

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SPECIAL MEETING
ASSEMBLY JUNE 26, 2001

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on June 26, 2001, at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Chambers, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Timothy L. Anderson. The purpose of the special meeting was a joint assembly/planning commission meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Assembly District No. 1
Ms. Sara Jansen, Assembly District No. 2 (Deputy Mayor)
Mr. Talis J. Colberg, Assembly District No. 3
Mr. Dan Kelly, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6
Ms. Kelly Lankford Ladere, Assembly District No. 7

Planning Commission members present were:

Mr. Chris Rose, District 1
Ms. Cynthia Payne, District 2
Mr. Lee Sharp, District 3

Planning Commission members absent and excused:

Ms. Mary Kvalheim, District 4
Mr. Craig Savage, District 5
Mr. Dick Stoffel, District 6
Vacant seat, District 7

Borough staff participating:

Ms. Sandra Dillon, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Mr. Michael Gatti, Borough Attorney
Ms. Elizabeth Manfred, Deputy Borough Clerk
Ms. Sandy Garley, Planning Director
Mr. Ron Swanson, Community Development Director

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Americorps crew leader Amy Parsons.

IV. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

A. Proclamation of Appreciation to Americorps

Mr. Swanson:

- spoke to the projects completed by the Americorps team; and
- introduced the team leader Amy Parsons.

Mayor Anderson:

- remarked that Tanana Tribal Chiefs representatives recently arrived to assist the Americorps team with the Butte trails project; and

- read the proclamation of appreciation.

Amy Parsons introduced each team member of Americorps.

V. JOINT ASSEMBLY/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

A. NEW BUSINESS

1. Visual Preference Survey Report - (Requested by Planning Director Garley)

Ms. Garley spoke to the development of the visual preference study.

Ms. Michelle Church:

- commented that complete study results will be available within the next week;
- stated that approximately 400 people participated in the study process; and
- presented the slide show of various sites shown to participants who were asked to record a degree of preference.

Mayor Anderson recognized Parks, Recreation, and Trails Board Member Rick Ernst in the audience.

2. Core Area Zoning Update and Time Schedule (Requested by Mayor Anderson)

Ms. Garley:

- reported that the planning commission has formalized the conditional use districts for the core area zoning;
- remarked that July 13, 23, and 30, 2001, are scheduled for planning commission meetings to discuss mapping components;
- stated that aerial maps were purchased to illustrate land use information;
- commented that additional land use information will be derived from assessment records and field checks;
- envisioned that the availability of the finalized draft map and the beginning of public hearings concerning core area zoning will be in the late fall season;
- noted that the planning commission is developing basically a Euclidian zoning ordinance;
- shared that borough staff and planning commissioners will do field checks of the major core areas;
- listed the following proposed zoning districts; residential, multi-family/office; light commercial; commercial, industrial, transitional, PUD, SPUD, and agricultural;
- proposed meetings with property owners to encourage dialog on the zoning maps; and
- distinguished light commercial zoning as having a maximum square footage requirement and the ability to coexist with neighborhoods.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- requested that the assembly update the borough comprehensive plan; and
- voiced concerns regarding grandfather rights versus zoning process.

Ms. Garley:

- responded that the core area has an active comprehensive plan; and
- assured the assembly that grandfather rights remain with the land until land use changes.

Discussion continued regarding the present comprehensive plan.

Assemblymember Colver:

- suggested that group homes be classified as a conditional use; and
- shared that group homes must comply with the Fair Housing Act.

Planning Commissioner Payne opined that due to the limited time frame, it is not possible to update and adopt a comprehensive plan prior to adoption of a zoning ordinance.

Mayor Anderson identified borough comprehensive planning as community by community.

Discussion continued concerning the urgency of completing a zoning ordinance and bringing it to the public.

Mayor Anderson:

- commented that the development of zoning has been a five-year project;
- encouraged the planning commission to expedite their target dates for completion;
- spoke to the need for zoning concepts and maps as implementation tools; and
- voiced appreciation for the planning commission=s efforts to date.

Discussion followed concerning the proposed time frames for presentation, adoption, and implementation of the zoning ordinance.

Planning Commissioner Sharp:

- spoke to the differences between comprehensive planning and zoning;
- supported submitting the text for a zoning ordinance to the assembly first, followed later with the maps.

Planning Commissioner Payne stated that she considers society to be visual and therefore it is imperative to submit text and maps together.

Assemblymember Jansen voiced her objection to discussing removal of Farm Loop Community Council from the core area as it hadn=t been advertised.

Planning Commissioner Payne:

- explained the decision of the planning commission to postpone the request of Farm Loop Community Council for exclusion of the core area until the zoning document is completed stating a consensus that it would be unfair to make a decision without all the information; and
- reiterated that when the zoning process is completed, the planning commission will revisit the Farm Loop Community Council=s request.

The special joint assembly/planning commission meeting recessed at 7:50 p.m. and reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

3. Race Track Issues (Requested by Assemblymember Kelly)

Assemblymember Kelly:

- spoke to enforcement issues concerning the current race track ordinance; and
- requested that the planning commission propose specific language rather than ambiguous terms to the race track ordinance.

Mayor Anderson reported that the race track issue is scheduled for public hearing with the Planning Commission on July 16, 2001.

Planning Commissioner Sharp remarked that the proposed revision to the race track code reinstates the original ordinance language prior to amendments.

4. Conditional Use Permits - Expansion of Uses

Planning Commissioner Sharp:

- spoke to the need for being proactive rather than reactive;
- suggested expanding the conditional use permit requirements until zoning is adopted; and
- questioned what areas should be expanded to require conditional use permits.

Ms. Garley:

- responded that planning is creating a list of problem land uses and conflicts; and
- requested assembly preferences concerning the goal of an ordinance for conditional use permits.

Assemblymember Lankford Ladere:

- spoke to the commonality with Anchorage of land use to the north;
- requested that the planning commission be invited to attend the next joint assembly meeting with Anchorage assembly;
- commented that the borough needs to address land uses for the transportation grid, public safety issues, power transmission, and emergency planning; and
- supported expanding the conditional use permits code.

Assemblymember Colberg emphasized the need to stay focused on zoning in order to accomplish one goal before starting another.

Discussion continued on the expansion of issues requiring a conditional use permit and the area to be enforced.

5. MSB 15.08.075 - Voting Requirements

Assemblymember Sharp:

- spoke to policy decisions made by the assembly versus quasi-judicial decisions of the planning commission;
- remarked that the quasi-judicial decisions address personal rights with due process; and
- suggested several alternate members be appointed to ensure there are always seven members to make the decisions.

Discussion followed regarding the requirements for voting.

Assemblymember Lankford Ladere requested that an ordinance be drafted to appoint alternate members to the planning commission.

VI. PLANNING COMMISSION, MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. Garley expressed appreciation of the opportunity to meet with the assembly.

Ms. Dillon announced that the continued public hearing regarding sales tax is scheduled for Thursday, June 28, 2001.

Mr. Duffy:

- thanked the planning commissioners for their continued dedication;
- commented on the weather haze created by forest fires;
- reported that the borough found good water at Meadow Lakes;
- commented that fireworks present a high fire danger;
- noted that the adopted FY 02 budget and the three-year financial plan have been published
- spoke to the costs required by GASBY for solid waste;
- remarked that the financial plan computes future funding based on the state cap; and
- mentioned that the borough is notifying contractors who are selling land prior to recording the subdivision that it is unlawful and to cease and desist.

Planning Commissioner Sharp requested that the planning commission be notified of assembly joint meetings with

other municipalities.

Planning Commissioner Rose assured the assembly that the core area zoning is the priority of the commission.

Assemblymember Lankford Ladere spoke to the fire safety programs available.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss commented on the flooding problems on Knik River Road and mitigation of disasters.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- spoke to the transportation issues and the transportation advisory board process;
- stated that the planning commission has the following issues to consider: hazardous waste, comprehensive plan, and zoning; and
- supported the planning commission in their efforts to move cautiously but quickly.

Assemblymember Colberg voiced appreciation for the planning commission efforts on the zoning issue.

Assemblymember Simpson stated appreciation of this evening's productivity and the professionalism of the members of the group.

Assemblymember Colver noted that he looked forward to working together on the zoning issue and other planning items.

Assemblymember Jansen:

- announced that WWII bomber planes (B-17 and B-24) are available for tours at the Palmer airport; and
- thanked the planning commissioners for their efforts and dedication.

Planning Commissioner Payne:

- expressed appreciation for the visual survey presentation; and
- requested that the planning commission receive agendas of assembly joint meetings with other municipalities.

Mayor Anderson:

- appreciated the open and frank discourse of the evening; and
- thanked Michelle Church for the visual survey presentation.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The special joint assembly/planning commission meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor
ATTEST:

SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: July 17, 2001