

**Turnagain Community Council  
Meeting Minutes September 1, 2011**

Cathy Gleason, TCC President, called the meeting to order at Turnagain Elementary at 7:08 pm.

**I. Announcements**

Cathy Gleason noted that the announcements were on the back of the printed agenda and highlighted the following ones:

- Lyn Ary Park Memorial Garden Clean-up on Saturday, September 10.
- Comment deadline on public hearing draft of West Anchorage District Plan, September 14.
- Tree Thinning Project at Lloyd Steele Park, September 17.
- Planning & Zoning Public Hearing on WADP, September 26.
- Oral Arguments on Lyn Ary Park Memorial Garden and Coastal Trail Greenbelt litigation, October 21.
- Mayor Sullivan has set up a budget webpage at [www.munibudget.org](http://www.munibudget.org).
- Elections for TCC Board members and officers will be at the November 3 meeting.

**II. Treasurer's Report and Minutes**

The Barb Jones, Treasurer, reported that there was no change from the last report and the balance is about \$1,300, which includes the only expenditure in 2011 of approximately \$129 for the West Anchorage Little League field day pizza. There is still money dedicated to Didlika Park.

Chris Habicht moved, and Bill Wortman seconded, a motion to approve the June 2, 2011, minutes and there was no opposition. The May minutes are not available and will be available in October.

**III. Committee Reports**

**A. Spenard Road Task Force**

Chris Habicht and Matt Claman are the TCC reps on this committee. Habicht reported about the last meeting, and noted the group would meet again the first week of September. Habicht indicated it's been quite an amazing and interesting process, with lots of different options. Assemblyman Ernie Hall noted that the biggest difference of opinions is between a three-lane and a four-lane road, but the group agrees about safe streets, safe crosswalks, and maintaining the feel of the community, among other issues. Taking into account all of the committee members' input, Hall and Assemblywoman Harriet Drummond will come up with a plan for the community to review.

**B. Official Streets and Highways Plan**

The MOA has updated the Official Streets and Highways Plan and Breck Tostevin and Cathy Gleason reviewed the plan and submitted preliminary comments. One of the main changes for our council is that Turnagain Street and Turnagain Boulevard are proposed to be upgraded to "collectors." This was not opposed as long as any improvement projects use the Context Sensitive Design process. West Northern Lights is listed as a "minor arterial" and the comment was that it should be down graded to a "collector." When West Northern Lights was improved between Wisconsin St. and Nathaniel Ct., it was designed as a collector, not an arterial. Also, Point Woronzof Drive was classified as a "commercial/industrial collector" and it was requested that commercial/industrial be deleted, since this road also provides

access to the Coastal Trail, parkland and the Clitheroe Center. A resolution to approve TCC comments will be on the October 6<sup>th</sup> agenda. The Official Streets and Highways Plan should be heard before the Planning and Zoning Commission in November.

### **C. Anchorage Parks Foundation – Parks Report Card Project**

Bill Wortman reported that he and Cathy and Dan Gleason attended a training session hosted by the Anchorage Parks Foundation's Parks Report Card Project. The idea is to take a group out to a park and fill out a report card, ranking everything from sufficient trash containers to safety problems on playground equipment. Whether in a group or not, anyone is welcome to you can pick a park and fill out a report card. Photos would be very helpful to show where the problems are. The more input the foundation receives, the greatly ability for them and the Parks Dept. to use this information to coordinate projects, to coordinate legislative funding, and to plan work parties. Please turn in the report cards by the end of September.

### **IV. Legislative Report**

Sen. Hollis French's legislative aide, Andy Modo, who can be reached at 269-0234, gave the legislative report. The Governor's capital budget vetoes were announced, but \$2.2 million in Senator French's area was approved, including Smart boards in every single school, lighting replacements, and PE equipment as well as renovation money for Kiwanis Fish Creek Park. Funding for a pathway on W. Northern Lights between Lois Dr. and Captain Cook Estates as well as a child care center for low income, extension for the Fish Creek Trail and West/Romig planning and Development was vetoed by the Governor.

### **V. Assembly Report**

Harriet Drummond gave the Assembly report and highlighted the following issues from the Assembly meetings over the summer:

- i. The Assembly passed a Resolution for the State of Alaska to continue the Coastal Zone Management Plan, but the Legislature did not approve the extension.
- ii. The Assembly amended the personnel rules. There will be a special meeting next week to give the Assembly additional direction on the arbitrator's decision in favor of the AWWU plumbers and pipefitters union. There was an injunction granted this morning and a hearing date was set in November. The workers are working under the existing contract.
- iii. The Assembly authorized the Downtown Parking enforcement as authorized by the voters in the April election.
- iv. The Assembly reauthorized the Watershed and Natural Resources Commission. The internal auditor has been tasked with reviewing each of the Commissions and making a recommendation whether they should continue.
- v. The Assembly approved the Heritage Land Bank Plan, including 5 of 10 amendments from TCC.
- vi. The MOA approved a business that will be polishing recycled glass into high-end kitchen cabinets. (Ms. Drummond also noted that Target stores accept household glass that is shipped to the Lower 48 in its containers for recycling.)
- vii. The Assembly failed to approve the mayor's code changes on sitting on downtown sidewalks. The APD has been clearing out homeless camps all summer long. The homeless camp on

Arlington Drive has been cleared a number of times and is on the watch list. Call dispatch at 786-8900 to report active or abandoned campsites.

viii. This week, the Assembly accepted State of Alaska grants for schools, including over \$1 million for West Anchorage schools – West, Romig and Lake Hood.

Ms. Drummond updated the TCC on MOA Public Notices. The Assembly passed an ordinance in 2009 to stop putting notices in print media. A meeting was held last week with Harriet, Bonnie Jack and Barb Jones, Municipal Ombudsman, to look at how public meeting notices work or don't work on the Muni website. Some dead ends were found and there are two complex pages that duplicate meetings. There is a way to get the information pushed to the public through the RSS feeds – the IT Director promised to make that user friendlier – and then the public can explore more information than the public will probably be able to deal with. It should soon be more user-friendly and posted. Harriet promised to stay in touch on this issue. A comment was made from Breck Tostevin that the RSS is on the top of your web browser and you can click on it and all the info., but another comment was that it was very user unfriendly. Another question was the city could contract with FCC to provide public notices to council email lists. Bonnie Jack talked with FCC Manager Mark Butler and stated that the problem is that the FCC doesn't have the staff to handle individualized requests. It was commented that people could be limited to receiving all public notices from FCC, rather than picking and choosing which ones to receive. There is continued action going on at the MOA to make the system more user-friendly.

Merl Akers raised a concern regarding the limited pedestrian crossings along Wisconsin St. There are lots of intersections, but kids have to go all the way down to 40<sup>th</sup> to cross at a specified safety crossing. There was a suggestion that there should be a crosswalk at every street. The sidewalk on the east side is relatively narrow and right up against the street. It also has interruptions with irrigation or other boxes, so kids will be inclined to move over to the west side. In another area, there is not a crosswalk on Turnagain Blvd. from the west to cross over to Fish Creek Park. Finally, a comment was made that there was no notice when Borland Street was torn up; but others indicated they got notice.

## **VI. AWWU Turnagain Interceptor Sewer Project Update**

Joshua Shackelford, AWWU, gave the wrap-up report on the AWWU Turnagain Interceptor Sewer Project. They repaired 3,100 feet of sewer by putting a slightly smaller plastic slip pipe into the old concrete pipe; the new pipe has a 75-year lift expectancy. The cost was about half the cost of a traditional repair. It did take a bit longer than expected; the projection was end of July and it was closer to the end of August. A question was asked regarding certain road signs and equipment that are still lying around. Mr. Shackelford will follow up and pick up the equipment in the next day or so. A final question was why traffic closed two days before the project started and the answer was they had a TV camera to see what was in the pipe.

## **VII. Turnagain Crossing Project Proposal**

Tim Gravelle, owner of Kaladi Brothers Coffee, and Alt Bal discussed a proposed café bistro and residential apartments at W. Northern Lights and Turnagain St. called "Turnagain Crossing Development." The project is currently in the development stage. A building along WNL would be a coffee shop during the day and have a variety of food in the evening. To the south would be small apartments. Cathy Gleason stated that J. Jay Brooks is the developer, who lives part-time in Turnagain and grew up in the neighborhood. He has met with and otherwise communicated with the TCC Board and wants feedback from the council. Currently, there is no zoning designation that would allow a

mixed-use development on this small of a lot. Mr. Brooks is working with Assembly Members Harriet Drummond and Ernie Hall and the MOA Planning staff to create a new zoning category. Ernie Hall reported the MOA is very interested in introducing an ordinance change by the end of the month, to add this mixed-use development zoning category. Neighborhood, small commercial development such as this proposal is consistent with the WAPD in terms of location along WNL.

Comments from TCC members included that it was a great idea and encouraged the developers to have a dedicated dog run or place to tie up dogs as well as a bike rack. Another comment was to include more landscaping. A concern was raised about what happened at the Fly By Night Club in Spenard: it was a really nice club until it was sold, then the new club became a huge problem in the Spenard residential area. A response was that the subsequent problem was Players House of Rock and it ran itself out of business and now Tap Root is in the building. Tap Root is doing quite well and Mr. Whitekeys is back doing some summer shows. A comment was made that this project is such a small project that it would never be in the category of a Fly By Night Club. The builder/developer grew up here and his vision is that a bistro/residential development would be appropriate for Turnagain. A related concern is if the development is too successful, parking may be a problem because of the small lot size - and it may generate a fair amount of traffic at that intersection. Kaladi Brothers responded that they are not getting involved in a bar; they want to sell coffee and offer people a glass of wine or a beer, and pizza. They do not envision the café bistro will be open until 2:00 a.m., as the Spenard bars were. Another comment was that people were opposed to any hard liquor. If the creation of a new zoning category is not approved and the property rezoned, the developer may just build an apartment complex.

Mark Wiggin moved to approve a resolution in that supports the concept of the Turnagain Crossing Development and Chris Habicht seconded the motion. Harriet Drummond pointed out that the developer wanted a conceptual map attached to the resolution and it is. The corner is within an area designated for small commercial business and consistent with long-term planning for this area. Thebe Tobish, senior planner for the city, stated that the "Neighborhood Commercial" zoning category being written will have many restrictions written into the code. It was also pointed out that Kaladi Brothers would only apply for a beer and wine license, not a full liquor license. The question was called and the motion passed 14 in favor, 1 opposed.

### **VIII. West Anchorage District Plan**

TCC sent in the comment letter approved at the June meeting on the Public Review Draft of the WADP. The Public Hearing Draft of the Plan is now out and comments are due September 14. The Planning & Zoning Commission held its first public hearing on July 25; they continued the public hearing to September 26. Breck Tostevin and Cathy Gleason served as reps on the West Anchorage District Planning Group.

Thebe Tobish from the Municipal Planning Department was available at this meeting for discussion and comments. The plan is on the municipal website at [www.muni.org/Department/OCPE/Planning/Project/West\\_Anch/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.muni.org/Department/OCPE/Planning/Project/West_Anch/Pages/Default.aspx).

Breck Tostevin spoke and noted that the TCC included 8 comments in our June letter. The TCC Board has now drafted a comment letter on the Public Review draft that incorporates the June comments by reference, because although there were some changes made, the big issues remain, including the land use map, which still designates all Airport Property as "Major Transportation Facility." The TCC also commented that the plan doesn't go far enough to advocate for the protection of all of the remaining

Turnagain Bog wetlands and associated uplands. On the Coastal Trail Greenbelt Buffer, TCC reiterated our previous comments and suggested specific changes in the Plan. On the North-South Runway, TCC reiterated our positions about opposing the WADP facilitating another runway. (The Executive Summary says that the plan is neutral as to the north-south runway. But in TCC's opinion is that the Plan is not neutral on some issues, including the North-South Runway.) On the issue of the Comprehensive Land-Exchange, the TCC position is that there is no need for a comprehensive land exchange, which facilitates another North-South Runway, but the plan still advocates for this. The TCC position is that city acquisition or conservation easement on recreational lands currently on airport property could be systematic and planned for. On the issue of the private property notice regarding noise disclosure on sales of real property, the TCC comment is that this proposal puts all the burden of airport noise impacts on the residents, not on the airport to try to minimize noise. Also, there are already state disclosures laws and the disclosure is not a land use issue. The last topic was the issue of Municipal Land Use Laws applying to the Airport; some of our comments were incorporated into the Public Hearing Draft, but TCC still feels the language isn't strong enough. Finally, there was a comment about a concern about airport management structure. Currently, public input is not a meaningful part of the decision-making process. While some of our input was incorporated, it still needs more work.

A motion by Barb Jones and seconded by Christine Knudsen to adopt the substance of the TCC letter dated September 1, 2011, called the TCC "Comments/Recommendations for West Anchorage District Plan Public Hearing Draft, dated July 2011." A comment was that the P&Z will have the draft plan and all of the public comments, plus staff comments, and then the Commission will probably ask the staff to do an issue/response. Another comment was that Breck did a "heck of a job" reviewing the plan and preparing and explaining the comments. One concern was that the Planning Department came up with concepts and has held onto them, despite TCC input. Another concern was the lack of ability for the public to participate in the planning process. Higher density housing called for in the plan was also discussed. The response was that by state law the MOA is required to project growth out to 20 years to determine if the MOA can accommodate that growth. The MOA can no longer accommodate that growth with single family homes, even though people want single family homes. If you go east on Wisconsin those multifamily homes have worn out their useful lives and don't look good. So in the plan, the department took the numbers and looked at the densities based on the zoning and made the tweaks to accommodate the zoning. Most of the changes are in the Sand Lake area of the plan as well as in the Spenard Corridor. There were no zoning changes in Turnagain. A comment was made that Anchorage does need more multifamily living; a person gave an example that three adults are living in their home because their adult children can't afford apartments within their commute to work. A comment was made that the deteriorating multifamily homes could be rebuilt to new design standards so they look better, last longer, and fit into the character of the neighborhood.

If you're interested in the WAPD, there is a document and a worksheet that shows the comments from the June draft and the responses from the department. The question was called, and there was no objection to approving the TCC letter, 13 in favor, none opposed. Cathy Gleason stated that the Board will review it to make sure page numbers, references, etc. are accurate.

TCC members were reminded to mark their calendars to attend the P&Z Commission Meeting on September 26, 2011 at Spenard Rec Center, at 5:30 p.m. The Loussac is reserved the following Monday in case they need to continue the public hearing.

**IX. General comments:** October's agenda is already booked; John Parrot will be on the October agenda giving an update on airport activities. United Way will be attending; DOT will be here to talk

about the Runway Protection Zone/Wendy's Way Property Acquisition. A comment was made that the airport is installing a bank stabilization project along sections of Lake Hood/Spenard and what is happening doesn't match the plan proposed to the public. Airport Manager John Parrot stated that modifications were made at the request of pilots and due to unforeseen conditions.

**X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Jones, Secretary-Treasurer