

Basher Community Council Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2013

Baxter Elementary School, 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Dirk Sisson at 7:05.

Guests:

Paul Honeman, Anchorage Assembly

Adam Trombley, Anchorage Assembly

Captain Jim Veatch, Anchorage Fire Department, Station 14

Anchorage Police Department, Neighborhood Watch representative

Nick Williams, GCI Project Manager

Spokesperson for State House Representative Lance Pruitt

Attendance: 37 community members signed in.

October 2, 2012 Minutes were approved.

Assembly Report

Paul Honeman:

1. Title 21: The Assembly is currently reviewing revisions affecting our community including the rewrite of E-1 and E-2 zoning provisions for our area and a revised proposal to recommend a 25 foot stream building setback rather than the original 50 feet setback which he supports.

2. Budget: The Anchorage School District must meet a \$25 million budget shortfall and the state PERS and TERS retirement system is underfunded. Honeman said he doesn't know what will happen but hopefully the state legislature will help meet some of the gap not covered by municipal and federal funding.

3. Public Safety/Fire Department: Honeman said he hopes to restore arson investigation to the Anchorage Fire Department to aid in inspection and enforcement of fire codes. There has been an increase in arson-related incidents in north Muldoon recently.

4. Basher Road Upgrade: Honeman said he is still looking for budgeting support from the state legislature for road improvements.

5. Municipal Election: Honeman reminded community members that he is up for re-election to the Assembly on April 2, 2013.

Adam Trombley

1. Title 21: Trombley said the current version of Title 21 concerning the rewrite of zoning laws has discrepancies and he was working with assembly member Debbie Ossiander to rectify problems. Because the plan has 15 chapters dealing with land-use issues, Trombley said discrepancies have arisen because subsequent chapters adopted after previous provisionally-adopted chapters reference earlier chapters resulting in problems. He cited

examples of issues and conflicts arising from divergent building design standards such as window requirements with “solar exposure” and replacement vegetation under landscaping design. Trombley said that overall he endorses the design standards and planning for neighborhoods as set forth in the initial Title 21.

2. Bar Hours: The assembly is considering adjusting the closing time for bars to 5 a.m. with additional restrictions such as no service of alcoholic drinks after a set time (such as 2:30 a.m. or 3:30 a.m. or a time to be determined). The assembly is also considering issuing 10 additional taxi permits in the city to accommodate bar guests who may need transportation, he said.

Captain Jim Veatch

Anchorage Fire Department Station No. 14 could be a potential site for closure due to loss of employees through attrition, said Captain Veatch who works at the Campbell Airstrip Road fire station which serves the Stuckagain Heights neighborhood. He suggested community council members call the mayors office and voice their concerns about any station closure affecting the neighborhood. He extended an open invitation to neighbors to drop by the station for coffee anytime and expressed appreciation for assistance on a call to our neighborhood on January 19, 2013.

Neighborhood Watch Program

Anchorage Police Department Officer Natasha Welch, the APD Neighborhood Watch liaison, was unable to attend the meeting but an APD officer spoke on her behalf stating the Stuckagain Heights neighborhood may qualify for the program. Basher CC resident Geri Groeneweg volunteered to coordinate a program with APD with the community.

The purpose of residents participating in the Neighborhood Watch program is to gather information – not to apprehend alleged suspects or criminals, according to APD. Neighbors can be of the most assistance to APD and the best witness to a crime by providing a description or taking a picture of a suspect. To set up a program, neighbors should first endorse a specific goal for the community such as prevention of crime: burglary or home break-ins; vandalism; or trash dumping.

Second, APD suggested the community focus on what specifically can be done to meet the community’s goal and identify obstacles to achieving it. For example, to prevent crime, encourage residents to install in-home electronic alarms or cameras; or organize neighbors who live next to you, behind or in front of you on your street. APD suggested that in organizing your program, you keep the Neighborhood Watch “geographically small” so everyone knows everyone in your area or who lives on your street.

Third, identify who would like to participate in the program and contact Officer Welch for further assistance in setting up a program and to obtain stickers and signage.

GCI Cable Installation:

Nick Williams

The project to install a GCI fiber optic cable from Muldoon throughout the Stuckagain Heights subdivision has already begun with completion expected by the end of July 2013, according to Nick Williams, GCI Project Manager. Work on the underground trenching is continuing in the winter months to keep the crew busy and to minimize impact. Williams said GCI will stay in the easement as much as possible when digging the trench and go around small trees. If a large tree falls within the easement, it will make sense to redirect the trench to follow the path of the right-of-way instead. He described the installation process as “fairly low impact.”

A number of community council members raised questions concerning what they perceived as a lack of communication and notification from GCI regarding the project including destruction of vegetation on their properties during the cable installation. Williams said residents’ doors should be tagged alerting them to impending work on their property prior to any start of trenching in the easement. Property lines are marked with pink. He noted that residents should previously have received a “Dear Homeowner” letter describing the GCI Construction Season for 2012. Barb Hood and other residents suggested that GCI might consider notification of residents by electronic mail.

Community council members reiterated problems with the cable installation including disturbance of natural vegetation, destruction of old-growth trees and their root systems making trees more susceptible to wind damage in our area. Rick Kuhlberg questioned why GCI couldn’t install the cable in the right-of-way. Williams said that unless there is a strong reason for moving the cable to the right-of-way, the municipality prefers the cable is installed along the easement. He said he is always open to work with individual homeowners and when possible he will work with them and the city to move the cable. The trench width is a couple feet wide in order to install the cable while the backhoe used to dig the trench requires a width of 6 to 8 feet, Williams said.

GCI representatives were on hand to answer council member questions and explain the route of the cable installation on subdivision maps. For more information contact: Jerry Cockran, Construction Manager at (907) 868-5635.

House:

Representative Lance Pruitt:

A representative from the office of House Representative Lance Pruitt, was present and stated the public can provide public testimony about the current session at the Loussac Public Library from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Feb. 16, 2013.????

LRSA Update:

Jeff Allen reported that due to this winter’s light snowfall, the board has saved some money in plowing costs.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Gabler, Member-at-large