



Municipality of Anchorage

Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

Room 155 - City Hall
632 West 6th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska

ACTION SUMMARY

12:00 Noon
Wednesday, April 26, 2017

Regular Meeting

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Present: Tamás Deák, Chair
Holly Kent
Cherie Northon
David Nyman
Stephanie Quinn-Davidson
Rick Sinnott, Vice Chair

Excused: Dan Bosch
Brett Jokela

Absent: Dan Billman

Staff: Thede Tobish, Senior Planner, Planning Department,
Long-Range Planning Division

Guests: Bob Shipley, Anchorage Waterways Council
Dave Battle, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

II. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

III. ACTION SUMMARY

A. Regular Meeting of February 22, 2017

Commissioner Nyman moved to approve the February 22, 2017 minutes as written. *Commissioner Sinnott* seconded.

The minutes for the February 22, 2017 Regular Meeting were approved as written.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Cats

Commissioner Sinnott introduced discussion about a local organization's efforts to initiate a Trap, Neuter, Release program in Anchorage for feral cats. This program cannot be sanctioned at this time because it is currently illegal in the State to release cats into the wild. This organization wants to submit a proposal to the State's Board of Game to change that regulation to allow release of cats. Commissioner Sinnott recommends the Commission consider submitting comments to the Board of Game, when the time is appropriate, to not support this proposal for releasing cats. Commissioner Sinnott presented a handout summarizing the negative impacts that feral cats have on wildlife and ecosystems.

B. Proposed New Singletrack Trails in Bicentennial Park

Commissioner Sinnott introduced discussion on the recently proposed Singletrack Advocates Trail (STA) project for the north side of Bicentennial Park. This proposal includes two new main looped trail sections in the park. These trails were recently approved following a public hearing before the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Sinnott brought to the Commission's attention, the longstanding concern about potential bear conflicts in this area with mountain bike trails. Based on ADFG bear tracking data, the north section of the park is heavily used by brown bears in July and August. Perhaps up to 20 bears are known to use the area, attracted especially to salmon in the Campbell Creek.

Commissioner Sinnott summarized bear-mountain bike trail user conflicts and related safety information noting there is concern about this type of trail use relative to bears. *Commissioner Sinnott* recommended the Commission consider responding to the Parks and Recreation Commission in light of these conflicts and concerns for bear safety in this section of Bicentennial Park.

The Commission did provide input on the Draft Far North Bicentennial Park plan, with emphasis on locating new trails away from the creek corridor and other areas of concern. The Commission agreed to place this item on the May agenda and request attendance from Parks and Recreation Commission staff.

C. Plan Implementation for Redevelopment Sites with Streams-e.g., Fish Creek

Staff and the Chair offered dialogue with the Commission on this issue relative to future redevelopment projects that might require, or offer, smaller creek setbacks. At issue is how the Commission can support smaller setbacks or reduced conditions of approval for future development projects in areas where a natural resource is diminished or less than ideal (e.g., Chugach Way channel of Fish Creek).

Developers and staff need flexibility and predictability to design for and approve these types of actions in the future. No current action is needed by the Commission, but it is likely that with implementing the new *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*, the Commission's expertise may be needed to assist staff in future redevelopment projects in areas with these conditions.

V. OLD BUSINESS (none)

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT (none)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kent moved to adjourn. Commissioner Nyman seconded.

The motion passed without objection.

The meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.