

Municipality of Anchorage

WEST ANCHORAGE LAND TRADE TASK FORCE

MEETING #2

Wednesday, January 8, 2014 11:00 am – 1:10 pm
Federation of Community Councils Conference Room
URS Corporation, Meeting Facilitators

Attendance: See attached sign-in sheet.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Joan Kluwe, Meeting Facilitator, welcomed the participants and conducted the introductions of facilitation staff, Task Force members, and public attendees.

2. Meeting #1 Summary and Follow-up

Meeting highlights of the first meeting were provided by Dr. Kluwe, as follows:

- i. Introductions, purpose of group is to implement West ANC IA-1, focusing on long-term solutions of airport area parcel conflicts.
- ii. The Municipality anticipates approximately 10 meetings, to conclude in March or April. The intent is to develop a range of scenarios for long-term solutions, including no exchange, exchange of whole parcels, or exchange with parcel boundary adjustments. The Task Force is to consider scenarios for implementation.
- iii. Background material included an overview of map and parcels.
- iv. First exercise: Each task force member identified needs – many focused on retaining park lands and neighborhood integrity, and resolving known conflicts such as operation issues (snow dump, airport and AWWU facility potential expansions).
- v. Second exercise: Identified possible outcomes: Focused on resolution of issues, development of a range of scenarios, and emphasis on protection of park lands and lands managed as parks.
- vi. The Task Force adopted Ground Rules at the first meeting, to be used at all subsequent meetings. They include:
 - practice open communication
 - respect divergent opinions
 - acceptance of goal to develop land trade scenarios
 - self-policing
 - agree to move on/yield when requested by the facilitator

3. Comments were requested on Working Assumptions and Task Force Formation

– these assumptions help economize with limited funding, as The Task Force does not need to spend extra time debating these types of things for which we assume members agree. Comments are noted as follows:

- i. Working Assumptions – Few comments were received. Potential use conflicts of parcels were noted. One item was raised in the last meeting regarding preliminary

- engineering work. That will not occur during this phase. A conceptual scenario would be put forth and then, should that scenario be selected to move forward, preliminary engineering, as well as many other sources of information would be required to determine feasibility of the scenario.
- ii. Task Force Formation: Name, Membership of the Task Force, Technical Advisors. Any issues on these topics will be handled directly by MOA, not by the Task Force. Staff will update the technical advisor list.
 - iii. Process Questions: There was a comment that the Task Force scope is too narrow, however, this is not the only action that may address IA-1; our task is limited to that issued in the invitation letter. We will be developing conceptual scenarios that will require additional staff work before the proposal could move forward to voters. If there is a consensus, that would be fantastic, but it is not anticipated. There will be no vote, but rather a focus on development of a range of scenarios, along with needs for additional work or analysis. The Task Force will summarize degree of consensus or agreement.

The facilitator paused for questions or clarifications. Ms. Gleason requested two corrections to the Meeting 1 notes: substituting “undeveloped” for “underdeveloped” in Need #2 column, and to “transfer all land in parcel 4” in Need #3, not just the Heritage Land Bank (HLB) portion. Her additional comments included that current efforts are not following the District Plan if only on a narrow track, and that there is no reference to conforming to the District Plan, now being restricted to land trades. Ms. Gleason wanted to discuss the purpose of the Task Force, and has yet to comment on the assumptions. Thede Tobish responded by noting that the scope of discussion are limited, reflecting a limited budget, and that having 1-2 meetings on extra issues is not affordable. Thus, the scheduled meetings are focused on process. In the West District Plan, there is a reference to policy and in Implementation Action #24 it states that a systematic process must be developed. Thus, that provision drives this process as well, and he noted the oversight of not previously explaining that point. The facilitator reiterated the goal and focus of this meeting, including a no exchange scenario.

4. The facilitator requested any items for question, or clarification regarding the paper, previously distributed, regarding the Kloep Snow Dump. Ms. Gleason questioned why the Municipality would not be able to continue using the snow dump, when the state benefits from it and could issue a long-term lease. One commenter thought that the State DOT uses it to discharge and clear their trucks. Ms. Gleason requested a state DOT representative to be at the next meeting.

The facilitator asked the group whether it was preferable to proceed through the parcels by numerical order, or to move geographically from #1 to the next, moving westward. The consensus was for latter approach.

Nick Moe asked what other west Anchorage snow dumps were used in the past, to which Mr. Tobish replied that there were no others, with the south end of C Street being nearest.

5. Highest and Best Use Discussion

The term “Highest and Best Use” was explained, in the context of the Task Force work. The definition does not encompass the realty sense of valuations, because that will be determined by appraisers. We will be looking at a suite of potential uses and to capture divergent views, so the term refers to the best use from a lay perspective.

The term is used in relation to scenarios, and there may be more than one best use identified. One use may be more suitable in one scenario, and another in a different scenario. The intended use of the exercise is a preliminary stage of discussion, which will be elaborated upon during scenario development. The Task Force should also identify any other parcels that should be considered.

Discussion by Parcel

The facilitator asked that everyone consider their perceived/conceptual highest and best use of each parcel. The members were also asked to note priorities, if applicable, constraints, and additional information needs.

Merle Akers questioned how important this process was to the airport, because the higher level managers were not in attendance at this meeting, and no one could represent the airport in negotiations. The airport designee, Teri Lindseth, Planning Manager, replied that she was the representative, and that this effort was very important to the airport. She stated that other managers were in a conference this week. The facilitator noted that this process does not involve negotiations at this point. Ms. Gleason observed that neither the invitee nor identified designee were present, from some organizations. The facilitator and Mr. Tobish explained that it is the invitee’s responsibility to get an alternate, thus, there is no problem with alternate representation.

Flipchart notes are recorded on the Parcel Table (see attachment).

Additional information about parcels, including historic information:

Parcel 1

This federal land parcel is less than 40 acres; GSA is entertaining applications for disposal. It is mostly forested, and slopes upwards to south. There are social trails to neighborhoods and to Kincaid. The parcel had an antenna field in 60s-80s. FCC put the land up for surplus. The south section has more social trails, single track trails, and Kincaid trails; Horseshoe Loop. The West Anchorage plan includes a recommendation to receive the parcel from Airport or GSA if for park expansion. The Municipality withdrew application to GSA for a housing project. The Airport representative stated that primary use by the Airport most likely to be for non-aeronautical purposes, and would serve as a neighborhood buffer.

Ms. Gleason requested a copy of the Airport’s application to GSA; also information on what is the definition of “non-aeronautical uses,” and also wanted wildlife habitat (value) information. She stated that the Airport 20 year plan stated short term use and wanted to know the intent regarding this parcel. Merle Akers stated that if the land is leased to the

MOA, it becomes part of the Grant Assurance Program, and he asked how to transfer ownership to MOA. The Airport representative stated that it could put it up for Land Exchange, if acquired from GSA. Currently this parcel must be part of a package deal from GSA, with parcel 16.

Parcel 16

GSA has two applications: from the MOA and the Airport; the MOA could use this as a new snow dump for West Anchorage. GSA is expected to make a decision soon.

Note: General Information Request:

Wildlife habitat (and value) information for parcels such as 16, 20.

Parcel 20

This parcel includes the access to Little Campbell Lake.

Suggested for retaining a berm or buffer along the edge of the parcel as in other places on Raspberry Road.

Parcel 2

This is a popular use site for the MOA. It is forested and has trails. Includes undulating terrain, wetlands, and Little Campbell Lake, which is the only lake in the area surrounded entirely by public lands (no private lands). There was a discussion about Entitlement Agreement from 1986, which is subject to FAA approval. While MOA continues to pursue its municipal entitlements, MOA views its proposed receipt of this parcel as unlikely. However, the parcel could still be part of a land trade, and may be the only way for the MOA to acquire it. MOA continues to work on a way to do so.

Parcel 25

The group requested to define “runway protection zone”...for example, is it only on the ground, or does it include aerial features? Define the location of the runway protection zone, including the recent work on the east end of the east-west runway.

Parcel 3

The airport land below the bluff didn't get filled in as originally intended. This parcel includes Arlene's Way, which is a connection to Sisson Trail. Now the Airport uses this area as a re-fill area for organic materials; they are filling the old gravel pit with organic material, which is of economic value to Airport for. Some material is also used for building berms. Jim Burkholder asserted that the airport doesn't need to own this parcel, and it is good for soft surface trails (e.g. snow). The parcel also has underground electric lines from Fire Island Wind Energy project, along with Parcel 25.

Parcel 4

Is part of the Airport Runway Protection Zone. Water drains through it from airport property. This parcel includes the compost facility with continuing cleanup activities, and it includes the detox center. TCC supported that all remaining greenbelt in #3 and #4 should be retained, and no perceived conflict with detox center.

There is a Tesoro pipeline easement on the east side of the Coastal Trail of parcels 3, 4, 5 and electrical and fiber optic cables in an easement.

The question came up as to any current agreements in place between the Airport and MOA, such as leases.

The remainder of parcels will be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

6. Meeting Logistics / Next Steps

The group requested that the next meeting be scheduled for Tuesday January 14 in order to ensure that Thede Tobish and legislative staff representatives could attend. Location is TBA.

Some Task Force members expressed concerns about amount of time spent on these first seven parcels, although others noted the value of the discussion parcel histories and taking time to draw out information. Mr. Tobish urged members to read the Assumptions Paper which includes many previously covered items from the West Anchorage Plan. This could help avoid the repetition of information.

The potential to provide teleconferencing was discussed, with follow-up needed to possibly use facilities in the Frontier Building or other sites.

7. Public Comment

Jim Burkholder, a recreationist on the west side of town since 1967, noted that he had helped design and/or all trails, and that quality of life was a key consideration then as it is now. The Coastal Trail is the crown jewel of the park system and we need to retain the present quality of the trail. Although creeks in Anchorage have received various protective measures, what will remain as the airport develops?

The facilitator noted one of the working assumptions acknowledges the Coastal Trail would be retained.

Merle Akers expressed his concern that this task force is unnecessary because the Anchorage Airport Communication Committee process for addressing such issues, which committee process will be found in New Airport Master Plan, could have been used instead of the Task Force process. He handed out a set of comments and information. Further, Mr. Akers offered more info:

- Expressed his concern that the MOA and Airport had decided on a task force approach to resolve their issues instead of using the approach setup, in the Airport Communication Plan, which is to be made part of new Anchorage International Airport Master Plan. He believes Airport Communication Plan approach to resolving conflicts would have been superior to the Task Force approach.
- Believes trying to look at all the land issues, is too much of a job to get done in the period of time the Task Force has allotted itself. The Task Force should limit finding solutions to the most urgent needs, of both the MOA and the Airport,

which for the MOA is the Snow Dump and for the Airport appears to be the acquisition of GSA parcel. Proceeding in the way the Task Force is planning to do, is a waste of both MOA and Airport funds.

- Thinks if the Airport does not want to issue a long term Lease to the MOA, or sell the property outright, then the MOA should ask the State Legislature to force the Airport to give up this land as the airport has no justifiable reason to hold onto ownership as this land as the land is clearly surplus to the Airports present and future needs.

Another commenter agreed, saying the proposal should be to get the Airport more accountable to MOA; maybe legislative action would be needed to restructure airport management. The perception is that things “go into the Airport and don’t come out.”

Peggy Auth (an alternate for Robert Auth) noted that she worked on the West Anchorage Plan, and that this meeting was not what she expected. She thought that the historical background that had emerged in this meeting was important.