

Spenard Community Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W 48th Ave.

1. Minutes and Agenda Approval – *Bob Auth*

- The president called the meeting to order.
- The agenda and January meeting minutes were approved with no corrections.
- Announcements (see agenda + newsletter)
 - Several members of the Spenard Fire House were in attendance to hear more about what's going on in the community. A few UAA social work students were also in the audience to learn more about what's happening in the community.
 - Bob shared a brief update about the security cameras: there are two cameras currently operating (Tommy's Burger Stop and Blaine's Art, both near Benson Blvd and Spenard Rd). The Executive Committee developed a form for people who would like to request footage for either evidence of criminal activity, or evidence of a traffic accident for insurance reporting. This form will help the Community Council track what requests are filled. There is a third camera, and the Council is considering where to put it; there may be an ad hoc committee in future to determine where it should be placed. The cameras were purchased with a grant from the legislature originally intended for the West Side Community Patrol, which has not existed for a few years. Contact Bob if you would like more information, and check out the form on Spenard's website.

2. Legislative Report – *Rep. Chris Tuck*

- The legislators are currently in Juneau for session. Chris is speaking on behalf of Rep. Drummond and Sen. Holmes.
- We are about 2 weeks into the session. Rep. Tuck is the new minority leader, but is not co-chair of Anchorage Caucus anymore (now Rep. Drummond chairs the committee).
- Anchorage Caucus will meet again on Saturday, February 22, 9am to 2pm at the Assembly Chamber at the Loussac Library. The last Anchorage Caucus meeting was January 11th. The meeting went well, but there was limited time for testimony, so get there soon on the 22nd!
- There will also be a short class on Feb 22 about how to access and track legislative activity online – contact Chris if you are interested in attending.
- Chris will be holding a listening session at Elim Café at 2PM on Saturday, March 1.
- Current discussions in the legislature: working on a **gas line plan**. Chris and others working to get a fair return on resources, may include Alaska hire and Alaska sourcing provisions, and working on an agreement that is beneficial to Alaskans. Also working to protect from cost overruns and to promote competition up on the North Slope.
- **SJR 9** (school vouchers, constitutional amendment to allow public funds for private funding) is currently in Rules Committee. The bill received overwhelming testimony against the proposal while it was in Finance Committee.
- **Capital priorities** requests should be sent to legislators through the Community Council.
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Allen Thornhill asked about the status of House Bill 19? Chris noted that it is in the Rules committee currently, involves permanent vehicle registration (no re-registering). It is waiting to be brought to the House floor.
 - Another member clarified that currently, people over 65 and with certain disabilities do get permanent registration. This bill would expand to all vehicle owners.

3. Assembly Report – *Rep. Tim Steele*

- There was not an Assembly meeting last night, but will be one next week (Tuesday, Feb 11).
- **Municipal bonding** was the main issue on the last meeting's agenda. The Assembly approved 6 bonds, about \$35 million total: police, fire, road improvements (largest) and others. He can provide a list to anyone interested.

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- **Assembly elections.** The next election is April 1.
- **Comments & Discussion**
 - Merle Akers asked about the status of the proposed changes to the Community Council ordinance? Rep. Steele noted that the discussion has been postponed because several councils gave comments about the proposal to allow 16 and 17 year olds to participate.
 - Phil Isley asked whether his testimony was considered, about being a voting member of multiple community councils? Tim indicated that his testimony was heard, but that they will stick with the plan to only allow people to be members of community councils because of the residency or business requirements. The councils are intended to be the perspective of the neighborhood, so allowing people to join many councils will undermine the intent.
 - Peggy Auth asked about the status of the change in election date? She felt that the April date is too soon, and in her experience is better to combine with the November election. Tim agreed that from a cost standpoint it doesn't make as much sense, since the Muni will need to purchase their own machines.

4. Airport Report – John Parrott

- See Airport newsletter or check for updates online, www.anchorageairport.com
- **Airport Master Plan:** The consultant is working on finalizing the report, to be submitted to the FAA soon. They are still accepting comments on the plan, please feel free to submit online.
- **Part 150 Noise Study:** The consultant is continuing to work on the noise contours and implications. Their next meeting will be Thursday, March 6.
- **Lake Hood:** Winter operations are in place, but there is minimal snow currently so be cautious on the lake.
- **Preferential Runway Use Program:** Bob asked John to give an update on the current status of this program. John noted that the Part 150 Noise Study consultants gave an initial number for impacts on the neighborhood if this program was eliminated. The initial numbers were very high, and particularly during the night, which has a higher “penalty” in the calculations of noise produced, because it disturbs neighbors more. The Master Plan (operations) team has been considering whether this runway program could increase capacity and minimize noise impacts – they have been narrowing the proposal down to “day hours,” or potentially just noon to 4PM. Projections indicate that this would put another 25 homes within a contour requiring noise mitigation strategies. John reiterated that the plan is still in progress, and requires coordination between the operations team and the noise study team. Allowing more flexibility (a window of time where the preferential runway system would not be enforced) during certain hours would allow the airport to respond to increased demand in a low cost way, without unnecessarily impacting the neighborhood.
- **Comments and Discussion:**
 - A member who works in the air freight field at the airport suggested that heavy aircraft are louder, and that they may not be the best flights to reroute to the east-west runway. Smaller planes, however, may benefit more from allowing the east takeoffs, and make less noise, rather than making them use less fuel by having to taxi longer. John suggested that this would be in response to heavy demand for the runway, and that smaller planes may either be given the choice to use more fuel and take off sooner, or wait until there is less traffic on the runway. It would be a business decision by the pilots, not a mandate.
 - Matt Claman asked whether there has been an increase in demand as projected originally? John noted that it has not increased, but there are several factors – economic activity, changes in the fleet activity, etc. Matt also noted that the annual increase of operations has not played out yet. John agreed, but explained that the

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main “triggers” for some of the planned activities is not tied to a specific year, but that it is responding to certain levels of operations.

- Phil asked whether the closing of the refinery at North Pole will impact the airport? John noted that at this time, he does not anticipate direct impacts. However, they are not directly involved in the actual fuel refining and distributing industry, so it will affect their suppliers and may have future impacts. Imported fuel has grown at the airport from 3% to 20% in recent years. Fuel purchases are business arrangements between suppliers and carriers, so it will primarily affect the carriers.
- Peggy asked whether the next generations of aircraft will likely be quieter, or other technological improvements which will lessen impacts on the neighborhood? John noted that yes, in several lines of aircraft there will be improvements in efficiency, including reduced noise.
- Anna asked how many current liquor licenses there are in the airport? John counted 5: Norton Sound, Chili’s, Silver Gulch, Humpy’s, and the Alaska Airlines Boardroom. The Northern Lights Spa would be #6, applying for a BDL-Tourism license.
- Another member asked about how the noise abatement programs work, particularly for those who aren’t on “normal” daytime work schedules? John noted that if there is an increase in impacts, there would be possible funds available to help retrofit homes with noise abatement features (e.g. better insulation in the roof).
- Jeff Graham, owner of the Northern Lights Spa in the airport (other owner is Shannon Basili), has applied for a BDL-Tourism liquor license (full liquor license). Customers have asked whether they could be served wine while getting manicures and other services. Jeff approached Reps. Ernie Hall and Tim Steele to ask for support, which they gave. Since the location is on the secure side of the airport, there was less concern about public access to the liquor outlet. The spa has the only HD sports televisions in the airport (they are the only location with HD). They will also feature a variety of Alaskan wines, including from Silver Gulch and others, as part of the business concept.

5. Ure Park Re-Zone Update – Bob Auth (informal update)

- The previous proposal to re-zone the property to PLI and to grant a long-term lease to the Spenard Lions Club has been withdrawn.
- The re-zone has gone back to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a standalone proposition and a public hearing before the Commission is scheduled for March 3.
- The Community Council has already voted in support of this zoning change from R2M to PLI, and members did not propose a new vote
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Peggy noted that she is concerned that changing the zoning would still leave the door open for possible future controversies about using the property as anything other than a park. Bob reiterated that the Council voted in favor of the re-zone itself, not allowing future development.

6. Council Business : Election – Bob Auth and Officers

- The bylaws require an annual officers’ election in February. (Review Spenard’s current bylaws here: <http://www.communitycouncils.org/download/1233.pdf>).
- Bob reminded the group that those eligible to vote are current members (dues paid or waived) and who have been a member for at least a month. Those who joined the council this month are not eligible to vote at this time.
- The Council sought nominations at the January meeting, will accept further nominations this session, and will vote tonight.

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- The group accepted the slate of nominations and since there is only one contested position, the two nominees for president/chair will make brief statements to the group.
- There are two other positions, not officers, but which could be filled – auditor (check the Treasurer’s accounting of Spenard’s books) and volunteer, in a variety of areas (land use and Muni processes, liquor licenses, etc).
- Nominations:
 - *President* – Bob Auth, Phil Isley
 - *Vice President* – Jason Bergerson
 - *Secretary* – Anna Brawley
 - *Treasurer* – Allen Thornhill
 - *Auditor* – Peggy Auth (volunteered)
 - *Volunteer* – Phil Isley (tasks TBD)
- Statements from candidates for president/chair
 - **Bob Auth:** has served as chair in the past and has been a member for several years. Originally he stepped up and was voted as chair in June after the previous chair resigned. He was planning to just serve an interim term, but realized that having continuity is important particularly in the chair position, there is a lot to learn. He would like to serve a second term now that he has gotten up to speed, and get things in order for someone else to take over the following year. The chair’s job does take a fair amount of extra time attending meetings, responding to requests and representing the council. He feels that he, working with others on the council, has done good work.
 - **Phil Isley:** Phil disclosed that he has also filed to run against Tim Steele for an Assembly seat. He feels it is important to have choices in elections, and have more than one person on the ballot. He has been a governor of a Moose Lodge, oversaw 100 Army aviation officers, and has also worked as a TAC officer with OCS. He has technical skills, a website, and is willing to work hard for the Council. He
- **Comments and Discussion**
 - Jason and Allen suggested that there are other opportunities to be involved – Planning & Zoning, the Muni processes, liquor licenses, etc. All of these areas would benefit from member involvement.
- **Vote:** 3 votes for Phil, 6 votes for Bob. **Bob Auth has been re-elected as chair through February 2015.**

7. Roosevelt Park Update – Kelly Petersen, Maeve Nevins

- Kelly has returned with an exciting plan, after working with the Muni. She has come back to the Council with Maeve Nevins, a planner with the Muni Parks+Rec Department.
- Maeve gave an overview of the Challenge Grant, which Kelly secured. Once a grant is secured, the grantee works with a planner from the Muni to develop a plan.
- Kelly is asking the Council to provide a resolution and letter of support for her plan.
- Maeve gave an overview: the existing swing set was removed, and only a portion of the playground structures remain. The new swing set to be installed will connect to the rest of the playground with an ADA accessible concrete walkway. The proposal will be a 4-bay (swings), single-post set. They shared a conceptual drawing of the swing set (two toddler swings, two regular swings). There was limited space to put in a safe swing set structure, and limited budget, so the choices made were the best solution and balanced cost with quality and safety.
- There will be a volunteer “fix it” day to help with installation. The set would be installed in early summer and hopefully operational for most of the 2014 summer season.
- **Comments and Discussion**

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- Jason asked whether the swing design (single post) will be safe and long-lasting, with posts buried enough to ensure the set remains safe? Maeve verified that they will be to current safety standards, and will be sturdy. Jason noted that the swing sets at Willow Crest (A frame) seem to be worse for wear. Maeve added that the Muni does regular audits, but there is a lot of old equipment which will require replacement (probably why the older swings were removed).
- The group briefly discussed whether the A frame model is stronger than the single pole model – strength is about comparable, but only the single pole model allows enough space around the swingset per safety standards.
- Another member asked about the quality of the wood material to go on the ground below the swings—whether it has preservatives, or whether it is flammable. Maeve pointed out that the cost constraints limited the options of materials, but this is up to current standards. Sand is not up to current code, and is being removed from other playgrounds around the city currently. Kids have done damage to playgrounds in the past to wood chips, but some of that cannot be avoided.
- Anna thanked Kelly for coming back to the Council with a proposal, and for persisting with the project. It's great to see this happening in Spenard, and that Kelly's hard work is paying off.
- Another member asked whether there were accommodations for older or larger children who may use the swing set, in addition to young elementary students.
- **Proposed resolution:** Support the Challenge Grant proposal by Kelly Petersen to install a new swing set at Roosevelt Park (*see resolution document*).
- **Discussion**
 - None
- **Vote:** All in favor, none opposed. **The resolution passed.**

8. Faith Christian Community Project – *Don Conrad*

- The representative for this project was not prepared to give a presentation about specific plans, but would like to return at a later time.
- Faith Christian Community is working on plans for a building on Arctic Blvd. It is technically outside the council boundaries, but across the street, and they would like to report on their plans at a later time.

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

- **President:** [see announcements]
- **VP / FCC:** Jason is attending a NUSA (Neighborhoods USA) board meeting in San Diego next week. NeighborWorks Anchorage is holding several “point of entry” informational events to learn more about the organization, talk to Jason if you are interested in learning more or attending an event. FCC news: the Muni increased the FCC's budget by approximately \$5,000, currently to \$85,000. (For reference, a few years ago the FCC had about \$125,000). There are 38 councils, about 25 of them are active.
- **Treasurer:** There is currently \$27,002.89 in Spenard's account. This is from the Community Safety grant, the sale of the motor home originally intended for the West Side Community Patrol, regular dues, and funds raised in previous years from the Doo Dah Parade.
- **Secretary:** None. As always, check the Spenard CC website for updated copies of the minutes, an archive of past agendas and minutes, and other documents like the bylaws or the map of Spenard's boundaries! Feel free to send in photos or other images of Spenard, to feature on the site.

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11. Old + New Business

Spenard Beach Park – Proposed Boundary Change

- At the previous meeting, the Council passed a resolution in favor of shifting Spenard Beach Park into Spenard's boundary. There was no specific reason given, but Turnagain has since taken exception to the proposed change and would like to keep the park.
- It is not clear who asked originally for the boundary change? Bob brought the issue to the Council last month because he was asked to by the Muni, but there was no significant movement in Spenard CC for this change. Turnagain was also not previously notified of the proposed change, and has discussed their opposition to the proposal at their January 9 meeting.
- Merle offered a bit more background – the houses across the street are in Turnagain, and are most likely to be affected by activities in the park. He suggests that the neighbors probably have a bigger interest in it than the businesses on the other side of the road.
- Tim Steele noted that there are two houses in that area on the other side of the street— which district are those in?
- Peggy pointed out that recent boundary changes to Spenard have made it about half of its size (used to go to Old Seward, now is Midtown). Historically, Spenard Beach Park was in Spenard's boundary, and the CC was not given notice of the changes either at that time. At the time, some Spenard residents were upset about the change, and Peggy advocated for keeping it an active beach and not just for airplane tie-downs. She observed that Spenard has cared about this park, and would like to bring it back into the boundary.
- Jason shared the boundaries (see the Community Councils website) and noted that the group should amend the resolution to also include the neighbors in the decision-making, and (possibly) bring them back into the Spenard Community Council. The houses across the street are similarly affected, and in the past were part of the Spenard CC as well.
- Allen also pointed out that Spenard used to represent a larger part of West Anchorage, and would like to see the residential areas between Arctic and C street included. The creation of new councils and shifting boundaries was an unfortunate splitting up on what was previously all the Spenard area.
- Jason also noted that West Anchorage District Plan was trying to address this issue.
- Phil also noted that the Spenard district according to the Census, from which government election boundaries are drawn, does not correspond with Spenard's neighborhood boundaries. A great deal of what we consider Spenard is not included in those boundaries, and the district boundary includes areas not in the CC.
- Anna asked whether Turnagain or Spenard has more acres of park? Perhaps if Spenard has fewer acres of park land, in addition to other reasons for shifting the park to Spenard, this might be a reason to shift park into Spenard. The group did not have the answer to which CC has more park land.

Property at 4619 Spenard Rd. (Justin Green's property, formerly the "Ceramic Palace")

- Peggy gave an update on the Planning & Zoning Committee meeting addressing the rezone. The rezone was approved, but the Council did not get access to site plan review. One member of P&Z asked for an 8-foot wooden fence around the property blocking from the residential area as a buffer.
- The owner is planning to break ground in late spring, and will build a commercial office building on the site. Peggy encourages members to keep an eye on the property and call Muni Code Enforcement if they notice issues.
- Anna added that the proposed tenant is a small marketing consulting firm and will likely not generate as much traffic as some retail uses might.

The meeting was moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.