



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Planning Division

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Meeting Notes

PT. MACKENZIE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING TEAM

Tuesday, December 16, 2008, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

PT. MACKENZIE FIRE STATION #6-4

Members present: Gordon Attaliades, Greg Bell, Garvan Bucaria, Steve Fishback, Lynn Gattis, Sam Martin, and Art Scates.

Also present: Brad Sworts, Emerson Krueger and Bonnie Allen of Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and Jan Fishback.

1. Review of the November 12, 2008 meeting notes: no changes, additions, or deletions.
2. MSB Transportation Planner, Brad Sworts provided an overview of the Long Range Transportation Plan, and explained about how community comprehensive plans are incorporated into the borough's LRTP. Things have been happening so quickly, the LRT plan may need to be updated in the next couple of years.
 - Roads: Reviewed the Long range Transportation Plan, Mr. Sworts explained road classifications; major and minor collectors, and local roads.
 - Projects were identified through a traffic model extrapolating future growth and development to 2015 and 2025 are those projects that should be done first. At the local level, the plan relied on the Road Service Area's identified connections and the community comprehensive plans.
 - The planning team identified the following transportation projects:
 - Ayrshire Road upgrade road and easement to meet Minor Collector requirements;
 - a. Little Su River Road should be similarly upgraded.

- Point MacKenzie Road extension to the point to avoid residential traffic through the Port District.
- Burma Road upgrade and maintenance.
- Cameo Drive maintenance and culvert;
- Holstein Heights subdivision access upgrade or replacement;
- Guernsey Road upgrade to Major Collector status with appropriate changes to the easement and road characteristics.
- Red Dane Ave extension to Pt MacKenzie Road;
- Farmers Lake Road improvements;
- Alsop Road upgrade and extension to the port area; and
- Blue Goose Road upgrade and extension.
- A team member noted that if people are dedicating easements, they'd like driveway access later, and wouldn't be happy about being denied access to their road.
- Bridge: Mr. Sworts noted that someday there will be a bridge between Pt. MacKenzie and Anchorage, until then there will be a ferry carrying people and cars.
 - The team identified a need for a bridge on Pt MacKenzie Road where it crosses Goose Creek.
- Rail: Mr. Sworts reviewed the rail project, and potential routes through Point MacKenzie area. He noted the EIS will determine the most favorable route. The draft EIS should be released probably by late February. It may be finalized by May or June.
 - The team identified a need for rail sidings in the agricultural district near the existing road network.
- Ferry: A team member provided a quick overview of the project. KABATA funds may be distributed to support the ferry landings at Anchorage and the borough. The navy will own the ferry, the borough will operate and maintain the ferry, and the navy will get data. The terminal on the Anchorage side is anticipated south of Ship Creek. The ferry is estimated to be in the water by fall 2009. Ferry service may include Tyonek, Kenai, Anchorage and the Port.
- Airstrips: Mr. Sworts gave an overview of the MSB Regional Aviation Systems Plan and Airport Location Study. The study includes three potential locations for a float plane hub: near Big Lake, Seven Mile Lake, and Goose Bay.

- A team member provided an excerpt of the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport Master Plan Update. The update included evaluation of a supplemental airport located at either Fire Island or Point MacKenzie, or a replacement airport at Point MacKenzie. The two alternatives that included an airport in Pt MacKenzie shared the following weaknesses: high costs in surface transportation and bridge construction, and high environmental impacts in a rural recreation area.

Construction of a major airport in the community will not be considered at this time due to the forecasted near-term improbability of bridge construction.

- The transportation chapter should include local roads in the goals, which could then be incorporated by reference into the LRTP. The planning team should look at all the "not constructed" roads and see if they should be incorporated into the plan. The team is also encouraged to review other transportation chapters of local comprehensive plans. A planning team member suggested changing "feet" to "foot traffic" in the draft transportation chapter.

Mr. Sworts brought up transit planning. He said there are plans for bus service to the ferry landing. He encouraged the planning team to consider possible transit stops or stations. A team member noted park-n-rides would be good. Brad Sworts noted that logical locations would be near future interchanges, probably at Ayrshire, Holstein, and perhaps Red Dane. A team member noted there will be a bus stop at the prison. The plan should include language supporting a shuttle to the prison from the ferry and a parking lot at the ferry landing. Security at the park-n-ride parking lots needs to be a priority.

Break 7:40 to 7:52

3. Trails, Recreation and Open Space Connectivity

- The team has spoken favorably of equestrian or open space subdivisions, a type of subdivision.
- There was general support for multi-use trails and non-motorized trails as well as a concern about safety. The team supported trail connectivity throughout the community with connections to neighboring community trails.
 - One team member supported separating three wheelers, horses, and bicycles along the highways for safety. It was noted that places cleared of vegetation are used, like the power line and the natural gas line.

- The draft land use chapter included the goal to Encourage Conservation Subdivisions / Open Space Subdivisions with “built-in” green space, trails, and connectivity to outside trails and green space;
 - Discussion about difficulties connecting the “T” with areas to the south via trails. Discussion about roads and trails along roads and the inherent dangers with that situation. Some old trails aren’t being used because as the road system has been developed, there was less need for trails to access property, and it is easier to use the roads. The old trails typically did not include legal easements and the subsequent road development has ended common use of the trails.
- The team supported merging trails and recreation chapter with the green infrastructure chapter.
- A large horseshoe shaped undeveloped area that connects the two refuges may be an excellent candidate for a greenbelt trail system. A substantial portion belongs to the borough.
 - A team member didn’t want exclusions of machinery and didn’t want the land to be set aside forever or preclude multiple recreational or commercial uses.
 - A team member would like to see options like ball parks allowed in the area, and allow some roads through there, too. They cautioned against setting up something like the Campbell Track in Anchorage which is locked up too tight
- A team member asked how much private land is in Point MacKenzie now, what percentage?
- The water and wildlife connection between Susitna Game Refuge and Goose Bay Game Refuge through the prison site should be protected.
- Parks around the prison and the “T” were discussed. A team member felt there needs to be enough people to watch the parks to minimize vandalism.
 - The team should think of areas to set aside parks land. Land for parks, ball fields and soccer fields should be near schools.
- The team discussed lakes or water bodies of special interest.
 - Silver lake was noted as a lake of special importance. A rough trail system exists around the lake which has probably not been mapped by the borough. Silver Lake is an unnamed lake located south of Alsop Rd.

- The Mule Creek area includes borough land and an existing winter trail that should be recognized by the borough. Mule creek trail is a wildlife corridor. A team member felt trails and wildlife corridors go together.
- A bluff trail was established during homestead times.
- The trailhead off Ayrshire Road, at the old school site, should be included in the trail system.
- Seasonal trails should be distinguished.
- Next meeting: Review MSB map of trails of regional importance
 - Trail plans around Lake Lorraine.

4. Community Survey

The team had the following comments on the survey.

- Include a map of the community council area.
 - Suggest people mark where they are located on the map.
- Define "park." People talked about what they thought of for "park."
- Clarify in the cover letter and on the survey that the survey is from the planning team to assist them in drafting the comprehensive plan
- Include community photos to make it more friendly and emphasize it is from neighbors. Photographs could include:
 - port office.
 - The team was encouraged to provide photos to include.

The team briefly discussed a community workshop. A team member suggested the cover letter or survey should ask if people wanted a workshop. The workshop may receive the best results if scheduled after the EIS for the rail extension.

5. Adjourn