



# MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

## ANCHORAGE PARKS & RECREATION

### Memorandum PRC 08-34



**DATE:** April 23, 2008  
**TO:** Parks & Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Brad Dunker, Park Planner  
**SUBJECT:** PRC 08-34 – Russian Jack Springs Park April 15 Meeting Summary

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#### **Background**

Since the March Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, the Russian Jack Springs Park planning process has continued the public involvement phase by attending the University Area, Scenic Foothills, and Airport Heights Community Councils as well as held a public open house at the Lidia Selkregg Chalet on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Below is a summary of the discussion at the April 15<sup>th</sup> public open house.

#### **Meeting Summary**

Jeff Dillon opened the meeting and welcomed everyone at 6:45. Jeff discussed the existing master plan and site development plan for the park and outlined the features of each plan. Jeff explained that the most recent comprehensive planning process for the park occurred in 1997-1998 where a citizen's advisory group (CAG) provided input to the Parks & Recreation Department on how RJSP should be developed. This plan went through Urban Design Commission approval in February of 2002 and was approved unanimously by that body.

Tom Nelson, Director of Planning, outlined the planning process and the requirements for Planning & Zoning and Urban Design Commission approval. He also talked about the upcoming changes to Title 21 and the land development codes in the city and how that may pertain to the Russian Jack proposals. He also stated that the Planning Department looks primarily at land use impacts outside the park based on the proposed development.

Dwayne Adams presented the original proposal from the January 9<sup>th</sup> public workshop and the revised plan that was based on the comments that we received during the initial proposal public comment period. This showed an overall reduction in clearing from 25 acres to about 7 acres. The revised plan also removed the access road off of Pine Street and removed the proposed clearing area north of the springs.

Wendy Wiltfong, Executive Director for The First Tee, spoke briefly about expanding their school program into the northeast Anchorage area and have signed with North Star Elementary to partner with them and are working with other schools in the area to create partnerships and build The First Tee program.

Primary concerns presented by the public are listed below:

1. A NECC representative stated that the NECC never saw the revised plan in 2002.<sup>1</sup>
2. Peace-mealing other development in the park that was shown on the approved master plan (constructing the driving range this year, the road off Pine St. next year, etc.)
3. Land use issues in northeast Anchorage- development of high-density housing is resulting in the loss of perceived open space. (Private lots that have been historically used by the public are being developed).
4. Process- who makes the determination within the MOA that this project needs to go before the Planning & Zoning Commission or the Urban Design Commission?

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<sup>1</sup> Staff has researched this and the NECC had a representative on the CAG to provide input. The plan was presented to the Russian Jack Community Council as it is the community council in which the park is located.

5. Ecological importance of the park to fish, animals and springs, which are already being damaged by development in northeast Anchorage.
6. The golf season is very short and doesn't warrant the clearing of the trees.
7. If the master plan includes the maintenance yard, the new road and the other amenities, would that have more impact than a driving range?
8. The ballot proposition passed that allowed The First Tee to enter into a lease with the MOA wasn't clear about the amount of development (clearing) that would occur. It also stated that there would be no financial impact to the MOA. What is the \$750,000 appropriated for Russian Jack by the Legislature going to be used for?
9. Relocation of the model railroad club from the out-building near the proposed driving range would require the club to destroy their train display.
10. Vandalism is a problem in the park and the park should be activated with different activities to prevent or reduce vandalism and illegal activities.
11. Using water for course would be drawn from the springs? Staff clarified that there would be a connection to the MOA water supply.
12. Greenhouse relocation to Centennial Park to use waste heat from the ML&P plant. Use greenhouse area for driving range.
13. Suggestion that we go through a master planning process for the park because community sentiment may have changed.
14. Add things to the park that kids can do.

### **Project Schedule**

Below are upcoming dates for continued public involvement and a schedule of the planning process. This information can also be found on the project website at:

<http://www.muni.org/parks/RussianJackSummerWinterImprovementsSchedule.cfm>

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| May 12, 2008     | Rogers Park Community Council Presentation   |
| May 14, 2008     | Russian Jack Community Council Presentation  |
| May 15, 2008     | Northeast Community Council Presentation   |
| May 21, 2008     | Public Workshop- 6:30PM Lidia Selkregg Chalet at Russian Jack Springs Park   |
| Summer 2008      | Design resolution of public comments (there will be no major new construction this summer). Safety repairs and upgrades to existing facilities to be determined. |
| September 2008   | Public Meeting   |
| Fall/Winter 2008 | Parks and Recreation Commission and other Municipal Boards/Commissions   |
| Spring 2009      | Phase One construction (based on public input and final design reviews by Park Commission and other Municipal Boards)  |
| Ongoing          | Project Fundraising  |