

**Fairview Community Council
General Membership Meeting Minutes**

**March 8, 2007
Fairview Recreation Center**

Meeting called to order by Chair Darrel Hess at 7:05 pm.

Annual Election for Officers and Members-at-Large

Darrel Hess read the slate for the executive board elections. The slate of officers comprised Darrel Hess (President), Sharon Chamard (Vice President), Justina Meyer (Secretary), and Harry Deuber (Treasurer). He asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, he then read the slate for the five Member-at-Large positions: Paul Benson, Dave Brossard, Allen Kemplen, Noel Rea, and Benita White. He asked for nominations from the floor. There were none. The Fairview Community Council by-laws require a ballot even if there are no nominations other than the slate; accordingly, ballots were distributed and subsequently collected from members in good standing.

Secretary's Report, Sharon Chamard:

It was moved by Claris Syren and seconded by Lee Ross to accept the February General Membership Meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Guests and Presentations:

Allan Tesche, Anchorage Assembly

There needs to be an amendment to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to continue funding the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority (KABATA). The final decision will be made by the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) committee. Only two of the five seats on AMATS are Assembly members. This is a rare opportunity for the public to address Assembly members on the project, especially the community councils in the north Anchorage area. All councils in this area particularly should take a position. Otherwise, decision-makers may think that a lack of a position is the same thing as support for the Knik Arm Crossing (KAC). Last year, the South Addition Community Council passed a resolution opposing KAC. Resolutions are also being considered by the Government Hill, Downtown, and Mountain View Community Councils. The Fairview Community Council should pass a resolution regarding KAC, whether it is to oppose it, support it, or support it with conditions (e.g., mitigation, traffic being funneled onto the Gambell-Ingra corridor instead of the A-C couplet, etc.). There is a range of possibilities.

Allen Kemplen pointed out that the council has already passed a resolution relative to KAC, and that we're on record expressing concern about the potential financial impacts on the Anchorage Bowl. It would be possible to amend the resolution being considered at tonight's meeting.

Lorne Bailey asked if there are any estimates for the costs of connecting the bridge to Gambell-Ingra versus A-C. Allan Tesche advised him to go to www.kabata.com for more information. KABATA says the toll revenue will be enough to fund the extra cost of an additional bridge over the Ship Creek area.

Anne Brooks said the STIP has just been released for public comment. One issue is the impact on communities of these major projects if the funds that were originally earmarked for them are instead taken from general funds. Allan Tesche replied that KABATA had said that the project will not draw monies from general funds or AMATS; they say their estimate of \$600 million is solid. He wants to know if this is guaranteed.

Darrel Hess recommended taking up the issue again in Old Business and amending the Highway-to-Highway resolution to include language about KAC.

Dr. Marc Robinson, Principal, Fairview Elementary School

Testing of students will occur after Spring Break. The school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 25 of 28 categories last year. The three failing categories concerned non-English-speaking students. They are focusing special effort on those students, and are confident they will make AYP this year.

Regarding the possibility of a teachers' strike, the arbitrator's report is out. It's not clear what will happen. If there is a strike, schools will close.

Karen Paul asked why we are considering spending \$600 million on a bridge when we could be spending it on schools and health care. Darrel Hess said that was a good question. Money gets allocated to certain categories, and it's up to politicians and others to decide how much to spend on things. It's up to citizens to get involved, to vote, and to tell their elected representatives what funding priorities should be.

Darrel Hess added that State House Representative Les Gara sent out a newsletter encouraging people to become volunteers at Fairview Elementary. People can call 742-7600 if they are interested.

Tim Potter, DOWL Engineers, on behalf of Alaska Sales and Service

This was a presentation seeking the support of the Fairview Community Council for a right-of-way vacation of Medfra Street between 5th and 7th Avenues. A DOWL study looked at the 5th and Medfra intersection. There were five accidents there in a year, most of them severe because they were head-on collisions.

Years ago, the Fairview Traffic Framework Plan called for limited ingress and egress. A traffic-calming diverter at 10th and Medfra stopped thru traffic on that street. Karluk was kept as a thru street, but chokers and chicanes slowed down traffic. Alaska Sales and Services decided years ago to stay in Fairview and still want to stay, but a public street running through their property makes things difficult. If the street is closed, a benefit will be reduced ingress and egress. This will make it harder for the bad guys to get in and out of the neighborhood.

There is a Department of Transportation project that will widen 5th and 6th Avenues; the project will also include a slowdown lane on 6th Avenue that will serve as the main driveway to Alaska Sales and Service. Some months ago, the stretch of Medfra in question was closed while Alaska Sales and Service repaired a roof. DOWL did a traffic impact study comparing the area when Medfra was closed and when it was open. Trips on Karluk were delayed by an average of 3 seconds; this was a minimal impact. Closing this section of Medfra should reduce or eliminate accidents at 5th and Medfra, and will provide blockage of an exit route. This should help Alaska Sales and Service, as it currently has a problem with car thefts and break-ins. They really want to work with the neighborhood to reconfigure parking on their campus to minimize traffic on Medfra.

Sean Pfeiffer, from Alaska Sales and Service, commented that they have been at the same location since 1964. They looked at demographics a few years ago to consider which areas were the best to have their business. They decided not to move to South Anchorage. Since then, they've been revamping the roof and shoring up walls. They are committed to staying in Fairview. Freeing up Medfra will allow for greater beautification on their campus and more parking spots. Also, they want to be involved with the development of Fairview Lions Park.

Allen Kemplen asked if there was a need for immediate action by the council on this matter. Tim Potter said it would be fine to wait until the next meeting to decide, although construction season is starting and they want to get underway. Darrel Hess said the membership could think about it until the next general meeting, at which time it can be discussed and decided upon. Allen Kemplen suggested referring the matter to the Neighborhood Plan Committee for more discussion and recommendations.

Cheri Herrington from Alaska Sales and Service listed many examples of their support of the Fairview community. In just the past decade, they have contributed over \$8,000 to adopt families for Christmas, to support the Block Party, and to support youth basketball. Tim Potter added that a lot of things can be done, such as helping with park improvements, and coordinating Alaska Sales and Service security with the Fairview Community Patrol.

Anne Brooks and Arnold Carter, update on 16th Avenue Terrace project

Arnold Carter gave a brief history of the project. When 15th Avenue was redeveloped and a median installed, this meant that more traffic had to use 16th Avenue Terrace to move west out of the neighborhood. But the street is not designed for that level of usage, especially in the winter, when the snow causes problems for cars and fire trucks. Kinney Engineers has been conducting Context Sensitive Design meetings with the community. The resulting plan calls for sidewalks on both sides and parking on the north side. They will be taking public comments on the plan during the summer, and there will be another public meeting in June 2007. The design will be completed in November 2007, it will go out to bid in Spring 2008, and construction will occur during Summer 2008. There will be a community advisory group to work out the specifics of the design. Anne Brooks added that they want public input on what to do with the area north of the street with respect to landscaping and the like. Arnold Carter said there will be lighting and accessibility improvements.

Lorne Bailey, looking at the plans, asked if we really need 29 feet for the width of the road, and how wide is it now? The guests responded that it is currently 18 feet wide, and they will be acquiring two lots on the north side to widen the road. The extra width is needed for more parking and space for snow storage. Karen Paul commented that more lighting is needed, especially if there is going to be foliage. Lights on both sides of the street would be needed in that case, not just on one side as shown in the plan. People are safer if there is more light.

Darrel Hess reminded people that this project was driven by residents who were concerned about the width of the street, especially with regard to fire truck access. There have been three public meetings and mail-outs; the design is based on public comments. People from the area, such as Paul Benson, Allen Kemplen, and Paul Kanitz, could be involved with the advisory group. Arnold Carter said they plan to have a two or three hour meeting one night to hammer out the details.

Randy Kinney, Anchorage Tomorrow, on the assorted bonds

This was a short informational presentation on the bonds that will be on the ballot for the upcoming election. Dave Shapiro, the Northwest District Manager for Parks and Recreation, commented on Proposition 2, which is for maintenance of parks and trails. Jeff Friedman and Mike Brice commented on Propositions 4 and 5 for the replacement of Clark Middle Schools and building system renewal. There was a general discussion about the proposition regarding the replacement of Clark Middle School. Tim Potter said if people question the need for this replacement, they should go look at Goldenview Middle School and compare it to Clark Middle School. Dan Loring said he supports this proposition. Clark Middle School is in horrible condition. We are spending this money because we think it will lead to improved academic outcomes. He asked Jeff Friedman if you measure if there is an improvement. Mr. Friedman replied that they don't always now if changes are due to a new building, curriculum changes, or what-not. Dan Loring commented that Title 21 now required that landscaping be included in new construction, but the School District doesn't do any maintenance of landscaping beyond what is required for health and safety and mowing lawns. Mr. Friedman said this is true, but we need to decide how to spend our money – should it be on teachers and books or pruning trees? Mike Brice said they take into account the potential viability of plants and factor this into building costs. They receive two years of maintenance and most of the plants do well.

The election results were presented. The entire slate as presented at the outset of the meeting was elected.

The Highway-to-Highway resolution was moved up on the agenda. *Fairview Community Council Resolution 2007-01, concerning financing of the Fairview Parkway and seeking of additional funds to advance development of the EIS was read for the second time.*

Lorne Bailey said that if you were to spend money on the KAC, you wouldn't need to have the Highway-to-Highway connection, because it will just split the traffic and eventually the KAC will connect with the Parks Highway. Allen Kemplen said that this was an interesting point, given that the majority of traffic now and decades into the future will come from Wasilla, Palmer, etc. down the Glenn Highway. Darrel Hess asked if the decision was made to build the KAC and run traffic down the Gambell-Ingra corridor, and connect 3rd Avenue to Gambell-Ingra, wouldn't that increase traffics along Gambell-Ingra, which is already at capacity? Allen Kemplen said yes, Gambell-Ingra is already at capacity, and is one of the most

dangerous roads in Anchorage for pedestrians. Allan Tesche suggested a friendly amendment to change the words "with or later" to "concurrently." The original mover of the resolution accepted the amendment. Anne Brooks commented that the resolution should ask for an Environmental Impact Statement study instead of a Reconnaissance study. *The resolution passed with a vote of 11-1.*

Committee and Community Reports:

Education Committee, Dale Myhill

There was a public hearing last month on the Education Plan. The next hearing is on March 22nd at 7 pm at the Anchorage Senior Center.

Fairview Community Recreation Center, Dave Brossard

The facility will be closed May 14-20 for redoing the floors. Everything will be open in the first part of June for the Day of Caring. Seward's Day is a municipal holiday; however, the facility will be open all day. New programs are on board – belly dancing, yoga, and ballroom dancing. There is a new bulletin board for the council out in the main hallway.

Neighborhood Plan, Allen Kemplen

The committee is working on the final details and the Appendix. The plan should be sent to the muni by the end of the month.

Public Safety Committee, Sharon Chamard

The next meeting of the committee will be April 19th, at 7 pm at the Fairview Community Recreation Center. There are forms on the back table for people to submit comments concerning the prioritization of code enforcement.

Community Comments and Concerns:

Claris Syren said she is disturbed by the issue of the Mush Inn and the reference in the Anchorage Daily News to 13th and Gambell as having 531 calls-for-service last year. This is really frustrating because it is difficult to attract tenants. It seems to take forever to get anything done. It took forever to get the bus stops moved. It is very disappointing, after all these years of living here and working so hard to change things. Darrel Hess said according to Sgt. Dennis Allen, most of those calls-for-service were officer-initiated. This is actually a good thing because it shows the police are dealing with issues before the public calls in. At the last Executive Board meeting, we talked about the Anchorage Press article about looking for drugs and prostitutes. This was a racist article and a slap in the face to Fairview. We decided to invite media representatives to talk with the council about their reporting practices. Allen Kemplen said he echoes Claris' comments. There is a media bias against neighborhoods. Dan Loring said he agrees as well, but he doesn't have a problem with the media identifying traditional neighborhoods. We can change the physical structure of the intersection, but we need a task force to address the social ills in Fairview that make 13th and Gambell such a problem. Allen Kemplen said there were once similar problems in east Fairview, but the street changes changed the social environment. If we change 13th and Gambell, the behavior there will change. Justina Meyer said we should write a letter to the media anyway. The police are non-responsive; they are just holding us off. Dave Syren said the real problem there is the liquor store, and changing the physical layout won't make a difference.

Allen Kemplen reported that the Urban Design Commission is being targeted by a South Anchorage Assemblyman for abolition. Its duties would be taken over by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Public hearings on the matter will be held soon.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Chamard, Secretary.