

## **Birchwood Community Council Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2006**

Called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Beach Lake Ski Chalet. V.P. Kevin Finnigan is conducting the meeting as Bobbi is attending a Comp Plan meeting this evening. Minutes from the previous meeting are approved. Updates of citizen committees are as follows:

**Chugiak-Eagle River Comp Plan** – We have been presented with our 3<sup>rd</sup> revised Land Use Map and it is still contentious. The local Chamber will be doing an overlay for the downtown district. Their acceptance of 60 foot tall retail/business structures as well as surrounding high-density multi-family up to 45 feet height is not acceptable to several of the council representatives. We are trying for a limit on residential dwelling construction, with 21 units being the maximum allowed on one acre, which equates to about a 50 unit complex. Right now Planning thinks 35 would be more acceptable (equates to 120 unit apartment complex maximum). It appears that most of the industrial will be located around the Birchwood Airport, extending to South Birchwood Loop but mostly on Eklutna, Inc.'s landholdings. Our guidelines for growth look good but it is only a reference document so all the councils are paying special attention to what is happening with the new Title 21. We continue to ask for a separate chapter such as what Girdwood has but the MOA is resisting. Planning did propose expanded home occupation standards for those currently zoned R-5A but not for other districts. Birchwood felt this would require further discussion with its membership for input.

**Title 21 Rewrite** – Another new draft is out for review. Comments are due by March 3<sup>rd</sup>. There is a copy at the local library and you can also access it thru the muni website. Birchwood Title 21 Review Committee is going over it right now. There are many changes. Everyone in Birchwood will be changed to a new zoning since they renamed the districts. This doesn't necessarily mean the requirements will change. There are 2 new zoning districts for Chugiak area: the old R-5A will be allowed a mobile home, a very large garage, and expanded home-based business regulations. The rural commercial zoning has been relaxed for business development at the intersections of the Old Glenn with South Birchwood Loop, North Birchwood Loop, and Peters Creek. Birchwood is thinking that maybe its residents might want something a bit different than what is proposed. Let me know what you think. There is a meeting 1/30/2005 at E.R. High School from 7-9 p.m. and we hope you will attend when the MOA comes out to talk about why we need this change. Call me if you have questions, Bobbi at 688-4321.

**Large Domestic Animal Ordinance** – The Assembly heard this ordinance last night, with all six new amendments, and it passed. However, on Notice of Reconsideration, it has been laid on the table until the next meeting(2 weeks from now) when a printed version as amended can be re-read. They will then decide on whether to reconsider their vote. Shamberg (who represents Hillside) and Sullivan were not present. The setbacks are back in, as are the limitations on barn size, etc.. Debbie got a variance and conditional use process with waived fees for a year in case there are properties that need to apply for permission for land variance or more animals. You can have 3 outdoor animals by right as long as your property is 40,000 square feet or larger. We all have time to send in an e-mail to all Assembly members (send it to all of them plus the Mayor and Tom Nelson to avoid Ex Parte rules from kicking in) protesting this move that further limits our choices on how we want to live and recreate on our own property. It is a matter of property rights. If you don't know what to say, call me at 688-4321 (e-mail is [barb@mtaonline.net](mailto:barb@mtaonline.net)) and I can send you a copy of the Birchwood protest letter as well as different points I have personally made regarding the problems with this ordinance.

Chugiak-Eagle River Long Range Transportation Plan – Things are going very slow here. Connectivity for emergency access is raising issues about cut-through traffic through existing neighborhoods and expanding escape routes for the vandals that visit us from other parts of Anchorage. There is discussion about putting several new bridges over Peters Creek to connect Birchwood and Chugiak without getting onto the freeway. The MOA wants us to write in a Pedestrian Plan area-wide and a Freight movement plan for downtown Eagle River, as well as some other subjects that are used in the Anchorage Plan. No decision has been made since almost any subject the committee talks about results in heated discussions. We have written our guidelines, goals and objectives and they haven't changed much from the original plan except for these connectivity issues. We will be asked to change some road classifications later on but that will probably be a heated discussion also. The plan will receive a public hearing later this year.

New Business: The council was presented information and maps for the Eklutna Electrical Line Rebuild Project and the membership approved a motion ( Gail Dial/2<sup>nd</sup> Eldon King) asking the Assembly to schedule a community meeting ASAP on this project. More details are needed on the project and its funding.

A motion was made (Gail Dial/2<sup>nd</sup> Eldon King) to address a community party or potluck, members are ask to bring ideas to next meeting, possibly a springtime get together to acknowledge the new Ski Chalet.

Anna Fairclough, Assembly Chairman, gave us information on several issues involving our area: three bond issues for the school district will be on the April ballot, possible sales tax, renaming three parks, junk car removal, cyclotron in residential area and proposition for Russian Jack Park to upgrade the golf course at no expense to the tax payer.

Gail Dial, Road Board Rep, informs us that the issues with Yosemite Drive have gone up the appeals ladder to superior court.

The meeting was adjourned at 8: 56 p.m..

NKB