

Minutes
Assembly Lands Committee
Monday, October 15, 2012, 5:00 p.m.
Assembly Chambers

I. Call to Order

Chair Becker called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Members Present: Mary Becker, Johan Dybdahl, Jesse Kiehl, Carlton Smith

Liaisons Present: Nathan Bishop, Michael Williams

Liaisons Absent: Jeff Wilson

Staff Present: Heather Marlow, Lands & Resources Manager; Jessica Beck, Lands & Resources Specialist

II. Agenda Changes – none

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the following Lands Committee Meeting were approved:
August 20, 2012

IV. Public Participation – non-agenda items (10 minutes)

There was no public participation on non-agenda items.

V. Action Item

A. Lands Disposal to Central Council

Ms. Marlow reviewed her memo and letter from Edward Thomas, President of the Central Council. She gave an overview of restricted status and non-restricted status. Mary Ann Miller, Central Council: Thank you to the Lands Committee for honoring the request of looking at the transfer of property. As the Transportation Director, looking at the opportunities and needs of the Indian Village is part of my job. We are looking at doing a parking lot improvement where the current Andrew Hope parking lot is located, which is where one of your parcels is located. We will be adding surfacing, lighting, security, etc. In the later years we will be working on a project that requires greater public participation. We hope to create something more consistent with the Willoughby Plan, working with the neighborhood to create pedestrian ways, sidewalks, etc. to revitalize the area.

Mr. Kiehl: Can you tell us a little bit about the other ownerships in the area and how your plans work into that?

Ms. Miller: Currently, there is no specific set plan. In 2-3 years we will be looking at their next phase of development that will require more public participation. We have been working with the Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority and Sealaska Heritage who are in the neighborhood. We will be looking at what they can do to get full use out of the area while keeping its integrity.

Mr. Bishop: Can you tell me the size of lot 7 and the proposed use for it?

Ms. Marlow: Lot 7 is 1,800 square feet and it would be for a residential use.

Mr. Bishop: What would a competitive bid go out for that?

Ms. Marlow: It's difficult to tell what a competitive bid might do. I think you could probably get somewhere between \$15,000 and \$30,000.

Mr. Kiehl: For lot 7, can you layout what the advantages are to dispose of the land now, rather than waiting until there is a better plan with the other land owners in the area and what improvements might come up?

Ms. Marlow: Central Council is a large owner of the land in the area. Disposing of this lot now gives them the opportunity to look at the area comprehensively and include this lot in a comprehensive assessment.

Mr. Smith: When the Hope Building was dedicated it didn't have any parking. Any small step to get additional parking is a step in the right direction. Central Council has been working on this for a long time.

Ms. Becker: Does this parking fit into the Willoughby Plan.

Marlow: It's an interim step for the district to improve the parking right now. Surface parking lots are not encouraged in the Willoughby Plan but the committee knows the parking issue will not be solved without a parking structure, more on-street parking or parking program. Until the CBJ has other options in place, this will work.

Mr. Bishop: In a negotiated sale there is a difference between what is paid for the land and what taxes are due on the land. What happens to that money?

Marlow: If we sell a lot for more than we have a debt for, the extra money goes back to the previous owner.

Mr. Williams: How much are we going to need to include Central Council in future plans?

Ms. Marlow: My personal opinion, based on formal training in Native American studies, it is most successful for government to support the goals and visions of Native Americans. When the Willoughby Plan was put together we met with Central Council and they stated several goals that overlapped with our goals. They will need to come up with organic plans for their areas.

Mr. Williams: Will these disposals have a large impact on the future plans for the Willoughby District?

Marlow: No.

Mr. Kiehl: Is there a structure on lot 7 currently?

Ms. Marlow: No.

Motion: Mr. Dybdahl moved that the Lands Committee pass a motion of support to the Assembly for an ordinance that would identify the two properties for disposal to Central Council, through a negotiated sale, for the amount due to the CBJ for delinquent taxes, interest and penalties.

Hearing no objection, motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Bishop: I would like for Central Council to have ownership of the property but I don't think it's appropriate to turn the property over at the expense of the former owner. I think it would be more appropriate for it to go to a competitive bid for the former property owner to receive any money that is left over.

VI. Information Item

A. Property Tax Deferral for Certain Subdivided Property

Ms. Marlow reviewed her memo, the correct legislation (not House Bill 264 as included in the packet) and the Fairbanks North Star Borough Ordinance 2012-51.

Mr. Dybdahl: I would like to hear from contractors what they think of this.

Mr. Smith: Are taxes due for all lots when one of the subdivide lots are sold or are they due only for that portion?

Ms. Marlow: Our original interpretation is that when a lot is sold the taxes all come due for that area included in a final approved plat.

Mr. Kiehl: Section F of the Fairbanks ordinance, says when a single parcel is sold then the taxes of that parcel come due.

Ms. Marlow: That depends if the ordinance is referring to the original parcel or the improved parcels in a new subdivision.

Ms. Becker: It says that only parcels that are vacant and unimproved shall be eligible for the deferral. It sounds like if one parcel is being improved we should tax that one and if one is not being improved we shouldn't tax it, which then seems like they are doing it piece by piece, not the entire original parcel.

Mr. Bishop: The ordinance says that we "may" make taxes due at the time, so it's not set in stone.

Mr. Dybdahl: Is there a savings to the end purchaser?

Ms. Marlow: I don't anticipate that this will save the end purchaser any money. I think this will help the developers by deferring taxes until the end sale, thereby improving cash flow for developers.

Mr. Bishop: I was disappointed by the outcome of this bill. I don't think it does anything for encouragement the development of property.

Mr. Smith: It would be nice to have some feedback from developers.

VII. Liaison Reports

Mr. Williams – Docks & Harbors: The Gitkof lease renewal went through. The lease renewal is still in negotiations with the Mt. Roberts Tram. The dock rebuild by the university was passed but contingent upon a hearing. The Juneau Fisheries Terminal is not owned by Taku Smokeries. Wednesday, October 17th they are having an open house about the three phase plan for Aurora Harbor. On a personal note, I did a home renovation project, the permit process and permit center was really good and very helpful to me.

Mr. Bishop – Planning Commission: We continue to work on comp plan review. Currently we're on chapters 10 and 11, land use and land use maps. The recent adoption of the ordinance where we review zone changes allow us to move in this area. We hope to be done in the next month or so.

VIII. Next Meeting

October 29, 2012, 5:00pm in the Assembly Chambers

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.