



Municipality of Anchorage
Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

A G E N D A

Wednesday, April 27, 2022
12:00 Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Join by Link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
and/or

Join by Conference Call:
Dial-in Number: 907-519-0237
Conference ID: 508 670 681#

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Establishment of Quorum
- B. Disclosures

II. MINUTES

- A. March 23, 2022

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Fish Creek Rehabilitation Resolution No. 2022-01
- B. Stormwater Utility Resolution No. 2022-02, Draft
- C. Interagency Meeting Update

IV. NEW BUSINESS

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (3-minute limit)

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: May 25, 2022, Teams Meeting



Municipality of Anchorage

Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

Virtual Teams Meeting

ACTION SUMMARY

12:00 Noon
Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m.

A. Establishment of Quorum

Present: Emily Creely
Tamás Deák
Luke Graham
Holly Kent
David Nyman, Chair

MOA Staff: Daniel Mckenna-Foster, Senior Planner, Long-Range Planning Division,
Planning Department

Guests: Ted Eischeid, Mat-Su Borough Planner, Staff to Fish and Wildlife Commission
Rick Sinnott, former Commissioner
Karen Button, Executive Director, Friends of Fish Creek
Natalie Kiley-Bergen, Environmental Planner, Solstice Alaska Consulting
Emily Davies, Board Member, Anchorage Soil and Conservation District

B. Disclosures

Commissioner Deak noted that he is on the board of the Friends of Fish Creek Organization.

II. MINUTES

A. January 26, 2022

Commissioner Deák moved to approve the 1/16/2022 minutes. *Commissioner Kent* seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously as written.

III. OLD BUSINESS (none)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fish Creek Restoration

- Karen Button presented on the Fish Creek daylighting project.
- *Commissioner Deák* mentioned that a resolution on Fish Creek was done three years ago by the assembly, that this project is a push to do a feasibility study, and whatever results in the future wouldn't be the same as the 1950s but would be more sustainable.
- The Commission discussed how this project might affect property values.
- The Commission discussed how wide a daylighting might be, *Commissioner Deák* explained that it is too early to say, and widths might vary.
- *Commissioner Kent* moved to approve the Memorandum dated 3/23/2022 provided to the Commission.
- *Commissioner Creely* seconded.
- The Commission discussed that there might be some minor formatting or organization issues to edit but not substantive changes.
- All voted in favor.

B. Report on Stormwater Utility

Commissioner Deák discussed the possibilities for creating a stormwater utility and examining the need for one. The Commission discussed preparing a resolution for the April 2022 meeting.

C. Beetle Kill and Woodpecker Home Preservation

Commissioner Creely noted that a MOA request for proposals to clear beetle-kill trees does not speak explicitly to protecting bird habitat. The Commission discussed the issue and recommended taking private action first.

D. What to do with Municipal Wetlands Classification: Interagency Collaboration

Daniel Mckenna-Foster talked about the possibility of an interagency meeting with the Municipality, other local or state agencies, and the Army Corps of Engineers to establish a clear process for dealing with wetlands issues.

Commissioners Creely and *Kent* expressed interest in attending the meeting. *Daniel Mckenna-Foster* will forward the invitation when a date has been set.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (none)

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Deák moved to adjourn the meeting. *Commissioner Kent* seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

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Teams Chat:

March 23, 2022

3/23 11:54 AM Meeting started

David Nyman (External) has temporarily joined the chat.

Luke Graham (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Natalie Kiley-Bergen (External) has temporarily joined the chat.

Holly Kent (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

tdeak@kpbarchitects.com (External) has temporarily joined the chat.

Emily Creely (External) has temporarily joined the chat.

karen button (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Emily Davies (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Theodore Eischeid (External) has temporarily joined the chat.

NK Natalie Kiley-Bergen (External) 3/23 12:05 PM
Apologies for my sound quality, I had to relocate due to some construction.

Emily Davies (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Luke Graham (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

TE Theodore Eischeid (External) 3/23 12:59 PM
I have to leave for another meeting. Thank you everyone for your service.

NK Natalie Kiley-Bergen (External) 3/23 1:09 PM
I also have another meeting. Thank you for the opportunity to listen in today. Interesting and exciting things happening, thanks for your hard work!

KB karen button (Guest) 3/23 1:10 PM
Thank you all very much for your vote of confidence for the Fish Creek rehab project and support of Friends of Fish Creek. Much appreciation and I look forward to working with you all in the future!

EC Emily Creely (External) 3/23 1:10 PM
Daniel, as Holly said - just ping me when there is a meeting

Holly Kent (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

karen button (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

3/23 1:15 PM Meeting ended: 1h 21m 39s

Attendance report
Click here to download attendance report

Natalie Kiley-Bergen (External) no longer has access to the chat.

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
WATERSHED & NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01**

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FRIENDS OF FISH CREEK IN ITS ENDEAVORS TO DAYLIGHT AND REHABILITATE FISH CREEK.

(WNRC Case No. 2022-01)

WHEREAS, Friends of Fish Creek (FoFC), a local 501(c)(3) organization, presented at the regularly scheduled March 23, 2022, meeting of the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission regarding the mission and the short- and long-term activities of the non-profit; and

WHEREAS, the Commission discussed FoFC's request for support for its goals and activities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been closely following developments in the Fish Creek watershed and has taken positions and made recommendations regarding planning and direct project activities affecting the waterway; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is in general support of efforts that propose improvements of the long-term sustainability of the waterway applying green infrastructural principles; and

WHEREAS, most recently, the Commission made specific recommendations regarding WNRC Case No. 2016-02, Fish Creek Estuary - AWWU Project, which is a precursor to the current estuary trail development efforts after the completion of the sewer main improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Commission supports Friends of Fish Creek in its goals of daylighting and rehabilitating Fish Creek, also known as Ch'atanaltsegh/Liq'aka Betnu to the Upper Tikahtnu (Cook Inlet) Dena'ina; and

WHEREAS, the Commission supports daylighting to include a habitat focus on the cultural indicator species, coho salmon, to be restored to the waterway; and

WHEREAS, because Fish Creek is a wetland creek, its hydrological functionality has suffered from Anchorage's urbanization more than other local creeks of alpine origins; and

WHEREAS, most of the wetlands and ponds within the Fish Creek system have been eliminated and over 70% of its open channel was piped, buried, and combined into piped stormwater infrastructure that is aging and deteriorating; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes the efforts of FoFC in rebuilding watershed health in this era of climate disruption, its thinking in terms of a green infrastructural context and practices and also its focus in building necessary resiliency into Anchorage's future by rehabilitating the waterway in a sustainable manner; and

WHEREAS, the Commission welcomes and strongly supports coalition building to further the stated goals of FoFC and recognizes that the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District are partnering with FoFC to assist in watershed rehabilitation and habitat restoration; and

WHEREAS, the Commission states that it is in a position to assist with technical advice and guidance and is pleased to be part of these collaborative efforts in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that a Fish Creek daylighting feasibility study is on the project list for municipal bonds managed by the municipal Project Management & Engineering Department and approved by Anchorage voters in the April 2022 election and is interested in continuing its technical assistance and guidance through its standard process following voter approval; and

WHEREAS, the Commission tasks the Chair to provide this resolution and also authorizes formal letters of support being written to convey the above information to federal, state, and local agencies that work on Fish Creek watershed improvement initiatives, administer supporting grants, manage and assign available funding using federal, state, and local resources approved by legislation, most notably the federal infrastructure bill.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission recommends:

- A. Formal support for Friends of Fish Creek in its endeavors to daylight and rehabilitate Fish Creek.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission on this 27th day of April 2022.

Craig H. Lyon
Secretary

David M. Nyman, PE
Chair

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
WATERSHED & NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-02**

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF A STORMWATER UTILITY.

(WNRC Case No. 2022-XX)

WHEREAS, the Watershed & Natural Resources Commission serves as a technical liaison between municipal departments, the community and state and federal agencies having water quality, watershed and natural resources management responsibilities, programs to restore and improve fish and wildlife habitat and other activities to increase community stewardship of aquatic and other natural resources within the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the commission is to sustain the economic and community benefits of healthy creeks, watersheds and natural resource lands within the Municipality of Anchorage by providing technical advice and guidance to help facilitate coordinated and collaborative local, state, federal and private-sector watershed and natural resources stewardship, restoration and protection actions; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has discussed the formation of a stormwater utility in order to proactively handle stormwater issues in the Municipality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission recommends:

- A. The creation of a storm water utility to address the need to manage public facilities and resources.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission on this 27th day of April 2022.

Craig H. Lyon
Secretary

David M. Nyman, PE
Chair