current school staff already does considerable outreach. There were 50 home visits and work with 75

homeless students. There are also volunteer PALS (Parents as Liaisons in our Schools) who do outreach with about 3-5 families a week, particularly minority and immigrant families. There is also good parental participation in concerts, other celebrations, and parent-teacher conferences.

Darrel Hess reported that he spoke with Sgt. Dennis Allen regarding the recent fire at the Fairview Elementary playground. Some community members had expressed concern that this was gang-related, but Sgt. Allen said this was not a gang incident, and that Fairview doesn't have a gang problem. Sgt. Allen will contact the gang task force for more specific information and report on gang activity in Fairview at the General Membership Meeting next week.

Darrel Hess said that the Anchorage Daily News editorial staff has not responded to a letter sent to them several weeks ago concerning the inconsistency of reporting on matters concerning Anchorage's historic neighborhoods. Darrel said he plans to e-mail them a copy of the letter to the Editor and ask if the original mailed letter was lost. The Council will need to think about what to do if there is no response.

Allen Kemplen asked if there had been any response from Gordon Keith to the letter sent to him asking for more participation by the Council in planning for the Highway-to-Highway project. Darrel said he would follow-up.

Next week's General Membership Meeting tentative agenda includes School Superintendent Carol Comeau and Lois Epstein (concerning an upcoming public meeting on the Knik Arm Crossing) as guests.

Darrel Hess made a variety of announcements:

- Regarding V.F. Grace, there continue to be lots of inebriates there; the food truck is there almost every day. The apparent feeling of the owner, Mr. Rush, is that the gathering of inebriates on his property doesn't affect him, and that it is not his problem. Assemblyman Allan Tesche suggested that the Council contact Matt Claman, the chair of the Assembly's Public Safety Committee, to hold a public hearing as a possible prelude to a nuisance lawsuit.
- The Mayor's picnic will be on August 4th at Fairview Lions Park.
- Darrel gave a presentation earlier in the week to a group from Youth Employment in the Parks. Many of these people helped plant trees at the Day of Caring.
- Seniors can now ride People Mover free on Wednesdays.
- Darrel went on a tour of the food banks and other related programs. Apparently there are 36,000 Alaskans who use food banks, and only 12,000 of these people are homeless.
- The Paddleboat Café at Goose Lake will be giving free lunches to kids all summer as part of a federal grant.
- The draft document for the 9th Avenue project has been released. Alternative #3 has everything the Council asked for: gateway portals, bulb-outs, and wider sidewalks on the north side. Reconstruction will now extend to LaTouche Street.
- The 13th and Gambell Highway Safety Improvement Project will be done in the summer of 2008.
- The Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list is due July 16th. The matter will be referred to the Neighborhood Plan Committee, which will make recommendations at the next Executive Board meeting.
- After Day of Caring, Mayor Mark Begich asked for a list of additional improvements to Fairview Lions Park, and Vic Mollozzi and Jeff Clarke from the Parks and Recreation Commission asked for a list of what else the neighborhood wants to see at Fairbanks Park. The Council already has such lists from walkthroughs and discussion from a couple of years ago; the lists will be updated to take into account recent improvements and new needs. For Fairbanks Park specifically, we plan to have a barbecue in the park after the remaining improvements (fence, lighting, and rain garden) are installed this

summer, and survey the neighborhood attendees about what they want in the park.

Lee Ross spoke with Flip Todd from Todd Communications at 12th and Fairbanks. The tenant who owns the conexes in the alley behind Barry's Baranof Lounge will be leaving in less than four months, and will take the conexes when they go. Mr. Todd also said he wants to put more lighting in the back of his property, and was curious about the fence that will be erected this summer at the south end of Fairbanks Park.

Darrel Hess said that he and Sharon Chamard met recently with Mayor Begich and Mary Jane Michael about various Fairview projects (based on a list that was generated by the Neighborhood Plan Committee and Allan Tesche). Both the Mayor and Ms. Michael were very receptive and supportive of the projects on the list.

Comments:

Lee Ross said that two girls are suspected of lighting the fire at Fairview Elementary. There has been little activity on the street from this group of juveniles since the police contacted these two girls. APD is doing a very good job on this.

Paul Benson will be calling a meeting soon through the Federation of Community Councils to discuss the community council radio show. He wants someone from the Fairview Community Council to attend this meeting. He also wants the Council to donate \$50 per show. Allen Kemplen suggested that Paul propose a resolution authorizing this expenditure.

Claris Syren commented that it should be no surprise that we have the problems we do at 13th and Gambell. Years ago, some members of the Council worked hard to keep the Spirits of Alaska liquor store out. But the Council also allowed Bean's Café and Brother Francis Shelter into the neighborhood. It's not all V.F. Grace's fault that 13th and Gambell is how it is. We have an element in our community that will always be here.

Allen Kemplen said he is putting the final touches on the Neighborhood Plan.

Dan Loring thanked the Council leadership for the changes to Fairbanks Park. He said he can see it becoming a kids' park again.

Dan also reported on a conversation he had recently with the owner of some property downtown on Eagle Street. The owner is thinking of converting that motel (Anchor Arms) to condos. However, he heard that Bean's Café will be torn down and replaced with a larger building with sleeping rooms on the 2nd floor and a kitchen and dining room on the 1st floor. If Bean's rebuilds, the motel owner will sell his property to various non-profit social service providers who have contacted him about his motel, and will not convert them to condos.

Dan talked to the owner of the land at 16th and Karluk, Mike Buzzard. He is building three buildings there, each with 18 condos. The construction should start in August.

Dan said graffiti is not being taken care of adequately by Graffiti Busters, and that there is lots of graffiti at Fairview Elementary. This graffiti should be monitored and removed promptly. Allen Kemplen said that if there are issues with graffiti removal and resources, it is important for the Council to voice its concerns. Claris Syren said she thinks graffiti removal should be part of the gang task force.

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sharon Chamard, Vice President