

# Spenard Community Council Minutes

September 3, 2008 7:00 PM, Spenard Recreation Center

The meeting started at 7:05 PM.

## 1. Approval of Minutes & Agenda

**Agenda Additions or Deletions:** None

**Minute Corrections:** None

No objections, Minutes and Agenda were Moved & Approved.

Note: At the beginning of the meeting there were no elected officials present, no call from legislators and attendance was light. People started to arrive later, after Governor Palin's speech at the National Republican Convention.

## 2. Announcements

No agenda was mailed this month; minutes and agenda were emailed. Members are reminded that an e-mail account has been established for the community council:

[Spenardcc@gmail.com](mailto:Spenardcc@gmail.com) to contact Pres. Matt Burkholder.

## 3. Legislative Report – None this month.

## 5. Local Projects & Discussion

**a.** Laile Fairburn (Snow City Café) and Jo Ann Asher (Sack's) are opening a new lunch and dinner restaurant – “The Spenard Roadhouse” – at the former Hogg Brothers. Remodeling and landscaping are underway; designer Catherine Call summarized changes being made. Seating capacity will remain about the same. They anticipate opening in early November.

Jason Bergerson commented that Spenard had lost its Farmer's Market some time ago; would the Roadhouse be willing to assist in re-establishing a Saturday market? Laile responded that such activities would be consistent with their intentions and that because they are not planning to be open for lunch on weekends, the parking lot could be available for community events. After a brief discussion, Laile asked the Council for a letter of support of the new business, and in particular for a conditional full service liquor license.

A motion made by Jason B. and seconded by Jim Bowers was unanimously passed: Given the positive attitude, approach and impact to the community by the representatives of a new business, Jason will craft a letter to the Assembly in support of the establishment of the Spenard Roadhouse, with a conditional use full liquor license.

**b.** Mark Butler spoke in support of an ordinance being considered by the assembly that would authorize purchasing the Quick Tow property at 27<sup>th</sup> and Spenard Road. Acquisition would allow demolition of the building, re-orient 27<sup>th</sup> to improve the intersection, ease traffic flow and create new parking. Mark asked for the Council's support. Jason B. made a motion, seconded by Jim B. to support a resolution supporting the passage of the proposed ordinance. After a brief discussion, the motion passed by a wide margin. Jason will follow up with a letter to Matt Claman and Harriet Drummond.

c. A neighborhood complaint involving 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave between Spenard and Minnesota was brought to the Council's attention: Ron and Sharon Berger informed the meeting that the last few months, especially on Saturday night/Sunday mornings between 2:30 and 5:00 AM, clientele of Player's House of Rock have brought anti-social, illegal and dangerous activities to the neighborhood, spilling out from the bar's parking lot, down the street and onto private property. (Ron Berger's statement and correspondence attached.) Ron emphasized that he is not out to shut down Player's House of Rock, but is frustrated that the problems have continued despite reporting the situation to the police and the mayor's office.

Another affected neighbor, Eileen Zaiser, inserted herself into the discussion and advocated shutting down Player's, blaming the owners for allowing the patrons' behavior – including shooting. She was joined by another neighbor, Bernadette Pannett, who also complained about disturbances associated with bar patrons. Bernadette stated that she fears for the safety of her little girls. Ron, Eileen and Bernadette stated that there were more neighbors affected that were unable to attend. Ron invited anyone to come by on Sunday morning to see how bad the situation is. Matt advised people to continue calling the police and reporting to the Community Council. Matt shares the concerns of the neighbors but it will take time to solve problems. Three men representing Player's were present. (None of these three men signed in to the meeting. The complainants apparently knew one as owner Jeff Matosky; another was later identified as a representative of a security firm.) The Owners are drafting a traffic control plan that will include shutting 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave. A contentious and increasingly heated exchange ensued between the two women, the three apparent representatives of Player's and Assemblyman Matt Claman and. Eileen and Bernadette ignored repeated requests to observe procedure and were eventually asked to leave the meeting.

Matt Burkholder, addressing the Owners, made the distinction between a parking/traffic problem and a noise problem. The Owners blamed Eileen for creating a problem where none exists and stated that Player's provides a community service. They didn't envision that the "breakfast club" would be as successful as it has become and acknowledged that if the Bergers were complaining, then a problem did exist. Ron reiterated his concerns and that he fears that there will be retaliation against him for complaining about the situation.

Matt B. brought that discussion to a close with the Owners promising to work with the Bergers to improve the situation and to extend their security presence down the street.

#### **4. Assembly Report**

**Matt Claman** stated that when he voted to allow the Player's "breakfast plan" he envisioned that people already in the bar at closing time would stay and have an opportunity to stay and sober up. He did not envision additional people driving to Player's after other bars closed. He stated that if he had that insight he, and others on the Assembly, would have not necessarily voted differently, but would have considered the issue differently. He also stated that he was disappointed that when the "breakfast club plan" was brought to the Assembly it had not previously been brought before the Community Council. He promised that in the future matters such as this would be referred back to the Council before he would vote on them.

Other issues: The Assembly approved a joint venture between Municipal Light and Power and Chugach Electric to build a new power generation plant near the Chugach Electric offices. It will be three years before the plant comes online. There is also a proposal to create an Anchorage Power Authority to manage ML&P.

#### Questions & Discussions:

-Jason B. asked about environmental issues related to the generation plant and said that he had been doing some research and has been somewhat reassured. Matt agreed, talking about new cooling technologies. Barry Blumenthal complained about the increased helicopter traffic and worried about the future supplies of natural gas to power the generator. Jon Barlow questioned the economics of the project.

-Alan Thornhill raised the issue of the non-construction of the 48<sup>th</sup> & Taft road project. Two bonds and many promises later and there is still no project. Jason B. reported that American Fast Freight has backed out of the deal. This is the first Matt C. has heard of the delay. Alan says that the only work that has been done is again widening the corner at Harding and Tudor for the truckers' convenience. Jim Bowers reported that he had been in contact with Project Manager Russ Oswald, who could not attend tonight's meeting. Summarizing what Russ said, Jim confirmed Jason's take on American Fast Freight and Alan's assessment of the corner widening. AFF isn't going to let the project proceed until they get the land swap they want first; they have ceased all direct contact with the Muni; everything goes through lawyers, now. Russ has been in contact with Municipality's manager Mike Abbott: The latest bond for the project was 4 million dollars; the latest estimates are now up to \$8 to \$9 million.

Barry B. questioned the status of the 40<sup>th</sup> Ave project.

Matt Claman departed.

Alan T. returned to the Player's situation, questioning the Owners why the Security seems to be ineffective. A discussion ensued about the Owners' responsibility and that the Council members take a dim view of the situation and will consider further action next month, depending on progress or lack of it.

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **a. Planning & Zoning Committee**

Bob and Peggy Auth were not present. Matt B. reported that he and Barry B had attended the last P&Z Committee meeting about the Faith Christian Community Church development. The development was considered starting at 8:00 PM and was still being discussed at 11:00 when Matt left. Connectivity with the transit system, traffic patterns, hotel vs. office development were issues discussed. Matt will try to get a copy of the report. Jason B. spoke in support of traffic calming if the project is to proceed. Jim B. asked if design consultants/traffic engineer could appear before the Council and present plans for Arctic Blvd. Matt B. is in favor of a "right in, right out" approach. Jason says that this would be in conflict of the Mid-Town plan. Alan T. stressed the need of a plan. Barry B. agreed. Jason suggests delegating the issue to the CIP Committee for follow up.

### **b. Public Safety Committee**

Sam O'Connor: GCI is eliminating the radio service that the Westside Patrol is dependent on; they've approached the Police and Fire Departments to adapt.

The Westside Patrol is looking at changing tactics in response to the changing nature of crime in the community.

Matt B. asked if there is anything that the Patrol can do to help the Bergers. Sam will be going hunting for the next couple of weeks, but will follow up after that. The Bergers repeated that the issue is serious, people are shooting guns and the police have been non-responsive. Sam will follow up.

**c. Membership:** Matt B: Nothing to report.

**d. FCC Delegate Report:** Jason B: No meetings were held this summer, but the next meeting will be held September 17<sup>th</sup> at the new office at 1057 Fireweed. There will be a presentation in Spokane next month to try to get the NUSA conference in Anchorage in 2011.

**e. CIP Committee:** Jason B: The list was compiled last spring and summer and submitted. The project to install gates at the Recreation Center was funded.

**f. Formation of an Alcohol License Committee:** Matt announced that the Brown Jug (Ed O'Neal) is selling out to Liquor Stores USA North from Edmonton, Canada. There was general agreement that Ed has been very community minded and responsible. The council should take steps to meet the new owners; hopefully they will continue Ed O'Neal's policies. There are also liquor licenses up for renewal; Matt has the list. Sam O'Connor and Ann Maria Umholtz volunteered to go through the list & identify which were in Spenard.

## 7. Old and New Business

**a. Spenard Recreation Center Gates:** We haven't had any contact with Russ Oswald or Jeff Mathis lately and Brad Dunker has moved on from Parks and Recreation, so we're a little unsure on how best to proceed to get gates installed: Put a project out to bid, try to include it in the road project or make it a volunteer project. Matt B will contact Jeff Mathis and follow up and see if we can get the project done this year.

**b. SCC Mailbox:** Matt wants a central point to receive all mail, whether it's the Recreation Center, a rented box or something. Recreation center or FCC office are likely candidates.

**c. Cora Weaver** reported that the Car Rental Agency at 4211 Spenard had been visited because cars had been repeatedly parked in the Right of Way. Ursin Aygun has construction in progress. There is a new landscape plan for the property. The chain link fence will have plastic, rather than wood, slats.

**d.** Merle Akers stated that the Player's Owners should be required to submit their parking plan to the Council. He also thinks that the hearing for their conditional use permit for the breakfast should be reopened.

**e.** Jim Bowers gave an update on the Northwood Ave project: Russ Oswald is still promising that the overhead flashing light at the Aspen intersection crossing will be wired in with the in-pavement lights. The reconstruction of the raised intersection at Northwood and 48<sup>th</sup> has been put on hold until next year. Russ is soliciting input from the community as to what should be done – leave it as is, raise it more and install concrete to slow traffic down. Anti-skateboard clips for the retaining wall, the cross walk should be installed within the month. A culvert has been installed across 47<sup>th</sup>/Haru to correct a

drainage problem caused by the Northwood project and the catch basin on 45<sup>th</sup> has been replaced. Helen Kolbeck commented on the water quality at the Northwood Park pond and that there is more trash in the area now.

Merle suggested driving on LaTouche Street entering Rogers Park as an example of traffic calming speed bump.

There was a general request for Alan to get more food for next month's meeting.

Ann Maria Umholtz requested 10 minutes in the November meeting for Steve O'Brien, the new Montessori School Director.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM ~