

Approved

Turnagain Community Council  
Meeting Minutes February 4, 2010

Breck Tostevin called meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

There was a change to the agenda to add approval of TCC letter to Legislature regarding our Capital Improvement Projects list.

There was a change to when the board meets - it will now be Thursday evening at Kaladi Bros. rather than Thursday at noon downtown.

I. Announcements.

Cathy Gleason made the following announcements:

- February 10, noon-1:00 p.m. at the airport there will be an Anchorage Airport Communications Committee meeting.
- February 10, 5:30 p.m., FCC conference room, West Anchorage District Plan Planning Group will meet to continue discussion regarding parcels in and around the airport.
- February 11, 11:30 a.m., Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission is holding a public hearing at City Hall on its 2010 Workplan and Five-Year Management Plan.
- March 2, the Assembly will hold a public hearing on the Anchorage Bike Plan.
- March 10, 6:30 p.m., Assembly Chambers, the Urban Design Commission will discuss the Anchorage Veterans Memorial improvements at Delaney Park.
- April 5, 6:30 p.m., Assembly Chambers, Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on the rezone for the Chugach Electric/MLP power plant.

II. Approval of minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved without objections, to move the approval of the December 2009 and January 2010 meeting minutes to later in the meeting.

III. Assembly Report

Assembly member Matt Claman gave the Assembly Report. The biggest issue for the Assembly is bonds for the April ballot. They are discussing adding a bond for road improvements for Alexander Avenue in midtown and asked the state to come up with 10 percent match because of flooding and deterioration that occurred there. An additional ambulance for the Sand Lake Fire Station has been added to the list of bond packages. What is the benefit to Turnagain for ambulance in Sand Lake? The benefit is that if there is a call for paramedics in Sand Lake, the Spenard Ambulance goes to Sand Lake. Then if there is call from Turnagain, the response comes from downtown. If we have an ambulance in Sand Lake, it is a huge benefit to the entire community.

Currently in the Legislature there are seven different bills about how property taxes are calculated. Three people on the Assembly suggested adding a non-binding vote on the Anchorage ballot recommending to the Legislature how bonds should be calculated. That proposal was put down, the question will be debated in Juneau, but will not be on the ballot here.

The TCC members asked the following questions: Is the public transportation bond for \$900,000 on the ballot? It didn't pass last year and we didn't get the federal match. Answer was yes, it's on April's ballot. Because there were a number of bonds that did not pass last year, the Assembly worked hard to get a good package this year with fewer bonds in hopes they will pass. Thus, there are no parks bonds on the ballot. The Mayor's office did not want to propose park bonds this year. There are no investments in new projects this year. The concern was that last year the parks bonds failed. Another concern is that Eagle River votes on the bonds, but doesn't pay, yet overwhelmingly votes against them.

As to property taxes, it appears there is a new assessment and a surcharge of 15 percent to people living near a greenbelt. Some started to pay in 2009, some in 2010, and some next year. Because this is being implemented by sections, it seems unfair. Who should address this? When making assessments, the Municipality is required to go out and look at the property. Since it would be almost impossible to assess all the properties near greenbelts in one year, the Municipality is doing it over three years. The TCC member suggested the assessment should be implemented to all at the same time. Assembly member Claman indicated there is no perfect answer because state law requires the Municipality to assess the property at the assessed value, so if one-third of properties near greenbelts are assessed this year, the surcharge will need to be paid.

#### IV. Legislative Report

Rep. Lindsey Holmes presented the Legislative Report with some notes from Sen. French. The 90-day session goes fast. She serves on Health and Social Services Committee and is looking at the budget for those departments. Rep. Holmes has a sexual assault bill that she has introduced because there is a loophole in the current law resulting in judges not having the ability to issue restraining orders. The bill went through the Judiciary Committee, and was voted on and passed the House on Monday and has been sent to the Senate.

Sen. Hollis French is addressing the U.S. Supreme Court case regarding allowing corporations to provide funding for elections. He held a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee and is working on a bill for some rules before the 2010 elections.

It looks like the price of oil is a bit higher. Last year no legislative districts got any items on their wish lists, but this year it looks like there might be some money based on the community council priorities. There is a lot work on energy. There are lots of bills and discussion but too early to weigh in on those.

There were no questions from TCC members. Rep. Holmes said there will be several more updates before the end of the session. She encouraged TCC members to please call or e-mail either her or Senator French if any there are any questions between now and the update next month.

*At this point, Pat Redmond moved that the TCC December 2000 meeting minutes be approved; Gloria Manning seconded. Motion passed with no objections. Chris Habicht then moved that the January 2010 TCC meeting minutes be approved; Pat Redmond seconded. Motion passed with no objection.*

## VI. West Anchorage District Plan

The West Anchorage District Plan is part of the Anchorage 2020 overall plan for the Municipality of Anchorage. As part of Anchorage 2020, different district plans are to be created, with the purpose of developing long-term goals and objectives for each area. The West Anchorage District Plan is currently being developed and the planning process has been paid for by a grant through the Municipal Planning Department.

Cathy Gleason reported that at the West Anchorage District Plan Planning Group meeting on Jan. 5, there was a recommendation to move the proposed town center away from Minnesota and W. Northern Lights to Spenard Road and W. Northern Lights. Also the group discussed how to make that area more pedestrian friendly. There were two ideas: One, to put in a traffic light between Spenard Road and Minnesota on W. Northern Lights to provide a safe pedestrian crossing; the second idea was to add parking garages in two or three locations in the area.

TCC members commented that businesses are required to have a certain amount of parking already; the parking garage would have to be centrally located to get people to walk - where would it be located? No specific locations have been decided on, but possible sites discussed included one near the Beartooth Theater and maybe one at the Carrs grocery store. Another comment was if the businesses are paying the cost of the parking garages, that is ok, but it should not be a cost to taxpayers. More comments included that it would be less expensive and more pedestrian friendly to improve PeopleMover than to build, maintain, and service a parking garage. Another comment was that it seems like the plan for parking garages has the cart going before the horse. If the intent is to get more people walking, parking garages is not going to make that happen, but rather would create greater problems. Other comments including that people do not like parking garages at all because of crime, especially crimes against women. Finally, there was a comment that the Spenard area is surviving and the character of the neighborhood doesn't seem to call for a parking garage; parking garages are concrete, expensive.

The WADP Planning group also looked at Heritage Land Bank parcels south of Raspberry on Northwood Drive. The land is all class A wetlands and the recommendation is that all of these wetlands be transferred to Parks and Recreation Department for management.

The Planning Group also discussed that higher density was not something many neighbors want, but rather protecting the character of the neighborhoods was important. The issue is that West Anchorage is predicted to increase in population and there is concern about where these people will be able to live. A TCC member commented that the south side of Northern Lights has a higher density and it would be good if redevelopment could include an upgraded apartment complex in our current neighborhood. There was much discussion about stores on first floor and

apartments on second floor for mixed use.

Breck Tostevin provided an overview of a WADP Planning Group meeting held Jan. 27, which covered discussions regarding land in and around the airport. The FAA, the airport and the planners were there. The FAA gave its position on airport land and how it must be used (because of the airport receiving federal money, grant assurances are in place that require land be used for aviation purposes). The group started to go parcel by parcel around the airport. For example, Little Campbell Lake is airport property but the MOA uses it for recreational parkland. There was a long-term interest to have recreation continue and have the land transferred to the MOA. The FAA was reluctant because it wants to protect the airport. The FAA doesn't want large concentrations of people in aviation safety zones. There was some discussion that perhaps the airport could grant a conservation easement to protect the parkland. If the airport does not see a future aviation use for the land, the FAA was more interested in allowing the transfer of the land. There are 22 parcels and the group finished only 4 parcels.

Designating buffer areas on airport land was also heavily discussed at the Planning Group meeting. For example, there was a discussion about the land between the Lake Hood airstrip and the Turnagain residential homes. Is there a way to use property for aviation but to keep a buffer, reduce noise, and keep the character of neighborhoods? Cathy Gleason stated there would be no final decisions during this process, but merely some recommendations for some of these issues to be included in the plan. FAA pointed out to the group that one of the reasons for the reluctance to turn over airport land to cities is that some cities turn the property into condos and business parks to make a profit. The FAA's mission is not cities or tax base. However, a comment was made that Anchorage is different, because our goal is to keep the lands for recreation or buffers. In contrast to the FAA's concerns, the community members' goal is to keep the airport from developing the land. John Parrott, Airport Manager, commented that he believes there are ways to achieve the goals that the airport and the community share with respect to some of those parcels.

The parcel-by-parcel discussion will continue at a WADP Planning Group meeting Feb. 10.

## VII. KULIS Land Use Plan Report

Kulis Air National Guard Base near the Anchorage International Airport will be vacated at the end of 2011 and includes 125 acres of land. The Kulis Land Use Plan final report is due in October 2010. Chris Habicht attended a meeting on the Kulis Land Use Plan on behalf on TCC on Jan. 20, and reported that the purpose of the meeting was to launch the study for the use of Kulis facilities. There have been on-site visits to determine if all contaminated or possibly contaminated sites have been cleaned up. An advisory group that includes the Airport, Sand Lake Community Council, Anchorage School District, and others has been formed. DOWL Engineers contacted 28 entities to determine interest in the property. Of those, 17 entities responded and only 6 expressed interest in ramps/hangers, etc. (Kulis is east of the area called South Airpark; expanded development of that area has been postponed due to lack of interest.) John Parrott, airport manager, stated the airport is negotiating with the FAA to designate some of the Kulis property for non-aeronautical use, but it doesn't want to flood the MOA with office space. There was a lot of interest at first, but FAA requires the airport to charge fair market

value for rent, so the interest dropped off. The airport is going to sell the buildings because the airport doesn't maintain buildings. There is more information on the Web site [anchorageairport.com](http://anchorageairport.com); go to the link for Kulis International Guard Base and all of the documents are posted there.

#### VIII. TSAIA Runway 7R Extension

The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport runway 7R extension was discussed at the January TCC meeting. Breck Tostevin attended the open house and reiterated that the purpose of the project is to lengthen the runway so the heavy cargo aircraft can turn off onto the taxiway farther west and avoid congestion near the passenger terminal. It would require acquiring an easement and rerouting trails on city land west of the existing runway to accommodate navigation lights. Today was the comment deadline for the Environmental Assessment on the project and Cathy Gleason asked for an extension until tomorrow so that people could discuss it at tonight's meeting. Cathy Gleason presented a letter that discussed TCC's support of the rerouting of the Sisson Loop Trail, requested the airport to minimize tree and vegetation removal in the easement where the navigational equipment is being added and in the areas where the trail will be rerouted; and indicated that TCC supports that the fencing doesn't surround the entire perimeter of the easement. TCC requests a change in the designation of the land from "transportation" to "Municipal owned HLB land being used as parkland" in the EA Land Use Map.

Comments from TCC members were that there was no discussion of noise around the airport in the EA. A response was that this project did not even look at the noise issue. Another comment was that it was unanswered as to how this project would affect the general aviation traffic coming off of Lakes Hood and Spenard and how will this project affect helicopter traffic over our neighborhoods. The response was that the Environmental Assessment did address noise both in the last TCC meeting and in the EA concluding there would be no significant noise impact. One point showed increase in noise near Sisson Loop Trail during construction. It was noted that the TCC members' comments were made on the record at the public hearing and thus, the airport would have to address them. A motion was made by Breck Tostevin to submit the letter, which was seconded and approved, with no opposition.

#### IX. Lake Hood Strip, Runway Protection Zone, Property Acquisition on Wendy's Way

Lucas Smith from the State of Alaska DOT presented the initial plans for the Lake Hood Strip, Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) Property Acquisition on Wendy's Way. The project is a property acquisition because 6 properties on Wendy's Way lay within the "runway protection zone," the purpose of which is to protect people and property on the ground. The goal is to try to clear the property of the homes. It is believed to be undesirable to have people gather in case a plane goes down on take off or landing and there is a greater chance of that happening at the end of the runway. The most common question is the timing. Currently the project is in the environmental stage to get input and comments, then there will be Environmental Assessment. The driving agencies are the FAA, the airport, and the Departments of Transportation, who are all working in partnership on the project. After the Environmental Assessment, the state can move forward for acquiring the property. The state will then assess the properties. One of the

steps is condemnation of the property if there is no agreement between the property owners and the state on purchase price. There is a possibility that if there is no agreement between the property owners and the state that the project might not go forward. The project assumes that funding will be available in the future for the property acquisitions.

Comments and questions from TCC members included the following: What if the runway is to be extended in the future? The response was that at this point in time, the plan does not include runway extensions. It is not related to a runway extension project. But sometime in the future there could be a need to extend the runway.

What happens if you acquire the property? Do you clear all the trees on the property? The response was that we would like to hear what the neighborhood and community would like for the property. One possibility is to clear the structures and level the area and seed and vegetate. Could the airport move the fence into the area where you tore down the houses? That decision has not been made and they welcome input. Al Burton for DOT commented that this is not a new idea. It has been included in previous airport master plans. TCC has commented on the proposal in the past and requested that no vegetation and no trees be cut.

There was a comment and concern regarding "leveling the area;" that we have never discussed the fence. The response was that the footprints of the buildings would be cleared and the area re-vegetated. One possibility for removing the structures is that they could be demolished; another is moving the structures out and relocating them; in addition the fire department could use them for training. A suggestion was made for the airport to contact Habitat for Humanity to see if they want the structures or the materials inside.

Another comment was concern that a tenant received a notice on the door today that caused great concern. This homeowner commented that the project could go smoothly if everyone is dealt with responsibly, but if that doesn't happen, this will be a problem.

Several people commented that they love the noise of the small planes and that this is one of the nicest neighborhoods people have ever lived in.

One TCC member commented that when the neighborhood and the houses were constructed, the houses were not within the RPZ. But when the runway was extended, the houses ended up in the RPZ. Thus, there was a question as to whether there are any plans of trying to acquire any other homes in this area? No. *(Note: the airport has since countered this statement and said the runway has never been extended and the runway protection zone has never changed.)*

There was a question as to whether this project is the same group involved at Merrill Field because the houses that were acquired adjacent to Orca Street have remained vacant and been broken into. The city was involved in that, not TSAIA or DOT. There was a question as to whether there are any perceived dangers? There was a concern that the question was not whether it ought to be done or not, but how it will affect the home owners. As part of the Environmental Assessment, the airport would be willing to consider other alternatives;

A comment was made that the airport should have bought the property before it extended the runway. The airport can shorten the runway, then twin engine aircraft won't use that strip. No commercial operators use the strip anyway. The commenter expressed concern that the strip was extended without public comment. There was also concern that the runway will be extended again or paved. A TCC member suggested the topic needs to be tabled to the next meeting so TCC can come up with a resolution; further, the project ought to be opposed by TCC and support shortening the strip to get rid of noise over the neighborhood. TCC President Breck Tostevin

commented that the presentation was informational only; that action could be taken on the Airport presentation at a later meeting.

Another question was how is this project funded? The response was that it is a federally funded project. It should come through in October 2010. Most projects are funded up front and then reimbursed by the feds. In the short term this must be funded by the state. The Airport would not proceed unless they knew it would be reimbursed. Owners can keep in touch through a public scoping meeting, public notice, and e-mails. Information will be posted on the airport Web site. The airport will keep TCC notified of the progress of the acquisition project. People can also fill out the comments sheets and send them in. Another comment was that the other property owners in the cul-de-sac should be included in the discussion about what happens to the land once the homes are removed.

There was some discussion that if the six property owners agree to the project, the TCC should agree. In addition, John Parrott, Airport Manager, said the airport understands that TCC may be interested in re-seeding, fencing, trails, and how the future area will look. Information about the project will be on the front page of the Web site anchorageairport.com referring to Wendy's Way.

#### X. TCC Legislative Letter on Capital Projects Ranking.

Breck Tostevin presented a draft TCC letter to Sen. French and Rep. Holmes that summarized and clarified the TCC's ranking of state and municipal capital projects previously voted on last year. Breck asked for TCC input on the letter. He indicated that unless someone had objections now, the letter would be forwarded to our representatives for their consideration during the legislative session. Cathy Gleason moved to approve the letter; Gloria Manning seconded. Council members did not have objections or changes to the letter and motion was passed without objections.

#### XI. Anchorage Bicycle Plan

A resolution supporting the draft Anchorage Bike Plan, but with the request to remove a proposed bike path in the Aero Ave. right-of-way south of the existing road from Cosmos Dr. to Lakeshore Dr. was moved by Pat Redmond and seconded by Chris Habicht. Some discussion ensued regarding the one change but otherwise supporting the plan. The motion passed without objections.

#### XII. Heritage Land Bank Annual Work Plan and Five-Year Management Plan

Cathy Gleason presented a proposed comment letter similar to last year's comments concerning how HLB land is managed by the MOA. They have 1 year and 5 year plans and TCC has consistently commented on the plans. There is a new item in this plan that was not in the past plans regarding the extension of the E-W runway. The HLB Document indicates that it will be paid over 1 million for an easement. The Coastal Trail runs through city owned land and airport land. The letter requests that some of the money should be used to purchase land where the Coastal Trail runs through airport land, so that the Coastal Trail is under city jurisdiction. The

Coastal Trail is just an easement on airport property and is not permanently protected. The airport could develop on this land and even has proposed developing up to 50 feet from the coastal Trail in the past. Gloria Manning moved to approve the letter and Barb Jones second it. The motion passed without objections.

#### XIII. Comments:

Merle Akers would like to see the 8:50 comment agenda item moved up earlier in the meetings. He also asked that sufficient time be given at the next meeting to discuss the Lake Hood strip and whether there are any alternatives to the airport acquiring homes at the end of Wendy's Way. Cathy Gleason noted that additional airport issues are on the March agenda and that Lake Hood GA Manager Andy Hutzler would be making a presentation on safety fencing at the strip.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.