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**Minutes of the Worksession**  
**Denali Borough Planning Commission**  
**Tri-Valley Community Center**  
**October 21, 2014**

**Call to Order:** The Planning Commission Worksession was called to order at 6:15 PM.

**Roll Call:** Planning Commissioners present were Patricia GRIGGS, Steve JONES, Ryan JUSCZAK, Mark MENKE, Baxter MERCER, and Kesslyn TENCH. Lee LIGHTFOOT and Sid MICHAELS informed the clerk that they would be unable to attend this meeting.

**1. Commission Training – Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA)**

It was proposed that the DCRA training occur in February on the 21<sup>st</sup> or the 28<sup>th</sup>. The commission was amenable to the plan of action proposed by Ms. Sam via her draft agenda. DCRA requested the borough pay for air fare from Anchorage to Fairbanks and overnight accommodations in Healy. It was noted that Winterfest will be happening the weekend of the 28<sup>th</sup>; it was determined that the two events would not conflict with each other. The clerk will contact Ms. Sam with the proposed dates.

Mark MENKE suggested that Mary Montgomery, who has worked with the University's land program for years and is nearing retirement, has expressed interest in being on the commission and may be interested in sharing some of her experience with the commission. A one-hour worksession scheduled prior to regular meeting might serve as a venue for such a guest. Mr. MENKE volunteered to contact Ms. Montgomery.

**2. Draft 7 Chapter 9.15 Zoning – Proposed Amendment: Height Restrictions**

The commission agreed that the draft was ready to be sent to the assembly along with the memorandum and the other two zoning chapters completed months ago. This item should be voted on tonight at the regular meeting.

**3. Comp Plan Review – Chapters 4, 5, and 6**

**Chapter 3 Current Economic Conditions and Future Goals**

- Page 9, should Goal 4 from Chapter 3 Future Economic Expansion addressing recycling and power generation be moved to Chapter 6 Public Facilities?
- Page 8, reference to the Eva Creek facility would be appropriate in this chapter. A photograph of the wind farm would be appropriate.
- Page 8, reference to the Healy-Clean-Coal Power Plant might also be added.
- Page 8, tourism, mining, power generation, etc., could all merit separate paragraphs within the chapter. The borough supports itself via severance and overnight accommodation taxes neither of which is listed as a current economic condition. (GRIGGS)

**Chapter 4 Land Use**

- Page 10, updates to borough lands section. (JONES)

**Chapter 5 Transportation**

- Page 12, upgrades to the George Parks Highway should be updated. (GRIGGS)
- Page 13, correct Kahiltna Glacier Airstrip information. (JONES)
- Page 13, Alaska Railroad improvements made in Healy. (MERCER)
- Page 17, GOALS to improve pedestrian safety and increased multi-use trails in the borough could be crafted and added to the list.

- Page 17, Goal 2 – Expand public transportation; is this being pursued, by not taking on road powers is this goal applicable? Should it be reworked?

#### **Chapter 6 Public Facilities and Services**

- Chapter 6 does not address the Denali Borough Landfill (Class II) or the Cantwell Transfer Station as public facilities. These facilities are being maintained and improved with a GOAL to expand them, i.e., location of a transfer station in Healy, AK. Page 20, Goal 5 could be modified to address the desire to expand the facilities.
- Generally, the chapter incorporates a lot of phrases but not complete sentences, i.e., “US Postal Service: Five locations throughout the borough”. (GRIGGS)
- Page 19, the descriptions of the fire departments should be reviewed and reworked; Healy and Cantwell are more similar; the volunteer aspect of the local departments should be stressed. (MERCER)
- Page 19, each community including their public nonprofits could be addressed individually. A map of the communities and their locations might be incorporated. (MERCER)

#### **4. DOT – Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan**

It was recommended that the commission compose and send a letter in response to the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT) long range transportation plan. As the borough has not assumed road powers, one strategy for being involved in transportation planning is to participate with DOT and the National Park Service (NPS) in designing and planning projects within the borough.

DOT recently visited the borough seeking input on the Mile 231 project, which is slated for 2018. An assumption that was made was that a turning lane could not be incorporated into the project design as the bridge over the Nenana River is too close to the entrance to the McKinley Village development. Steve JONES redrew the plan based on comments heard at the meeting to improve overall safety at the congested area. The following enumerates the proposed changes:

The entrances to Grizzly Bear and the Village would be offset replacing the present T-intersection configuration, which has the two entries directly across the highway from each other.

##### **NORTH OF THE NENANA RIVER BRIDGE**

- Create a left turn lane from the north into the NPS facility site on the east side of the highway.
- Create a right turn lane from the south into the NPS facility site.

##### **SOUTH OF THE NENANA RIVER BRIDGE**

- Move the entrance to the Village 600 feet to the south of where it is situated thereby allowing a right hand turning lane from the south into the Village and the Denali Education Center. The borough would need to grant DOT the right-of-way across borough land and then the road would segue into the Old Denali Highway to access the developed areas. This would open up an acre of borough land for commercial use.
- Create a left turn lane from the north into the Village.
- Create a right turn lane from the north into the Grizzly Bear complex.
- Create a left turn lane from the south into the Grizzly Bear complex.

Steve JONES identified the following additional projects as highway needs through the Denali Borough:

- Creation of an overpass at the Alaska Railroad Crossing on the George Parks Highway within the bounds of the National Park.
- Development of additional turning lanes.
- Development of multi-use trails along the George Parks Highway. (The old road bed connecting the Village to Riley Creek would be a perfect multi-use trail inside the park.)

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Steve JONES volunteered to produce a draft letter and to work with Marsha Lambert on producing a map.

**Adjournment:** The worksession adjourned @ 7:15 PM.

APPROVED: *Sidney W. Michaels*  
Sid MICHAELS, Presiding Officer

ATTEST: *Linda L. Paganelli*  
Linda PAGANELLI, Deputy Clerk

Date Approved: *November 11, 2014*