

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on November 18, 2008, at the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 5:43 p.m. by Mayor Curtis D. Menard for the purpose of discussing transportation issues.

II. ROLL CALL

Assembly members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Pete Houston, Assembly District No. 2
Ms. Michelle R. Church, Assembly District No. 3
Mr. Mark Ewing, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Cindy L. Bettine, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Robert Wells, Assembly District No. 6
Mr. Tom Kluberton, Assembly District No. 7

Assembly members absent and excused were:

Ms. Lynne Woods, Assembly District No. 1

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Lonnie R. McKechnie, Borough Clerk
Mr. John Duffy, Borough Manager
Mr. Nicholas Spiropoulos, Borough Attorney
Ms. Cheryl D. Marino, Deputy Borough Clerk
Mr. Keith Rountree, Public Works Director
Ms. Cheyenne Heindel, Financial Analyst
Mr. Mark Mayo, Planning and Land Use Director
Mr. Brad Sworts, Transportation and Environmental Manager
Ms. Patty Sullivan, Public Affairs Director
Ms. Tammy Clayton, Finance Director
Ms. Lauren Kruer, Planner II

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Menard 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. Brad Sworts, Transportation and Environmental Manager.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

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

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Transportation Issues

Mr. Sworts:

- stated that they are currently in the right-of-way acquisition phase and design phase of the Bogard Road Extension Project;
- noted that State funding allows them to work on different phases in parallel with each other;
- reported that he met with engineers that informed him of revised plans for improved circulation at the schools;
- stated that they have purchased two homes and moving forward with the remaining ones;
- noted that they can move forward with the acquisition of the partial right-of-ways after the homes have been purchased;
- reported that they held a public meeting at Colony Middle School; and
- commented that they are going to be working to determine what kind of noise mitigation can be done.

Assemblymember Church:

- noted that there were several areas of concern regarding the Bogard Road Extension;
- stated that the main concern was increased traffic on the feeder roads;
- commented that feeder road upgrades are not part of the project; and
- queried what could be done with the feeder roads.

Mr. Sworts:

- stated that it is all part of the design process; and
- noted that they are partially through the design phase of the process.

Assemblymember Church noted that Dowl Engineering is not upgrading roads outside of the project area.

Mr. Sworts:

- stated that is probably true; and
- reported that it would be very expensive to improve every road that was adjacent to the project.

Discussion ensued regarding the impact of increased traffic within the Bogard Road Extension Project.

Assemblymember Church:

- stated that Whitaker Farms submitted an interim materials district application for a gravel pit;
- spoke to the concern of the neighbors;

- noted that she is unclear on the reason that the Whitaker's would need an interim materials district; and
- queried what plan is in place to address the proposed interim material district.

Mr. Sworts:

- noted that the Whitaker Farm proposed excavation area has a number of hills and ridges that they plan to level into a field; and
- stated that a portion of the excavation area of the Whitaker Farm is in the area that the corridor would go through for the Bogard Road Extension.

Assemblymember Houston queried if measures were being taken within the Corridor Access Management Plan to address the feeder road issues.

Mr. Sworts:

- noted that the Corridor Access Management Plan is currently under review; and
- stated that he will report back upon the completion of the review.

Assemblymember Ewing queried if the gravel from the Whitaker Farm would be used in the construction of the road.

Mr. Sworts:

- noted that most of the material for the project will come from within the acquired corridor; and
- stated that they will not need a lot of off-site material coming into the project.

Assemblymember Bettine:

- stated that the purpose of this meeting agenda is to discuss how to handle many large proposed road projects;
- requested that the Bogard Road extension concerns be taken up at a separate time; and
- noted her concern regarding meeting efficiency when holding three meetings within three hours.

Assemblymember Church noted that she will request a special meeting regarding the gravel issues.

MOTION: Assemblymember Bettine moved to continue the special meeting (postpone to a time certain) directly after the regular meeting recesses.

VOTE: There was no objection noted.

(The meeting recessed at 5:58 p.m. and reconvened at 10:22 p.m.)

Ms. Kruer provided a presentation for the residential traffic impact fees.

Assemblymember Wells queried why there is disparity between the impact fees for each individual road service area given the diversity and size of our Borough.

Ms. Kruer:

- stated that they have used the averages in the formula, because when the formula uses individual numbers, some of the outlying road service areas would have a very high impact fee;
- noted that the goal is to be public friendly;
- stated that you get the best of both worlds when using the averages; and
- spoke to the opportunity for the public to prepare their own impact study should they not agree with the impact fees.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- noted that the public could submit an impact study if they hired a traffic engineer to do the study, which would be comparable to cost of the impact fee;
- stated that using the average numbers in the formula for the northern road service area communities will not work; and
- queried if the fees are going to be kept in funds used within the road service area when there are already issues with the funds.

Ms. Kruer:

- stated that a special fund would be created, "road service area impact fee fund"; and
- noted that the fund would have to be accounted for.

Assemblymember Kluberton queried what the funds could be used on.

Ms. Kruer noted that there is a list within the ordinance that states how the funds can be expended.

Assemblymember Kluberton queried if residents would still pay the fee, if they were not living on a main road.

Ms. Kruer:

- stated that is something that needs to be taken into account;
- requested that the Assembly ask their constituents how to pay these costs in the future; and
- stated that each person that builds a home on a Borough road, will have some type of impact on the road.

Assemblymember Ewing:

- spoke to the current costs of traffic studies;
- opined that this system would be a hard sell to the public; and
- stated his concerns regarding the impact to new development.

Assemblymember Church:

- noted that the traffic impact fees were requested by the Assembly; and
- opined that the traffic impact fees spread out the costs.

Ms. Kruer noted that the traffic impact fees allow for dollars to be spent where they are needed.

Discussion ensued regarding how the fees will impact new development.

Assemblymember Wells:

- spoke to the cost increase of purchasing a new home;
- commented that the assessed value would also increase; and
- noted that the traffic impact fee is a whole new concept.

Assemblymember Bettine:

- noted that originally the impact fees were going to pay for approaches and similar expenses associated with the development of a new school and similar situations; and
- stated that the traffic impact fees are now geared more for road service areas.

Ms. Kruer:

- commented that she was asked to develop impact fees for transportation;
- spoke to impact fees used in other states;
- reported that currently the road service areas are responsible for finding funds through the mill rate to pay for impact costs; and
- stated that the proposed traffic impact fees will require the developer to be responsible for the road impact costs.

Assemblymember Kluberton:

- noted that he believed that the traffic impact fees originated for situations when a new subdivision is developed at the end of a substandard road;
- stated that the theory is, that in time, the funds would accumulate and would be used to update the roads; and
- spoke to the Oilwell Road area and that people would be paying impact fees forever before Oilwell Road would be upgraded to a collector road status.

Assemblymember Ewing:

- queried if a person would pay the impact fee when developing property that required a new road that connects to a State road; and
- queried the incentives for developers to build.

Ms. Kruer:

- noted that the fees would change depending on the type of dwelling units on the lots;
- stated that even though the new road was connected to a State road, the dwellings may still have an impact on the roads within their road service area;
- commented that impact fees are recognized nationally; and
- welcomed ideas from the Assembly.

VII. MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Assemblymember Houston:

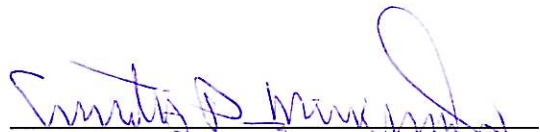
- spoke to his support of the impact fees; and
- stated that Ms. Kruer did a great job.

Assemblymember Bettine:

- requested that Ms. Kruer present the traffic impact fees to the Local Road Service Area Advisory Board members; and
- noted that this is a way to get the funds needed into the road service areas.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 p.m.


CURTIS D. MENARD, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: 12/02/08