

Rogers Park Community Council Minutes  
7 PM Monday, May 11, 2009  
Rogers Park Elementary School Library

**Board members attending**

Jim Wright, President  
Ted Ryberg, Treasurer  
Marilyn Houser, Secretary  
Heather Ireland, Immediate Past President

**Minutes**

I. Welcome

Jim Wright called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 P.M.. He reported Bob Churchill, RPCC Vice President and FCC Representative, was unable to attend, and RPCC wishes him well. There was no FCC report.

II. Approval of Minutes

Addressing the minutes of the April 13, 2009 RPCC meeting were initially delayed because there was not a quorum. When enough members of the RPCC were present, discussion of the minutes convened. Elvi Gray-Jackson, Anchorage Assembly woman and RPCC member, stated she will provide the notes from her report to include with the meeting minutes rather than try to incorporate corrections that are needed. Heather Rice stated the minutes are incorrect in that ADF&G did not say the proposed single track bicycle trails in Far North Bicentennial Park are dangerous and that they helped design them. Marilyn Houser stated she attended two meetings where AT&T stated they had public safety concerns about the placement of single track bicycle trails in documented wildlife corridors. Numerous corrections and additions are needed to page two of the minutes as submitted, so the decision to delay adoption until the next meeting was made given the full agenda for tonight's meeting.

III. Assembly Report

Dan Coffey was not present.

Elvi Gray Jackson provided a thorough report:

- April 28<sup>th</sup> - Assembly approved the 2009 1<sup>st</sup> quarter budget revision and approved the mill levy.
- A total of \$18M in property tax relief

- \$15.1 from revenue sharing, \$2.9 in additional revenue sharing from the stimulus funding
- Mill levy for Taxing District 1 = 15.62 (ASD 7.18) prior to adding the \$2.9 in property tax relief
  1. Example: Elvi's Assessed Valuation (after \$20,000 residential credit)  
Taxes = \$3,751
- Mill levy for Taxing District 1 = 15.50 (ASD 7.18) after adding the \$2.9 in property tax relief. = \$3,723
- May 12<sup>th</sup> Agenda

Budget revision resolution – PH 5/26 (Selkregg, Gutierrez)

1. Anti-Gang Youth Violence Position – Tri-borough MOU
2. OEO office – restoring Admin position
3. Bus service on Veteran's Day and Day After Thanksgiving
4. Graffiti Busters Program – adding part-time temp

Introduction of anti-discrimination ordinance – adding sexual orientation and veterans – PH 5/26

- Two other unions gave back 3% increase – Teamsters – Bus Drivers – Local 302 Plumbers
- Non- rep furlough ordinance – PH tomorrow – Mandatory LWOP of 62 hours annual – Savings - \$1.2 General Government and \$453 - Utilities
- Change in leadership – Ossiander Chair, Drummond Vice Chair – New Committee Assignments
  1. No longer Budget Committee Chair – Jenifer Johnston, Chair – Elvi and Pat Flynn members
  2. Audit Committee Chair – Starr, Drummond
- Meeting is being scheduled to meet with MOA Staff re Safety issues at Annapolis and LaTouche – Possible Friday

#### IV. Legislative Report

Berta Gardner was present and provided the following information:

- The legislature did accept and approve all of the federal fiscal stimulus funds. It is likely Governor Palin will not approve the weatherization part of the package, turning down 28 million.
- Concerning the Alaska natural gas pipeline, there is a battle brewing between Alaska Natural Gas Association and Enstar. Berta stated she supports the efforts of ANGA but it doesn't have the funding. She stated the governor seems to want Enstar to take the lead on the gas line.
- Bills that didn't pass will be carried over to 2010, the second half of the session.
- Berta attended an energy meeting in Washington, D.C.. Members of the Alaska legislature who went took a lot of heat for their attendance, but it is important for Alaska to be at the table. She stated opportunity needs to be opened up I Prudhoe Bay, but large companies control the markets and are fighting opening it.
- She stated she does not believe a 90 day legislative session best serves Alaska.

Peter Mjos asked Berta about ANGA. ANGA has been working with Trans Canada. ANGA's proposed route is along the Richardson Highway. ANGA would build a quick, small line. Enstar wants to run a line along the Parks Highway. Building a gas line is so expensive because we have such a small population in Alaska and don't have a large commercial user. We will have to export gas to make it affordable. Berta stated there is still a lot of natural gas in Cook Inlet but it is not easy to get to it and will cost more. All the more easily accessed reserves have already been tapped. Tom Obermeyer, aide to Betty Davis and member of RPCC, stated there is plenty of natural gas in Cook Inlet but the producers won't go to the table. In fact, they have sued the Department of Energy because they won't be forced. Tom stated Japan gets cheaper gas than we do in Anchorage. The producers contend it is not a monopoly.

Max Hensley from Senator Johnny Ellis's office stated Berta had done a good job of providing a summary and had nothing to add.

David Theriault from Senator Les Gara's office stated Les is working hard to improve the state's foster care system, mentoring foster children, and recruiting foster parents through Office of Children's Services. David also stated the bid for the sound barrier fence along Northern Lights has gone out and construction will occur this summer.

David Evans asked about the status of the net metering bill. Max Hensley stated the bill got bogged down. Berta Gardner stated the energy companies do not like net metering; they do not want to have to buy it back at retail prices.

Tom Obermeyer stated many bills died in committee during the session, including limits on nurse's over time, foster care, trauma centers, Denali Kid Care (70% of which is paid for by the Federal government). They are hoping to revive all the bills in 2010. He stated it is important for constituents to be involved.

## V. Treasurer's Report

Ted Ryberg reported a \$145.52 balance in the RPCC bank account.

## V. Presentations and Discussion/Announcements

Karen Ruud stated there will be a meeting on Friday, May 15, 2009 concerning the safety issue for school children crossing the street on Annapolis and LaTouche. Karen is the school nurse at Rogers Park Elementary and has spoken to the Anchorage School District about the problem. She was told it is a Municipality of Anchorage issue and it maybe addressed this summer because the city has gotten a safe route to school grant; interns will be hired and will be visiting sites where there are hazards for school children.

Jim Wright stated Steve Gillet of the Municipality of Anchorage has gotten three bids for the Northern Lights sound barrier fence. The entire north side of Northern Lights to the corner of Seward Highway should be completed this summer. Tom Obermeyer noted the center median between Northern Lights and Benson should be redone with landscaping and it was a mistake to allow it be paved when that road project was done.

Northern Access to UMed District presentation done by Michela Spitz and Maryellen Tuttel of Dowl HKM:

- Northern Access to the UMed District was added to the Long Range Transportation Plan several years ago.
- Dowl HKM is just getting started on a one year reconnaissance study
- There have been a lot of improvements from the south for people driving to the UMed District and now improvements from the north need to be addressed.
- The first public meeting is Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at Wendler Jr. High School.
- Dowl HKM recognizes there is public concern about the need for the road project, but doctors need to get back and forth quickly and easily.

Heather Rice asked what are the transportation issues? It seems to be an afternoon traffic peak not so much in the morning. Dowl HKM stated 4:00 – 6:00 P.M. is the issue and noted ambulance service will improve.

David Evans asked what field work will be done? Dowl HKM stated wetland delineation will be a focus. They are also doing modeling for traffic studies.

Heather Rice asked if a study will be done on the impacts on bicycle and pedestrian plans? Dowl HKM referred her to Lori Skanke.

Helen Nienhauser stated residents of the neighborhood use the trails in the area heavily. A road will mess up the ski trail system. A bridge will be needed, not a grade separation. The only time she notices there is a problem on UAA Drive is when classes are changing. Heather Ireland stated the pedestrian crossing may be going to a pedestrian activated crossing light.

Tom Obermeyer asked for some indication of where these roads will be placed. Dowl HKM stated they are only doing reconnaissance right now and will look at various placements for roads or roads in the area, including pushing Providence Drive through or pushing Bragaw Street through.

David Evans asked about construction costs.

Peter Mjos noted after UAA Chancellor Fran Ulmer met with citizens concerning the proposed sports complex for UAA and the unacceptable level of traffic it would bring to the area the project was downsized and has been moved to Elmore.

Dowl HKM stated the LRTP includes a study to improve access into the UMed District from the northeast.

Peter Mjos asked what has East High School had to say about the project since the students already have a difficult time crossing the roads there? Dowl HKM stated the school buses will flow more easily.

Heather Ireland read her resolution that RPCC does not support road access of UMed from the northeast and moved it be passed. Peter Mjos seconded the motion.

**North University Medical (UMed) Access Resolution:**

Whereas, the northeastern quadrant of Anchorage has access to quality, emergency medical services at Alaska Regional Hospital; and

Whereas, the northeast area of the university lands includes wetlands (class A, B, & C) and wildlife (moose, small mammals, and waterfowl) that should be protected; and

Whereas, the wooded aspect of the Northern Lights corridor enhances the quality of life in Anchorage; and

Whereas, existing traffic and road problems in the UMED area and throughout Anchorage are not being addressed due to funding limitations; and

Whereas, adding roads does not necessarily improve the flow of traffic and may not address existing traffic concerns; and

Whereas, the positive and negative impacts of Elmore Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd/48<sup>th</sup> Ave have not yet been fully assessed; and

Whereas, additional access from Northern Lights to the UMED will disrupt the smooth East/West traffic flow on Northern Lights; and

Whereas, North UMED access would impose unacceptable traffic congestion, safety and environmental impacts on East High School; and

Whereas, additional roadways into the area will erode delineation of the UMED district; and

Whereas, public transportation enhancements to this region can alleviate some traffic issues; and

Whereas, the 2008 Rogers Park Community Council survey results overwhelmingly supported the preservation of the trails and open space on UAA and APU lands\*;

And whereas, additional North access to the UMED district is not in the best interest of East Anchorage residents,

Therefore be it resolved, that the Rogers Park Community Council does not support access to the UMED District from Northern Lights east of UAA Drive.

Tom Obermeyer stated he doesn't think now is the time for RPCC to take action but also believes if we wait it will be a done deal.

Dowl HKM stated the comment period ends in June.

Jim Wright noted RPCC does not meet again until September.

Heather Ireland noted University Community Council approved a resolution opposing the UMed project at their May meeting.

Heather Rice asked what is the funding source? Dowl HKM indicated money from the State of Alaska is funding the study.

Helen Nienheuser stated this project was never discussed during her past involvement with transportation planning and observed the project is being pushed by a few powerful individuals.

Peter Mjos stated comments from doctors that their access between the two hospitals is specious and noted the H2H conversation is turning from automobile transportation to serious discussion of multi-modal options. Dowl HKM stated the information about doctors needing better access to the hospitals is coming from the doctors.

Dowl HKM stated UAA has long term plans for housing in the area.

Dowl HKM stated they would be happy to be first on the agenda with more project information at the September 2009 RPCC meeting.

David Evans spoke in support of the resolution. No one spoke opposing the resolution.

**Question was called. 15 votes in favor of the resolution, no votes (zero) opposing the resolution, one abstention**

Heather Ireland reminded everyone May 20<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for completing the Capital Improvements survey, and the results are sent to the municipality.

Also, H2H is holding a public meeting on May 28, 2009 at the Anchorage Senior Center, and they are also hosting a picnic on May 30, 2009 at Lyons Park.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.