

NECC

Northeast Community Council

January 21, 2010

To: John Rodda, Parks and Recreation Director.
Anchorage Assembly Members Selkregg and Gutierrez.

FROM: Ron Rivas, President North East Community Council 333-6168 or 382-0378

SUBJECT: Resolution for Russian Jack Springs Park

At the North East Community Council Membership Meeting held on January 21st, 2010, the following resolutions were presented from the floor and voted on.

1. A Resolution: NECC January 21, 2010 concerning the Russian Jack Springs Park.

NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 2010-01

The Northeast Community Council having determined that:

- * in 2009 the Northeast Community Council (NECC) repeatedly opposed both the Plans promoted by the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) for Russian Jack Springs Park (RJSP) and the planning process, and
- * the last MASTER PLAN for RJSP was adopted by the MOA in 1979 and a site plan was allegedly adopted in 1997 by the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&ZC) though the planning process for the latter specifically excluded NECC from notice contrary to the provisions of MOA ordinance, and
- * the community at large during hours of public testimony before the Parks Commission made it clear that it wished to see a systemic plan addressing RJSP before any further planning or development was undertaken, and
- * various members of the Parks Commission have indicated that the Master Plan is "dated" and the Commission's most recent resolution on RJSP called for additional planning and review before any further development or construction, and
- * the NECC is informed and believes that P&R is considering the expenditure of several hundred thousand dollars that may have been initially intended for developments at RJSP that were broadly opposed by the community, and

* the RJSP MASTER PLAN as well as the 1997 site plan appear to call for completion of the adopted trail plan including the creation of a second tunnel under RJSP and the completion of trail lighting, including the lighting of the paved trail in North RJSP, and

* NECC supports the creation of a Muldoon Park Strip and the conversion to park land of the balance of the Muldoon Estates property now held by the Heritage Land Bank, as well as efforts to provide youth with recreational opportunities proximate to the Muldoon Town Center, and

*a new Director of P&R has been appointed by the Mayor of the MOA,

NOW THEREFORE THE NECC HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

NECC would like to congratulate and welcome John Rodda, the new P&R Director to his new post and extend an invitation to Mr. Rodda to appear before the NECC to discuss resolution of the outstanding issues with respect to planning documents addressing RJSP,

NECC notes that to the extent that P&R has funds for which it seeks NECC's advisements as to projects upon which such funds should be expended, that the most critical project demanding P&R funding is the compilation of a new RJSP Master Plan, and the NECC strongly urges P&R to secure funds promptly to address same,

NECC feels that pending adoption of a new Master Plan for RJSP no development should be undertaken with respect to RJSP. Should P&R insist on moving forward with development in RJSP over the objections of the community, such development should be limited to those projects over which there has been no apparent dispute, which would limit development to matters set out in the 1997 site plan to the extent such matters are not inconsistent with the 1979 Master Plan. NECC recommends completion of the most long standing approved developments for which no apparent objections have been raised, and these would include the creation of the second tunnel under DeBarr and the lighting of existing paved trails. The NECC notes that the multi-use trail connecting RJSP to Cheney Lake is unlit between the current "lighted loop" and Nunaka Elementary and that bridges in the Park need repair or replacement. Additionally, in as much as the 1997 site plan was adopted without notice to the NECC, this apparent breach of MOA ordinance should be acknowledged and remediated.

NECC is aware that CIP funding is often NOT tied to a particular project; i.e., funds initially targeted for one project, even if obtained from bonds, can be employed in other projects. Should P&R have funds initially intended for RJSP which P&R would rather not spend on a new RJSP Master Plan or aforementioned community approved developments, NECC has maintained a CIP list over the years which list does include park projects. As NECC has repeatedly noted that North East District Parks are inadequately maintained, to the extent possible, any funding available should be directed at maintaining existing infrastructure as opposed to constructing or developing additional resources that would possibly deteriorate for lack of adequate maintenance.

NECC is aware that a number of Assembly persons have opined about the need for greater recreational opportunities for youth and to that end the NECC has proposed the creation of a park strip to encompass the balance of the Muldoon Estates property now held by the Heritage Land Bank and is interested in the creation of a skate board park somewhere within the confines of the Muldoon Town Center (potentially within the Muldoon Park Strip) where youth can be engaged at a location which affords amenities such as proximity to school, food, transport as well as ease of observation, integrating such youth activity into the center of the local neighborhood's focus. If a portion of such a facility could be covered it would offer additional winter recreational options to local youth.

NECC is aware that Centennial Park has a reputation for being the best sledding venue in the North East and as access to sledding venues is typically via automobile, the NECC is interested in any plans P&R may have to promote such a venue, especially to the degree that such planning might alleviate safety concerns at other locations that may not be appropriate venues for sledding.

NECC presently does not see the need for additional playgrounds in the North East District and is concerned that as most playground usage seems to be via motor vehicle that what the District needs is better public appreciation of the existing facilities as well as comprehensive user data concerning how playgrounds are used (time of day, day of week, season of year, age of users, how park accessed, etc.) together with an understanding of the degree to which school playgrounds serve the same purpose before any consideration is given to the construction of additional playgrounds.

Approved and adopted by the NECC this 21st day of January, 2010.

_____/s_____

Ron Rivas, President

Attest

_____/s_____

James Starzec, Secretary

A vote on the resolution: In favor-15, opposed-1, abstains-3, Resolution passed.