



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091
PHONE: (907) 373-9050
FAX: (907) 373-9085

COUNCIL MEMORANDUM NO. 97-44

From: Karol Kolehmainen, Assistant City Planner

To: Wasilla City Council

Date: June 4, 1997

Subject: Wasilla Planning Commission recommendation to complete a locational site analysis prior to siting a Public Safety Building.

APPROVED

DATE: 7/28/97
BY: M. Davis

A special work session with the Parks and Recreation Commission (WPRC) and the Wasilla Planning Commission (WPC) was held April 15, 1997 to discuss WPRC concerns over the possible use of five acres of the Old Wasilla Airport site for a Public Safety Building. An April 29, 1997 letter from Ron Rucker, former Chairman of the Wasilla Parks and Recreation Commission (WPRC), requested the Wasilla Planning Commission not recommend allocation of five acres at the Old Wasilla Airport site for a Public Safety Building. The WPC has considered this request in light of the following factors.

The surrounding land is a mixture of commercial and residential activities. The 1992 Wasilla Comprehensive Plan recommended that the area be dedicated for public purposes, emphasizing recreational and civic needs over commercial development. The site was described as a "very special opportunity" and the plan identified that it was an important theme of all the public meetings and planning workshops that the entire parcel should "remain in public ownership". The 1996 Comprehensive Plan discusses both the fact that the eastern edge of the site had been identified for placement of a Public Safety Building, and, in the same paragraph, a "recent trend" away from developing structures at the site. The current zoning of the parcel as P-Public and the recent replatting of the site into one lot supports the concept of recreational development; however, the current zoning would also allow the location of a Public Safety Building at the site.

The Commission has considered whether it is possible to determine that the Old Airport site is the best location for such a public facility. The fact that the parcel is available and adequately zoned present compelling reasons to consider the site for such a facility, but these factors may not represent the only criteria to consider. Deciding that an absolute determination is not possible, the Commission has recommended a locational analysis be done prior to the dedication of any City, state or federally owned property for a Public Safety facility. Such an analysis would be based on needs and environmental factors and could serve as a basis for any future municipal bonds required for development.

RECOMMENDATION

The Wasilla Planning Commission requests that the City Council concur with their recommendation to perform a locational analysis prior to the siting of any Public Safety facility.



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.

WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

PHONE: (907) 373-9050

FAX: (907) 373-9085

WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 97-25

A RESOLUTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WASILLA, ALASKA, IN SUPPORT OF THE WASILLA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONS RECOMMENDATION NOT TO ALLOCATE FIVE (5) ACRES OF THE OLD WASILLA AIRPORT SITE, OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL, STATE OR MUNICIPALLY OWNED PROPERTY, PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF A LOCATIONAL SITE ANALYSIS FOR A NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING.

WHEREAS, the Wasilla Parks and Recreation Commission WPRC has reviewed development options for the Old Wasilla Airport site; and,

WHEREAS, the WPRC has worked with community members and other support staff to develop a plan for the Old Wasilla Airport site that meets the perceived needs of the community; and,

WHEREAS, the WPRC now wishes to forward a recommendation to the Planning Commission and the City Council on this issue;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wasilla Planning Commission hereby supports the recommendation of the Wasilla Parks and Recreation Commission (WPRC) to the City Council, recommending that the City not allocate five (5) acres of land from the Old Wasilla Airport, or from any federal, state or municipal property, prior to the completion of a locational site analysis for the purpose of constructing a new Public Safety Building.

I certify that a resolution in substantially the above form was passed by a majority of those voting at a duly called and conducted meeting of the Wasilla Planning Commission this 3rd day of June 1997.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Helen Y. Kaye, Planning Clerk

John Cannon, Chair

(SEAL)

WASILLA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION RECEIVED

DATE: April 29, 1997 MAY 01 1997
THRU: Wasilla Planning and Zoning Commission Planning Department
TO: Wasilla City Council
FROM: Wasilla Parks and Recreation Commission
REF: Allocation of Five Acres of the Old Airport Site
for a Public Safety Building

The WPRC does not recommend allocation of five acres of the Old Airport Site for a Public Safety Building.

A brief history of this site is:

The land was donated for public use (initially an airport) by Heine Snyder.

Mr. Snyder's daughters have professed a desire for a new Public Safety Building at this site for many years.

Several designs for this site have been developed since the mid-70's. The extremes of these design proposals are from a site focused around a significant civic center and library facility to a predominantly green space.

All designs have retained a central concern for the Iditarod Restart.

Public testimony during the most recent updating of the Wasilla Comprehensive Plan was significantly in favor of creation of a central green space at this site.

The current design by Jonathon Schilk is a continued refinement of the Comprehensive Plan's green space plan developed by the WPRC.

Specific reasons the WPRC does not recommend allocation of these five acres are:

We can find no record of any stipulation specifically identifying a public safety facility as a condition on the donation of the land. The only identified condition is "Public Use". The park design is a public use.

The public safety building will add significant traffic to an already congested traffic pattern.

The public safety building will add a variety of noises to an already noisy area.

This action will significantly limit or eliminate space for the Iditarod Restart and associated parking, parking for VPA, the skateboard park, basketball, volleyball, tennis, unstructured family activities, fitness trails, etc.

Although this is a proposed joint use facility, the majority of use will be by non-city personnel. So why should the city pay such a significant price for its limited use of the facility?

Once again, the WPRC does not recommend allocation of five acres of the Old Airport Site for a Public Safety Building. We have carefully considered the wishes of the Snyder sisters and the needs of the community in making this recommendation.

If you have need of further information feel free to contact me at work at 745-7571 or at home at 376-3935.

Sincerely,

Ron Rucker
Chairperson



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

Area Code (907)

Administration

Ph: 373-9055

Fx: 373-9092

Clerks Office

Ph: 373-9090

Fx: 373-9092

Finance

Ph: 373-9070

Fx: 373-9085

Library

Ph: 376-5913

Fx: 376-2347

Museum

Ph: 373-9071

Fx: 373-9072

Parks &

Recreation

Ph: 373-9053

Fx: 373-9072

Planning

Ph: 373-9094

Fx: 373-9092

Police

Ph: 373-9077

Fx: 373-9051

Public Works

Ph: 373-9095

Fx: 373-9054

Ph: _____

Fx: _____

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM NO. 97-27

To: Wasilla City Council Members
Wasilla Planning Commission Members

From: Mayor Sarah Palin

Subject: Public Safety Building

Starting in 1992 the Wasilla Comprehensive Plan recommended the Old Wasilla Airport to be dedicated for public purposes emphasizing recreational and civic needs over commercial development for this area.

It is accepted that we have developed some recreational infrastructure and that more is planned. In looking at this area as the site for the proposed Public Safety Building, we would be keeping in line with the comprehensive plan. A Public Safety Building would fulfill the "civic" needs of the plan. Civic is defined as having to do with the rights, affairs and duties of citizens or as being "of a city".

It would centrally locate EMS, Police and Fire Services to best serve our valley population. It would also allow the Mat-Su Borough to bring together widely scattered EMS and Fire Service resources. Having such vital services located at the proposed Old Wasilla Airport site would also put public safety close to our major business districts and our children, yet allow timely response to outlying areas via the Parks Highway, Bogard Road and Knik Goose Bay Road and Lucille Street.

This facility has the potential for even more partnerships including possibly leasing space for a Magistrate's office, Legislative offices, as well as a Wasilla branch of the DMV, Alaska State Troopers and dispatch services, and other borough, state and federal agencies and satellite agencies.

In looking at other areas I note that finding a parcel of adequate size is the first problem. A bigger and more important limitation is that fire services are required to maintain a five

mile limit to keep their Insurance Service Office rating which helps determine fire insurance rates for the people of our community. The lower the rating, the better the insurance rates. This really limits the available sites. Another limiting factor is that we need to consider the disturbance problems caused to residents being exposed to sirens at unusual hours. Once again the Old Airport site is indicated as being the least infringing on the smallest group of people while still complying with the other concerns.. There are a great many other concerns such as site cost, road access, impact on residents and soil stability. In looking at these concerns and listening to many of the arguments for and against, it still appears that the best common sense answer to site location is the Old Wasilla Airport.

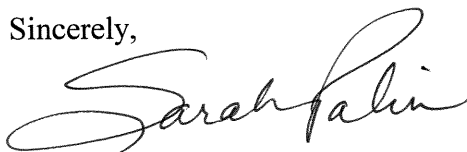
Now is the time to make a decision which will effect the direction of Emergency Services in the Mat-Su Valley for our future. **OUR GROWTH RATE WILL NOT STOP WHILE WE TAKE TIME TO DECIDE. IT WILL LEAVE US BEHIND WITH MEMORIES OF MISSED OPPORTUNITIES.**

The potential of a Public Safety Building is only limited by the needs of our community. If we really wish to serve our community then let's bring the services to them at a centrally located site with the ability to match our growth rate and our progressive ideas.

Please review the "Space Needs Assessment" packet you have received. It is vital that we keep an open mind in considering the proposed "Public Safety Building". Get feedback from informed people, the public at large, both the negative and the positive. There is great potential here for our community but there is a greater need to serve the public. After all, that is what they elected us for.

Thank you for your time and effort that just looking and researching this project will cost each of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Palin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sarah H. Palin
Mayor
City of Wasilla