

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on October 23, 2012, at the Mat-Su Borough School District Administration Building, 501 North Gulkana, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Larry DeVilbiss for the purpose of holding a joint Assembly/Planning Commission meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

- Mr. Warren Keogh, Assembly District No. 1 (*attended telephonically*)
- Mr. Noel Woods, Assembly District No. 2
- Mr. Ronald Arvin, Assembly District No. 3 (*Deputy Mayor*)(*attended telephonically*)
- Mr. Steve Colligan, Assembly District No. 4
- Mr. Darcie K. Salmon, Assembly District No. 5
- Mr. Jim Colver, Assembly District No. 6 (*attended telephonically*)
- Mr. Vern Halter, Assembly District No. 7

Planning Commission members present and establishing a quorum were:

- Mr. Gary Foster, District 1
- Mr. Thomas Healy, District 2
- Mr. John Klapperich, District 3 (*Chair*)
- Mr. Bruce Walden, District 4
- Mr. William Haller, District 5
- Mr. Vern Rauchenstein, District 7

Planning Commission members absent and excused were:

- Mr. Tom Adams, District 6

Staff in attendance were:

- Ms. Lonnie McKechnie, Borough Clerk
- Mr. John Moosey, Borough Manager
- Mr. George Hays, Assistant Borough Manager
- Mr. John Aschenbrenner, Deputy Borough Attorney
- Ms. Brenda J. Henry, Executive Assistant to the Borough Clerk
- Ms. Eileen Probasco, Planning and Land Use Director
- Mr. Alex Strawn, Permitting Services Manager
- Ms. Mary Brodigan, Administrative Secretary II
- Mr. Emerson Krueger, Planner II

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor DeVilbiss inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

GENERAL CONSENT: The agenda was approved as presented without objection.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. John Klapperich, Planning Commission Chair.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(There was no one present who wished to testify.)

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Platting Board Update *(Requested by Assembly)*

Ms. Probasco:

- advised that the Platting Board update was requested by a previous Assembly;
- stated that there is not a member of the Platting Board present this evening to report on their activities; and
- noted that she is unsure of what type of report the body would like or if it was still needed.

Assemblymember Halter:

- stated that he thought there was to be a 6-month review of Title 43;
- advised that he would like to have a comparison of plats issued last year to this year; and
- noted that he has not heard any feedback on Title 43 since it was adopted.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- that the Assembly would like to continue to receive this report; and
- the format of the Platting Board report.

B. Status and Content of Planning Commission Resolution Serial No. 12-14 regarding Tall Structures *(Requested by Assemblymember Keogh)*

Assemblymember Keogh:

- apologized for teleconferencing into the meeting;
- thanked the Planning Commission for their prompt attention and review of the tall structure ordinance;
- advised the body that the legislation will be introduced at the Assembly meeting on November 6; and
- requested that the Planning Commissioners report on their recommendations.

Planning Commission Chair Klapperich stated that there was a lot of discussion, especially concerning setbacks.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the public testimony that was received by the Planning Commission;
- concerns with towers falling onto houses;

- the current lack of any tall structure regulation;
- the engineering of tall structures;
- that view shed is not criteria for placing a tower;
- the concerns regarding lack of public notification; and
- the Borough's responsibility to provide communication infrastructure.

C. Fish Briefing (*Requested by Mayor DeVilbiss*)

Mayor DeVilbiss:

- noted that he requested this briefing;
- spoke to concerns that have been shared with him by the MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission;
- stated that the Watana Susitna Dam project has contributed in a positive way to genetic fish studies;
- spoke to conflicts between personal use and commercial fishing; and
- related that the Commission is working to provide very specific information to the State Board of Fisheries.

Assemblymember Halter noted that fish escapement was requested to be included in the request to the Governor's budget, which is a significant statement in itself.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the work session the MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission recently conducted;
- that it is not just Borough fisheries that are affected, as there are several Statewide;
- ongoing genetic studies;
- tributaries and streams where fish are spawning;
- how the September 2012 flood event affected salmon spawning;
- that there is no easy solution for fish escapement;
- the opinion that there is a lack of data to support the State Board of Fisheries analysis;
- that not all of the salmon spawning areas have been mapped;
- the enormous loss of revenue to the Borough due to fish closures;
- whether or not there has ever been a hydro project in Alaska that has not improved fish production;
- the Cook Inlet red salmon fishery in Kenai and how it has been managed; and
- the desire to have a plan that works comprehensively on all species and all drainages in order to have healthy fish runs.

D. South Denali Update by the Department of Natural Resources (*Requested by Administration*)

Mr. Wayne Biessel, Alaska State Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, provided an update on the South Denali Project.

Mayor DeVilbiss queried what mile post the project is located at.

Mr. Biessel advised that it is at Parks Highway Milepost 135.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- that the project includes 3 phases for electricity;
- that the current electrical grid on the Parks Highway ends at mile 124;
- that having electricity in the area will enhance economic development;
- the total cost of the project and who has contributed thus far; and
- that all permits are in place and the corridor identified.

E. Density and Build Out Study Update (*Requested by Administration*)

Mr. Emerson Krueger provided a history of the density and build out study.

Mr. Shannon Bingham of Western Demographics provided an update regarding the density and build out study.

Assemblymember Woods:

- queried if it is expected that Anchorage will build out this direction; and
- further queried if that possibility impacted the projected density numbers.

Mr. Bingham:

- advised that should the Knik Arm Bridge be built, that it would provide more linkage and possibility of Anchorage expansion on this side;
- stated that job growth within the Borough will hopefully drive down the number of job commuters in Anchorage, as the Borough is an incredibly rich opportunity; and
- stated that this information was not included in the projected numbers.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- whether or not the study considered high rise office buildings;
- the consideration of a major airport construction in the Borough;
- that the Borough is one of or possibly the densest aviation centric communities possibly worldwide;
- the possibility of a large influx of residents if the bridge is built; and
- how the core density would shift if the bridge is built.

F. Flood Hazard Mapping and Flood Update (*Requested by Administration*)

Mr. Alex Strawn provided an update of flood hazard mapping and the September 2012 flood event.

Planning Commissioner Healy queried the location of properties proposed to be removed from the flood zone.

Mr. Strawn advised that if the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accepts the Army Corp of Engineers study, the red area indicated on the handout would no longer be considered part of the flood plain.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- a known channel of the river that is currently dormant and not mapped as flood plain;
- that the data available now is more comprehensive than what was available eight years ago;
- concerns with the absolute accuracy of this type of data;
- that Mars is mapped better than the state of Alaska;
- that mapping of the Borough will be a continuous investment;
- the desire to have an update on the parcel and survey work before the next budget cycle;
- that having data available to the community during recent flood event was very helpful; and
- the residents who were not mapped as being in a flood zone that were flooded last month.

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

Planning Commission Chair Klapperich:

- spoke to the attendance of the Planning Commission members; and
- thanked them for their hard work.

Mr. Moosey stated that he is planning to schedule the work session with the State Legislature during the first week of December.

Planning Commissioner Walden stated that it was a great meeting and he is looking forward to the next one.

Planning Commissioner Foster:

- spoke to concerns with contractors who are not licensed and bonded and how they impact legitimate contractors;
- noted the issues that unlicensed contractors cause him as a businessman; and
- opined that it is a matter of revenue that needs to be monitored.

Planning Commission Chair Klapperich:

- stated that he sees that Borough employees have a great passion for getting the job done;
- related that even though they are in overcrowded spaces and overworked that customer service is made a priority; and
- thanked staff for their hard work.

Planning Commissioner Healy stated that he appreciated the information received this evening.

Planning Commission Chair Klapperich:

- spoke to the tall structure ordinance being of importance; and
- provided a history of the former Tall Tower Committee, of which he was a member, and the work done by the Committee.

Assemblymember Keogh spoke to his appreciation of the information received this evening.

Assemblymember Colver:

- spoke to a letter approving the site selection for the new Knik Junior/Senior High School; and
- advised that the selection should be moving forward soon for Planning Commission review and then Assembly approval.

Mayor DeVilbiss queried if the School District was aware a site had been selected.

Assemblymember Colver affirmed the query.

Assemblymember Colligan:

- stated that he is looking forward to lively discussion at future joint meetings;
- spoke to the need for the body to work together to find a solution on tall towers;
- noted that the Assembly has a responsibility to provide certain services to residents;
- opined that the largest need is to focus on core essential services; and
- spoke to concerns of what the construction industry is doing to self regulate.

Assemblymember Woods:

- stated that he is pleased to hear of the long range growth planning that is occurring; and
- advised that hopes to see more of it as projects develop.

Assemblymember Halter:

- thanked the Planning Commission for the meeting; and
- noted that it is always a pleasure to meet with them.

Mayor DeVilbiss:

- noted that this is the first official meeting of the reelected members of the Assembly;
- commended the Planning Commission for their full attendance at meetings;
- opined that boards and commissions work best when they are at full capacity; and
- spoke to a possible land exchange that he was approached about by the Ahtna Corporation.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

LARRY DeVILBISS, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes Approved: 11/06/12