

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly was held on June 27, 2000, at the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Chambers, Palmer, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Darcie K. Salmon. The purpose of the special meeting was to meet jointly with the planning commission.

II. ROLL CALL

Assemblymembers present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Larry DeVilbiss, Assembly District No. 1
Ms. Sara Jansen, Assembly District No. 2
Mr. Dan Kelly, Assembly District No. 4
Ms. Jody Simpson, Assembly District No. 5
Mr. Jim Turner, Assembly District No. 6
Mr. Doyle Holmes, Assembly District No. 7 (Deputy Mayor)

Assemblymember absent and excused:

Mr. James Colberg, Assembly District No. 3

Planning Commission members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Steve Rowland, Seat 1
Ms. Cynthia Payne, Seat 2
Mr. Timothy Anderson, Seat 3
Mr. Craig Savage, Chairman, Seat 5
Mr. Dick Stoffel, Seat 6
Mr. William Moll, Seat 7

Planning Commissioner member absent and excused:

Ms. Mary Kvalheim, Seat 4

Staff in attendance were:

Ms. Sandra Dillon, Borough Clerk
Mr. Michael J. Scott, Borough Manager
Mr. Michael Gatti, Borough Attorney
Ms. Elizabeth Manfred, Borough Deputy Clerk
Ms. Cindy Gilder, Planning Director

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was no objection to the agenda as presented.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Planning Commissioner Savage.

V. JOINT ASSEMBLY/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

A. NEW BUSINESS

1. Borough's 1970 Comp Plan - Chapter 1 (Requested by the Planning Commission)

Planning Commissioner Anderson:

- stated the Planning Commission would like to reauthorize the borough's 1970 Comp Plan.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- spoke to the history of the comp plan; and
- remarked that Chapter 1 is an overall plan for the borough.

Mr. Scott:

- stated that the strat plan included the comp plan with a goal of hiring a professional facilitator to help develop the comp plan;
- discussed the size of the group necessary to evaluate the comp plan;
- spoke to the staff responsibilities and time management in addressing the comp plan;
- stated the borough has the 1970 plan plus satellite plans adopted after that date; and
- commented that more specific goals in the introductory chapter would make things flow.

Mr. Gatti:

- advised that a comprehensive plan is adopted before land use ordinances may be adopted;
- remarked that a comp plan is an overall blue print for land use regulatory ordinances;
- said that Chapter 1 is the basis for the comp plan;
- declared a comp plan is defined as policy, statements, goals, standards, and maps; and
- noted that a comp plan is a broad policy statement as to direction of growth desired.

Assemblymember Turner:

- stated that planning is an organic process and difficult to blueprint; and
- questioned how specific the comp plan should be.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- asked if the planning commission wanted assembly direction on the comp plan;
- stressed that the assembly needs to review and update the borough comp plan;
- suggested the assembly develop policy and goals concerning the review process; and
- requested a periodic review of the comp plans and suggested that guidelines and a time frame be developed for that review.

Assemblymember Jansen:

- advocated planning for the borough.

Assemblymember Holmes:

- spoke to the difficulty in being broad on regulatory issues in Chapter 1;
- recognized the individual needs of communities;
- proposed that the assembly establish costs and staff time associated with the goals;
- listed options: to reorganize current comp plan, update the current plan, or develop an entirely new plan; and
- reiterated the a supreme court decision determined that the borough's comp plan is updated.

Assemblymember Simpson:

- encouraged community-by-community development;
- endorsed the option of updating and reorganizing current plan.

Assemblymember Turner:

- supported a review of the current comp plan to identify inconsistencies and clarify the language; and
- remarked upon the contradictions, inconsistencies, and unclear portions in current plan.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- spoke to the state law requiring comp plan review; and
- supported public participation for review of comp plan.

Mr. Gatti:

- explains that Chapter 1 is part of the blueprint which may be included into community plans; and
- stated that communities may adopt parts of the plan and self-determine their regulations.

Planning Commissioner Stoffel:

- questioned the importance of a comp plan.

Planning Commissioner Payne:

- compared a comp plan to a business plan;
- supports written goals and objectives in a comp plan;
- stated that Chapter 1 is a broad overview; and
- stated that new businesses check comp plans to determine growth environment.

Planning Commissioner Rowland:

- addressed outdated specifics and deficiencies in the current plan; and
- supported a review of the plan.

Planning Commissioner Moll:

- asked what requirements are necessary for a facilitator to be hired; and
- supported community-by-community planning.

Mr. Scott

- clarified that a facilitator is someone with working knowledge of planning; and
- suggested the mayor appoint a committee of 12 to 15 members.

Assemblymember Holmes:

- stated the assembly needs to set a goal and define expenses to accomplish the goal;
- supported a review of the comp plan and to make no significant changes until the review is accomplished; and
- commented that the assembly and mayor should appoint the review committee.

Mayor Salmon proposed a work session be scheduled to review the comp plan.

Assemblymember Jansen:

- requested clear objectives be given to the planning commission in writing; and
- supported community-by-community planning if common elements in the basic comp plan are in place.

Assemblymember Holmes:

- clarified that a comp plan is a plan and not enforceable; and
- identified that changes to comp plan also requires changes to community plans.

Assemblymember Turner:

- favored community-by-community planning;
- recognized the diversity of communities and the need for overall regulations;
- stated that the product of the committee should be a core plan;
- concerned with the lack of a definition of "community";
- remarked there is no formal procedure for developing a comp plan by a community; and
- supported scheduling a work session to review the comp plan.

Mr. Gatti:

- commented that consideration be given to structure in initiating the comp plan review process;
- suggested that the planning commission develop a design for Chapter 1 and submit a resolution to assembly; and
- stated the assembly assign a committee to work on the resolution submitted by the planning commission.

Mr. Scott stated that a June 9, 2000, memorandum that the planning department forwarded to the planning commission requested the planning commission's concurrence in moving the planning process forward, which was consistent with a previous memo that was adopted on this subject in 1996.

VI. PLANNING COMMISSION, MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Scott:

- shared planning documents that have been initiated since February 1998; and
- commented that the planning staff generates approximately two plans per month.

Ms. Dillon

- reported that DOT invited the assembly and the planning commission to the dedication of the first phase of the Parks Highway reconstruction on July 12, 2000, at 9:30 a.m.

Assemblymember Simpson:

- expressed her pleasure in meeting with the planning commission.

Assemblymember Kelly:

- remarked he enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the planning commission;
- stated the original comp plan wanted the borough divided into districts and boundaries; and
- suggested the assembly study the Soldotna comp plan and public input process.

Planning Commissioner Anderson:

- stated he appreciated the opportunity to discuss planning with the assembly;
- agreed the planning commission needs direction from the assembly;
- supported the proposal of using a facilitator in the planning process; and
- requested the planning process remain open to the public.

Planning Commissioner Payne:

- supported the issue of hiring a facilitator for comp plan development; and
- encouraged public involvement.

Assemblymember Holmes:

- remarked that representation on the review committee should be a stakeholder concept; and
- commented that the borough comp plan is a role model for municipalities statewide.

Assemblymember DeVilbiss:

- suggested that the plan for review be included in Chapter 1;
- thanked the planning commission for review of the special events ordinance;
- expressed concern for DOT projects that bypass borough input;
- thanked the planning commission for an invitation to speak; and
- shared non-support for borough-wide flexible zoning.

Mr. Scott remarked that he will check the "Make it Black" project status with DOT and report back to the assembly.

Planning Commissioner Rowland:

- thanked the assembly for the directions given.

Assemblymember Jansen:

- stated her pleasure with the discussion in this meeting;
- addressed the cost of planning and necessary expenses involved;
- spoke to the special events ordinance;
- related the importance of a balance on the review committee member selection; and
- thanked the planning commission for their efforts on behalf of the borough.

Planning Commissioner Savage:

- thanked the commission for electing him chair of the commission.

Mayor Salmon:

- discussed a constituent who called to discuss road paving;
- stated 80 percent of all small business fail in the first five years;
- shared the assembly's goal to make the borough a desirable place to live;
- asked that the community survey results be used in the comp plan review;
- asked how the comp plan differs from the strat plan;
- commented that every right you relinquish is a right lost; and
- reminded everyone that the actions we take now have a lifetime beyond ours.

Mr. Scott:

- explained that the strat plan has a broad comprehensive plan with action plans to accomplish the goals listed; and
- proposed that the comp plan Chapter 1 review should begin in September 2000.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The special assembly meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.


DARCIE K. SALMON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

Minutes approved: July 18, 2000