

Spenard Community Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 4, 2013 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W 48th Ave.

1. Minutes and Agenda Approval – *Bob Auth*

- The agenda and November meeting minutes were approved with no corrections.
- Announcements (see newsletter)

2. Assembly Report – *Rep. Tim Steele, Ira Perman (staff for Ernie Hall)*

- “Marathon sessions” for the Assembly in the last few weeks—trying to finish budget, and having public hearing on a variety of issues.
- **Taxi Ordinance:** Had work session this week to discuss proposed amendments and language changes. Did not take new testimony on the issue, but working toward passing the updated ordinance. Trying in particular to follow up on enforcement issues and ensuring customer safety and service (for example, basing dispatch decisions on proximity, using GPS). Also working to increase fleet of cabs for people with disabilities.
- **Tennis Courts:** The Assembly defeated the measure to fund the project with existing funds, did not get around to voting on the proposal to return the funds to the State. Mayor Sullivan made a new proposal of funding for the facility which has not been decided on yet.
- **In & Out Liquor Conditional Use Permit:** Their conditional use permit was approved last night and so far I&O’s owner’s cooperation has been good.
- **Public Land Trade Task Force:** This group is looking at the issue of public lands by the Airport and a possible land trade, which has been controversial.
- **Ure Park / Lion’s Club:** This discussion involves the possible disposal of public land, with proposal to vote on the issue in April 2014. The matter is in the Muni’s Rules Committee about the length of time needed, amount of public notice, etc.
- **3107 Brookside Drive:** The property is now in foreclosure and owned by the bank. The tenants have been evicted, and slowly the cars on the property are being removed individually. There were issues with cars blocking access to the alley, both for residents and for public vehicles. Please contact the Muni and/or the Police Department if you notice anyone occupying that property, as it is supposed to be vacant. Phil pointed out that some of the cars which were on that property seemed to have moved to Iowa Drive and other surrounding streets.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Phil Isley expressed disappointment with Reps. Hall and Steele about their willingness to use public money to build indoor tennis courts. Tim responded that if public (state) money will be used, it should be a public facility. Phil is concerned about whether the Muni can afford building a new facility.

3. Legislative Report – *Sen. Berta Gardner, Rep. Harriet Drummond*

- **School Visits:** Sen. Gardner and Rep. Drummond are visiting schools in the area with an open agenda, asking to meet with students, teachers, administrators. Berta has been asking about schools’ suicide prevention plans to comply with the new laws, and has learned about some of those strategies. Harriet also shared that she learned West High School is very much over capacity, and is looking at the need to expand. She is also frustrated with the amount of money spent on Chugiak High, which is down 700 students. Addressing the uneven density of students is an issue.
- **School Business Partnerships:** Have been participating in job shadowing and other activities with schools and businesses to learn more about the program.
- **Municipal Budget Request:** Met with Mayor Sullivan to discuss budget items and priorities for the next legislative session, including the fact that the Spenard Road redesign has gotten pretty broad consensus as a priority. This will be presented to the legislature.

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- **Mayors' Conference:** Met with mayors at the Mayors' Conference last month to discuss effects of state legislation on local communities (e.g. "unfunded mandates" like property tax exemption)
- **Legislative Constituent Meeting** will be held at Wendler Middle School on January 7th, 5:30-7pm, including information about the types of gas pipelines, a chance to talk directly with legislators about your issues. There is also a daytime meeting about the Common Core Standards at the (temporary) Anchorage Legislative Information Office, discussing what these standards are and how this would affect Alaska.
- **2014 Municipal Budget:** Harriet received a copy of the proposed budget from the Mayor's office and is concerned about some of the priorities listed or not listed—for example, little funding toward addressing flooding issues along Chester Creek. However, other issues like Spenard Road redesign have been made the priority list. The Arctic Road (phase 3) improvement has also made the priority list.
- **2014 Oil Revenue Forecast:** Rep. Tuck shared that the forecast numbers have just come out, and the projection is that they will be down by about \$2 billion dollars: projected revenue from the oil industry will be about \$4.3 billion, not the original projection of over \$6 billion. These numbers may still be very low, given the conservative estimates based on the oil tax credit and other factors, but it will affect the governor's budget to be released soon. Chris pointed out that on the other hand, there has been a great increase in investment on the North Slope, which speaks to the possibility of changing production level. In addition, production is projected to be lower than the previous years, even with the new tax regime favorable to oil companies.
- **Constituent Office Accounts:** In the past, legislators were given some funds to be used for constituent outreach, but with the option of partially or fully taking it as income instead. The IRS has now said that there needs to be a consistent policy, and that now it needs to be an "all or nothing" rule, all of the money must be spent on constituent activities, or returned to the state rather than taken as income.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - A member commented that she would like to see the section in Spenard prioritized (between Benson and 36th and Arctic and Spenard), Cope and Dorbrandt, for road improvements which are badly needed in that area.
 - Tami Agosti-Gisler with the School Board shared that the district is looking to spread some of the technical vocational programming around to different schools, rather than concentrating all the services in one place. She will speak more during her report.
 - Members discussed whether the forecast is likely to be accurate, how the taxes may or may not have affected the amount of production forecasted.

4. Airport Report – John Johansen

- See *Airport newsletter online*, www.anchorageairport.com
- **Airport Master Plan:** There will be a public open house on the evening of December 11th with the developed master plan (including land use plan) to discuss the result of the planning process. John clarified that the proposal referenced in the newsletter (changing some of the preferential runway program) is not to completely drop the program, but to change the patterns mostly during the day (10AM to 4PM) and only as congestion and delays occur. The FAA defines "daytime" as 7AM to 10PM.
- **Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study:** Had two meetings on November 19th and presented to the public ideas for mitigation of noise, including the idea of deflecting some of the noise from engines during maintenance runs.
- **Holiday Music Events:** Local performers will be at the Airport giving holiday music performances – the schedule is on the Airport website. Come enjoy the music!

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- **Land Trade Task Force:** From the Airport, John Parrott will be on that task force which will be meeting next week. The meeting will tentatively be on Wednesday, December 11th (he is unsure if the details have been finalized, There will also be legislative and assembly representatives as part of that group. There may be a Spenard representative, Bob has not been involved to date but is active in other Airport related activities.
Background: in the West Anchorage District Plan, there was land identified that is owned by the Muni but might be better suited for the Airport's use and ownership; and some land owned by the Airport could be better used by the Muni (and/or is currently used for recreational purposes). The proposed land trade was intended to resolve some of these inconsistencies, and this task force is intended to talk through the proposal and come up with an acceptable arrangement.
- **Airport Communications Committee:** Matt Claman shared that there will be a draft communications plan (part of the master plan) for public review. In the past Spenard has been participating in these meetings. He encourages Spenard residents to come to the meeting to learn about the communication plan and give feedback—the suggestion is in the long term, to “sunset” the committee because its function can be covered in other ways. The Council can consider this further in January, and decide if they support the discontinuation.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - A member asked whether there is a current plan to increase a variety of fees—parking, user fees, etc. John noted that he is not aware of a proposed fee increase, but could check with others at the Airport.

5. Anchorage School District Budget Report – Tami Agosti-Gisler, Anchorage School Board

- Tami is sharing “part A” of the 2014 ASD budget, with the intent of coming back in January.
- Revenue sources: ASD is facing a serious budget shortfall. The district cannot tax or borrow money, and rely on state and local funding.
 - The main source of revenue is the BSA (Base Student Allocation) from the state. The BSA has not increased in four years, despite increasing costs and inflation. Currently the BSA is \$5,680 but inflation is 3%, so it requires increases every year just to stay even.
 - ASD does receive one-time legislative grants, but it is difficult to use this money in the budget for ongoing costs (e.g. permanent teachers) because they are worried the money will not be there the next year.
 - ASD also receives capital funding, but cannot spend it on operational expenses. ASD's board also has no jurisdiction or authority over the projects approved.
 - ASD also receives Municipal funding, but the State has lowered and set limits on what the local government can contribute to the district.
 - Municipal cost-sharing has been beneficial in the past (e.g. demographers) but recently the Muni has been billing ASD for services provided, from unpaid tax fees to use of public trails.
 - School Resource Officers have been valuable in promoting kids' safety and establishing relationships in the school, but the Muni has also charged for this staff even in the summer. SROs were part of a grant whose funding ended, but it would be great to keep them in schools—they have better long-term relationships with students than having to bring in APD officers. SROs have been addressing truancy and the district has seen a 20% increase in attendance.
- ASD has been working for multiple years on responsible budget cuts - \$18 million cut last year, in addition to \$7 million from savings, to fill a \$25 million shortfall. Many of the administrative and back-office positions have been cut or consolidated.

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- Anchorage uses a national organization's metrics to compare with other school districts of similar size (there is no equivalent district in Alaska) and consider how their costs stack up with other peer districts.
- Expenses: health care and pension costs have been the major driver in cost increases—adjusting for inflation, teachers' salaries have been flat in Anchorage for 30 years.
- ASD projects a budget deficit of \$49 million in the next two years: \$23 mil this year, \$26 mil next year. 85% of overall costs are staff, despite the many cuts already made.
- Tami encourages residents to contact the governor and legislators about the need to balance out ASD's budget (increasing BSA, securing more permanent funding sources).
- She will be back in January to present the proposed budget, including proposed cuts.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Tim Steele pointed out that many of the charges from the Muni are recent, but don't necessarily have rationale (particularly since the district has no taxing authority and relies on funding from others). This is a state issue, particularly because of the limit on local spending for the district.

6. Spenard Road Project Update – *Tyler Robinson, Cook Inlet Housing Authority*

- Tyler has come to the Council in the past, but not much to report about Spenard because the redevelopment process is slow.
- Cook Inlet Housing has an office at 36th and Spenard (northwest corner), and purchased what was PJ's strip club on the southwest corner.
- CIHA also received funds from the state to purchase the property on the southeast corner (currently Alpina Motors) because it is a contaminated site (former gas station). This is an issue because contaminated properties, when they change hands, trigger the requirement to remediate the property and that someone be liable for the contamination. The DEC looks for the responsible parties (previous owners) and otherwise the current owner is held liable. CIHA is working on limiting its liability, while actually moving forward with the cleanup—the previous owner is not in a position to be able to pay for cleanup.
- They are currently measuring the boundaries of the "plume" of contaminated groundwater, which extends under PJ's as well. The intention is to monitor the groundwater, clean up the property, and over time the contamination should retract.
- Tyler is requesting a resolution in support of CIHA's application for an EPA Cleanup grant—CIHA has received state funds (DEC) and an Assessment grant from EPA, the next step is to get funds for a Cleanup grant, which can also help with the actual redevelopment of the property and building new improvements on it.
- Timeline: Alpina is allowed to remain through "two tire changes," through April 2014. CIHA intends to continue with cleanup regardless of the outcome of the EPA grant application, but they have strong support so far from EPA who would like to award an Alaska project.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - A member asked how this fits into Cook Inlet Housing's mission? Tyler pointed out that they work on a variety of housing projects, not just Indian housing (their original funding source), and use a variety of funding sources to be able to build affordable but not the lowest-end tier of housing. The project is along a commercial corridor but would provide high-quality housing, improve the property and possibly begin to address other issues such as Fish Creek and east-west movement through the area along Chugach Way.
 - Anna asked whether Cook Inlet Housing has considered a larger-area plan for Spenard, or are they just starting with cleanup of contamination? Tyler noted that they are considering how their properties fit together, and working with business owners and residents to make their plans for their properties fit into the larger area,

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but are not trying to “plan Spenard.” CIHA’s intention is to start developing the properties to fuller potential, starting with cleanup of contamination.

- **Proposed resolution:** [see draft resolution drafted by Tyler]
 - **Motion and Second**
 - **Discussion** [none]
 - **Vote:** majority in favor, 1 opposed. **The motion for resolution passed.**

7. Iris Drive, Northwood Park Sewer Project Update – *James Armstrong, AWWU*

- James shared that the project is almost done, pending some contract obligations and paperwork. The park is, pending any further needed changes, basically complete.
- The beavers appear to be gone now!
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Peggy Auth expressed concern about the result of the project, she and Bob are the “Adopt a Park” reps for Northwood Park and have noticed drainage problems and problems associated with the removal of some vegetation. Stan Jones, another resident nearby, has documented issues with photos. Additionally, another property owner has had a flooding problem on their property and has been trying to direct water elsewhere.
 - James explained that the project involved placing down about 6 inches of topsoil, which has not firmed up because the vegetation and root network has not been established yet. He anticipates the soil to settle and return closer to the previous firmness in spring and summer, when vegetation has the chance to spread. In response to the property owner’s problem, he is aware of that issue, but the home’s basement is below the water table and has suffered cracking from freeze and thaw in the foundation. The Northwood project cannot fully address that issue.
 - James and Stan discussed the stormwater drainage system and how decisions were made about the flow of water.
 - A member asked about the associated AWWU project in the area—there were overflow issues and problems in one person’s yard. James clarified that his project and the other project’s contractors collaborated on the connection with a particular manhole, and part of the issue was that the line being installed was off by approximately 5 feet and required a re-alignment.

8. 4619 Spenard Road Re-plat and Re-zone Petition – *Justin Green, property owner*

- Neither Justin nor his representative were present at the meeting.
- The property which was formerly the Ceramic Palace is up for a re-plat and re-zone proposal. The building has been recently removed, and only recently was the hole in the ground leveled off. Justin acquired the property from his brother Bart, who was overextended and went bankrupt and could not execute the plans he had intended.
- There are two properties in question—one is zoned B-3, and the other is split zoned (front B3, back R2). The proposal is to re-plat the properties as a single property, and re-zone the entire property as B3. This proposal is scheduled to be brought before Planning & Zoning on Monday, January 6th.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Peggy Auth gave more background on this project: when she was involved with the Spenard Land Use Committee, this property has been a problem for many years, particularly when sitting vacant. The Council has pushed Justin to share an actual plan for redevelopment, which he has not done in the past. In addition, re-zoning from residential to B-3 business adds a significant value to the property with no investment from the owner. While Spenard Road in general is intended to be a

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business corridor, there is benefit to keeping existing residential uses and having appropriate developments (residential and commercial), and the city badly needs affordable housing which is lost when properties are re-zoned to other uses and/or buildings are torn down.

- Tom McGrath also pointed out that this is a “split zone” lot, sold in Spenard in 1975 as such, the front portion of the lot is B-3 but the back is R-2, but as a single economic unit it has a challenging status from a development standpoint.
- Peggy and Jason Bergerson also expressed frustration with the owner’s lack of effort to contact the Council and establish a relationship, at minimum to present a redevelopment plan to the Council to which they could respond. Jason suggested he would oppose any motion made to support the owner’s plans as is.
- Tim Steele noted that the Council could send a letter to P&Z indicating that they have not had communication with Green, and that they would like to request a postponement until they have seen the redevelopment plan and had a chance to deliberate. Other members agreed with this approach.
- **Proposed resolution:** a letter to Planning and Zoning requesting a postponement of consideration of the 4619 Spenard proposal, until Mr. Green brings his proposal before the Council first and allows time for the Council’s response.
 - **Motion and Second**
 - **Discussion** [none]
 - **Vote:** all in favor, none opposed. **The motion for resolution passed.**

9. Council Business – *Bob Auth*

- The regularly scheduled January meeting would fall on Wednesday, January 1 – New Year’s Day. The Council proposes moving their meeting to Wednesday, January 8th. **The group approved this schedule change. The next meeting will on January 8th.**
- The bylaws require an annual officers’ election in February. The Council can discuss this and receive nominations in January.

10. Officers Report – *Bob Auth, Jason Bergerson, Allen Thornhill, Anna Brawley*

- **President:** None.
- **VP / FCC:** None.
- **Treasurer:** None.
- **Secretary:** None.

11. Old + New Business

- [None]

The meeting was moved to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

ANCHORAGE AIRPORT UPDATE
December, 2013

1. Part 150 Noise Study:
 - a. Study Input Committee (SIC) meeting and Public Open House were held Tuesday, November 19, 2013.
 - b. Consultant is continuing evaluation of mitigation alternatives.
 - c. Web site is anc150study.com for information and to send comments, questions and request to receive notifications/updates.
2. Master Plan:
 - a. Master Plan team is in the final stages of refining the Airport's draft plan for future development to ensure its ability to meet long-term aviation needs.
 - b. Upcoming meetings are:
 1. Public Open House #7, Wednesday, December 11, 2013 at 5:30PM, presentation at 6:00PM at Coast International Inn, 3450 Aviation Avenue.
 2. Online Public Open House, December 12-26, 2013 at www.ancmasterplan.com
 - c. Website is www.ancmasterplan.com for information and to send comments, questions and request to receive notifications/updates.
3. Anchorage Airport Stakeholders Meeting was November 6, 2013.
4. Concessions opening soon:
 - a. An expansion of the landside seating area for Norton Sound Seafood House is anticipated to be completed by March, 2014. The area will include the sale of beer, wine and liquor.
 - b. Construction has begun on a new spa concession. The Northern Lights Spa will offer manicures, pedicures, massages, tanning, and hair styling. It is planned to be opened before Christmas.
5. Lake Hood Tiedown Parking: Storm drainage construction work has been completed and permittees are being asked to return to their regular parking spaces. Thank you to all those involved for their patience and understanding through construction.
6. The Lake Hood Economic Impact Study is available upon request. For a copy please contact Lake Hood Manager Tim Coons at 907-266-2741 or tim.coons@alaska.gov.
7. The Airport completed the annual FAA 139 Inspection and did well. Many thanks to Operations, Field Maintenance, Police and Fire and Engineering for the work all year round that keeps the Airport running efficiently and smoothly.
8. Airport Facilities will be decorating the airport public areas beginning November 29, 2013.
9. The Airport will host local amateur musicians throughout December. Currently 22 groups have scheduled performances from December 2- December 20, 2013.
10. Sign up for GovDelivery at www.anchorageairport.com to receive emails on all sorts of DOT related things.

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Resolution # _____

**A resolution supporting Cook Inlet Housing Authority's application for
a Brownfields Cleanup Grant from the EPA for 3607 / 3609 Spenard Road**

WHEREAS, Cook Inlet Housing Authority (CIHA) has a proven track record of redeveloping brownfield sites in Anchorage; and,

WHEREAS, CIHA has acquired several blighted and contaminated sites near the intersection of 36th and Spenard and seeks to redevelop the area with high-quality affordable housing and mixed use development; and,

WHEREAS, redevelopment along Spenard road will help provide a catalyst for further public and private investment; and,

WHEREAS, in 2012 CIHA received a State of Alaska Capital Grant to purchase the "Alpina" site at 3607 / 3609 Spenard Road; and,

WHEREAS, the Spenard Community council supported CIHA's request for project funding through a resolution passed on March 7, 2012; and,

WHEREAS, a Targeted Brownfield Assessment will be completed in 2014 that identifies the full extent of the contamination on the site and lays out a cleanup plan; and,

WHEREAS, the EPA's Brownfields Assessment Grant would provide up to \$400,000 to help clean up the site and provide an important step towards a feasible redevelopment.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Spenard Community Council supports CIHA's application for an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant to further redevelopment of a brownfield site in Spenard.

Passed this 4th day of December, 2013 at a meeting of the Spenard Community Council.



Robert Auth, Chair
Spenard Community Council