

## **Birchwood Community Council MeetingMinutes**

Beach Lake Chalet

Wednesday, Sep. 25, 2013

Jill Crosby, Acting Chair calls the meeting to order at 7:30, with 27 members present. She introduces our various guests.

The April 2013 minutes were approved with correction of a minor typo.

### **Announcements:**

Chapter 10 (the Eagle River chapter) of the new Title 21 establishes a Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board that will replace the Chugiak Eagle River Consortium that advised on the writing of Chapter 10. Each Council will appoint a representative to the new board; for Birchwood, this will be part of our October agenda.

MEA's proposed new substation in the Birchwood Council area will also be on the October agenda; there are issues that neighbors would like addressed. It is scheduled for a hearing before P&Z November 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **New Business:**

A committee has worked over the summer to draft revisions to the Birchwood Community Council By-Laws. The current by-laws need revision if we are to successfully manage a transition to new leadership, to better share the workload across the council's officers. The proposed changes are mostly about board membership and election procedure, with some language clean-up as well. The council needs to decide on a final draft for voting at this meeting so that it can be sent out to members and be voted on at the October meeting. At the October vote, we will not be able to revise the proposed by-laws; we will only be able to accept or reject them as a whole.

Amy Demboski presents current work by the Assembly on how they oversee the community councils. Some councils have by-laws provisions that contradict municipal code – for example, some councils require dues be paid for members to vote. The assembly intends to review community council by-laws for compliance with code; if they do not approve the proposed by-laws (or if the council would prefer) the city will impose a 'default' set of by-laws. The new ordinance about this should be introduced in October; those with comments should send them to Amy as soon as possible.

With this in mind, we discuss the proposed changes to Birchwood's proposed revised by-laws and make a few adjustments. Officers will send the complete set out to the membership in about a week, and we will vote at the October meeting. We will also vote on all the officers; Gail and Jim have both had to resign due to family issues.

### **Board Reports:**

Parks and Recreation (Lexi Hill): The board will be talking about our proposed capital projects for the 2014 season at the October meeting. We will be including in that discussion: location for a skate park; improvements in the NW quarter of Section 25 in Beach Lake Park; lighting of ski trails near Mirror Lake Middle School and Eagle River High School; possible improvements at the Edmonds Lake Park trails; possible development of the parcel next to Eagle River Elementary. Everyone is encouraged to send

their thoughts, suggestions and input on these and other possible park projects to Lexi Hill at [lexi.hill@gmail.com](mailto:lexi.hill@gmail.com) or 230-8082.

Road Board (Tony Vita): The road improvements involving overlay of asphalt over chip sealed roads went well this summer; the board is considering accelerating the overall project in order to finish in less than the planned 5 years. We may fund some of the work with interest on unspent grant funds. Tony also comments that the board often hears from homeowners with drainage problems that have left them with standing water on their property, but the issue is almost never a road problem, and while they can try to point the homeowner in the right direction, they cannot usually help.

#### Open Forum:

Rick Davies, who is a project manager for residential developments, speaks about problems they have had with plans for lighting in rural streets. On one road above Potter Marsh, their plan (in keeping with usual practice) called for 5 lights on a stretch of road on which the city wanted them to install 32 lights. Planning appears to be enforcing an urban, highly developed area continuous lighting standard because they do not have a rural standard to apply. An ordinance to limit the lighting needed on neighborhood collector roads was passed over the mayor's veto, but now needs some minor revision to work well. In response, Amy Demboski, Adam Trombley and Jennifer Johnston introduced an ordinance making the needed revision, but staff comments would revise it so that it would not accomplish its purpose (which is to make clear that rural areas do not need the intense and continuous lighting that is appropriate for more densely developed parts of the city). We need this new ordinance because without it, road improvement and rehabilitation projects may bring an aggressive push for much more intense lighting, even in rural parts of the municipality. Rick asks for a resolution from the Council supporting the ordinance (AO 213-129(s)) as written and introduced by Demboski, Trombley and Johnston. He would also like to encourage us to attend the October 7 meeting to support that stand. We leave this topic but return to it at the end of the meeting, when ***Lexi Hill moves that the Council resolves to support AO 213-129(s)) as written and introduced by Demboski, Trombley and Johnston, Tony Vita seconds the motion. The motion passes without opposition.***

Maria Rentz from the Chugiak Community Council is here to ask our support of her council's opposition to the Monofill proposed adjacent to Loretta French Park by Eklutna, Inc and Central Monofill Services. This monofill project would cover about 68 acres and would fill about 17 acres of a ravine just west of Kerbow Lane (which is s driveway into Loretta French Park) with construction waste, processed by Central Recycling Services but not recyclable. Central Recycling Services recycles about 75% of the construction waste it receives, but sends about 25% to the landfill. Trucks would access the site using Kerbow Lane. The Chugiak Community Council has concerns about both noise and safety from the truck traffic this would generate on the Old Glenn Highway; about possible surface and ground water contamination; about a possible decline in property values; and about the inappropriateness of siting a landfill next to a busy park. They believe the community would be better served by having this waste stream continue to go to the regional landfill, which is sited and constructed to mitigate all those concerns. They would like Birchwood Council to pass our own resolution opposing the monofill and to attend the October 7<sup>th</sup> Planning & Zoning meeting, where the issue is on the agenda. Case 2013-068 is the request for a Master Plan Review for this project; that public hearing is closed. Case 2013-069 is the request for a Conditional Use Permit for the Monofill itself, and that is the hearing at which they are asking us to testify. We discuss the various concerns raised; some people believe that we need to hear

from the proponents of the monofill, and others believe we already know enough. We do agree on water quality concerns, however. ***Randy McCain moves that Birchwood Council ask Planning and Zoning to carefully consider and mitigate water quality concerns about case 2013-069, because of potential surface and ground water contamination impacts from the proposed monofill dump site. Debbie Ossiander seconds and the motion passes unanimously.***

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 (it had been extended by two 15 minute increments).