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Rabbit Creek Community Council
Meeting of 11 May 2000
Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm. Present were Grunblatt, Miller, Fries, Mendenhall, Pease, Zidek, and Kutzer.

Announcements:

Upgrades of DeArmoun Rd. (phase II) and of Elmore between Huffman and DeArmoun are in the capital budget.

Public involvement is being sought for the Glenn Highway reconstruction project.

The Federation of Community Councils office is moving. They are requesting a donation of \$100 to help with moving costs.

The Potter Heights request for R-6 zoning and exemption from sewer requirements is being reviewed by the Department of Community Planning and Development (DCPD).

It was moved (Miller), seconded (Pease), and **passed** 6-0 to donate \$100 to the Federation of Community Councils.

Legislative report (Con Bunde):

HB133 (voting on LRSA's) has been passed by the Legislature.

The Governor has signed an act sponsored by Bunde to reform pension provisions for part-time teachers.

Assembly report (Dick Tremaine):

The Assembly will vote on the municipal budget next Tuesday. It includes the controversial tax rebate.

A Fire Department audit has been issued with 112 recommendations. They include sprinklers and hydrants around the Hillside, and a triage of Hillside houses in advance of a wildfire to decide which ones would be defended.

Discussion:

- Revision of Municipal policy that favors R-3 zoning everywhere in the Hillside Wastewater Management Plan (HWMP) area
- Public debate on the proposed tax cap will include budgets showing its potential effects, prepared by Mystrom and statewide groups.
- Could an ordinance be proposed to make landowners reduce fire hazards on their property?
- How could a local tax district be formed to purchase open space? (Wiener, Fries) Tremaine said a measure could be put on the August ballot; he will investigate how Bayshore formed their district.

Public interest lawsuits regarding Elmore Road upgrade (Angela Kuentzel):

The upgrade would use Anchorage Roads and Drainage Service Area (ARDSA) bond money on areas located outside the service area. This is being challenged in a suit.

An injunction is being sought against the Muni and the Anchorage School District to stop work on the new high school on Elmore Road, on the grounds that public involvement has not taken place as required by law.

The Smoke-free Anchorage Coalition (Anne-Marie Holen): They are proposing an ordinance to require that all public places and work places be smoke-free. Outdoor venues and homes would not be covered. The ordinance would reduce exposure to second-hand smoke, especially for employees. Such ordinances have been found not to reduce business revenues. The group is requesting RCCC endorsement.

The minutes for March 2000 were approved (moved Pease, second Gruenblatt) with correction of Geuss' name.

Mental Health Trust lands:

The Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) hearing on zoning the tract R-3SL is still open and will reconvene Monday at 6:30.

DCPD recommends that the area be included in ARDSA; this seems incongruous.

A P&Z member asked whether RCCC might try to purchase the parcel. The Conservation Fund possibly could make an interim purchase of the land, subject to final purchase by another group (Fries). The RCCC Parks and Trails Committee could investigate further.

The Mental Health tracts is the source of 4 creeks that drain into Potter Marsh (Thede Tobish, DCPD, quoted by Ann Rappoport). A 25-foot setback is required from each one, but neither the Muni nor the Corps of Engineers has mapped them.

No impact studies have been written on traffic, water quality, etc. A special limitation would recommend connection to Potter Valley Road, but this isn't required.

Friends of Potter Marsh and ADF&G have not testified yet at the hearing. Mendenhall will ask FOPM to do so.

It was moved (Mendenhall), seconded (Gruenblatt) and passed 7-0 to write a letter to P&Z saying that we are interested in purchasing land in the Mental Health Trust parcel.

A resolution was moved (Pease), seconded (Kutzer), and passed (7-0) to request that exchange of the 12-acre parcel in Virgo and the 15-acre parcel on Goldenview be considered separately from R-3SL zoning. (Attached.)

De-coupling of sewer service and high-density housing:

HWMP should be revised. This plan recommends that Hillside tracts with sewer service be zoned R-3SL. However, sewer service and housing density should be "de-coupled." High density should not be approved without considering rural roads, poor access, soils, and other factors (Pease). Revisions should be based on good science.

Many subdivisions in Anchorage have sewer and large lots. Recent examples within the HWMP area include developments by Yoshimura and Berggren (Weiner).

The Municipality is agreeing to up-zone many tracts to R-3SL, saying that special limitations answer the concerns of neighbors. However, SL's are often circumvented by exemptions or lack of enforcement.

It has been suggested that "package plants" (on-site sewage treatment) do as good a job as the municipal treatment plant. However, a hydrologist and a septic engineer say that "package plants" don't lower nitrate levels and often aren't maintained properly (Rick Abbott).

Sewer systems are desirable in some areas where large lots are desired. Septic systems on Hillside lands with poor drainage would contaminate wells downhill. It is a quality of life issue (Rick Abbott).

In some states, dual septic systems are required in some areas; they are used alternately every 15 years (Holmes).

A resolution was moved (Pease), seconded (Kutzer), and passed (7-0) to de-couple housing density from waste water issues. (Attached).

International Airport expansion (Cheryl Richardson, Alaska Center for the Environment):

ACE is requesting that impacts of future air traffic on noise and pollution be and alternative land use plans be evaluated. It has even been suggested that the airport might move to another site in 20 years.

The Airport Master Plan really is a marketing plan (which is what the legislature wants).

More than 90% of the 400 comments received on the issue opposed the filling of 240 acres of wetlands adjacent to the airport.

Neighborhoods near the airport want less noise and air pollution -- complaints have increased. A buffer of marshland helps reduce noise, while solid ground reflects sound.

There is dispute over whether the Alaska Department of Transportation is required to comply with local zoning maps.

The airport has set up a Citizens' Advisory Commission.

The Army Corps of Engineers hearing on the airport's application to fill marshes will be June 6.

Richardson was requested to send issues to the Board for action.