

**BOROUGH ASSEMBLY & PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT MEETING
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
September 29, 2008**

Approved

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** at 6:30 by Mayor Fred Shields.

2. **PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

3. **ROLL CALL**

Assembly Members Present: Doug **Olerud**, Steve **Vick**, Deborah **Vogt**, Jerry **Lapp**, Norm **Smith**, Pete **Lapham**

Planning Commission Members Present: Chairman Lee **Heinmiller**, Vice Chairman Rob **Goldberg**, Don **Turner III**, Greg **Brask**, Andy **Hedden**,

Planning Commission Members Absent: Harriett **Brouillette**, Dawne **Thomsen**,

Haines Borough Staff Present: Borough Manager Tom Bolen, Clerk Jullie Cozzi, Lands Manager John Wurst, Planning and Zoning Technician Steve **Ritzinger**, Debra Schnabel

Visitors Present: Norm Hughes, Madeleine Shields, Sean Gaffney, Jason Gaffney, Darsie Culbeck, Les Hostetler, Christy Tengs, Fred Gray, Jessica Edwards/cvn, and others

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

M/S Lapp/Vogt to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **AGENDA ITEM:** Former school Properties

A. Asbestos Abatement

B. Future of Properties

BOLEN read a written report concerning the issues at hand. He asked the Assembly and Planning Commission to clarify for him the future of the properties. The contractor relied on a report from Nortek in preparing their work estimate. The estimate is \$67,000 short. **HUGHES** asked for clarification. Does the asbestos abatement have to be done regardless of what happens to the building? **BOLEN** responded that only part of it would have to be abated regardless of future considerations. **VOGT** asked to reiterate the past decisions on this involving the Assembly, Planning Commission. **SCHNABEL** said that the first decision was in 2004 when the plan was to build a new school and demolish or sell the former buildings to recover the money spent on the Schafer property. When the construction estimate was over 4 million dollars more than anticipated the demolition portion was removed from the contract. In Jan 2008, Dawson Construction informed the borough that extra money was available, so the abatement issue/demolition was brought back for consideration. When Alaska Mountain Guides proposed to purchase the primary school property, research on abatement began in earnest. It was discovered that it was not mandatory prior to selling the property as long as the purchaser accepted asbestos responsibility. She said that she came forward saying that there was liability sitting there and that

the O&P approved the abatement followed by assembly approval. **VOGT** noted that the Assembly directed to abate for demolition. **SHIELDS** said that the local landfill will take the demolished building as a whole with all of the mastic, tile, etc. in it. **VOGT** asked if special personnel are needed for the demolition. **BOLEN** said that no white suits or respirators would be required. **LAPP** asked for cost. **SCHNABEL** said that an estimate in March of 2006 showed the primary school abatement would cost of \$40K and full demolition would cost \$145K. The demolition of the elementary school would be \$416K. **OLERUD** asked if the borough has accepted the buildings from the school district. He said that we were going to leave them with the school because there was a chance they could qualify for maintenance and demolition funds. Especially in light of the fact that there are still a lot of furnishings in the elementary school building. **SCHNABEL** said that the school project has paid the cost of shutting down the primary school building and the associated costs of maintaining the building. As for the elementary school building, the school district has abandoned the building, property, and furnishings. There is still money in the project to deal with this issue. **SHIELDS** said that there is a crew that will leave town unless direction is given for work. **OLERUD** said that the 3-story building with the gym might be feasible to save. He questioned if an engineer had looked at it. **SCHNABEL** said that the school district had the feasibility study done in 2004. There were qualified people that evaluated the building financially. **OLERUD** said that he was referring to demolishing the older 2-story section and keeping the 3-story section. **BOLEN** mentioned that he did a walk-through of the building the previous week. He has an extensive background in building construction. He disagrees that it is less expensive to build new than to retrofit. He agrees that the 3-story section is the only viable section. It does not contain asbestos. **LAPHAM** asked about the contract. **BOLEN** said that the owner has the right to increase and decrease the scope of work in a project. It also impacts the mobilization and demobilization costs. **SMITH** suggested for a garage sale rather than pay \$3,800 to have it removed. **LAPP** said that the furnishings are in the way. **HEINMILLER** suggested that all furnishings should be moved into the gymnasium since that isn't needed for abatement. **TURNER** said that it would be better not to abate what could be demolished. **LAPHAM** asked what the building weighs. **BOLEN** said that cubic yardage is the main issue, not weight. **LAPHAM** said that the old A&P building debris cost by the pound too at the landfill. The elementary school is cement. **VICK** was glad to hear that retrofitting was not necessarily more expensive. The borough has a building that could include court system, government offices, a community recreation center. It would be worth getting a good engineer's report on it. **LAPHAM** said that he understood that it was in such terrible shape that it couldn't be rehabilitated. **OLERUD** said that the 2-story section needs to be torn down. It would be the main cost of retrofitting it. Also, making it ADA compliant with elevators, etc. would be cost

prohibitive. He said that the contractors should finish the abatement that has to be done and get an engineer to estimate what it would cost to retrofit it. Also, the school district should look into money for demolishing the 2-story section. **VOGT** is assuming that it could be sold, as is. **HOSTETLER** said that he is not sure about the primary building. He can clarify what has to be done and what's more elective. If the building is going to be demolished, he would abate for demolition. If it is going to be abated for reuse, it would also have to involve air quality testing after the abatement. Both buildings were supposed to be empty prior to abatement work. **HOSTETLER** said that the elementary building is the one that really needs furnishings removed. **BOLEN** believes the primary building has value to someone. He is not in favor of selling the property because it is a big tract of land that might have a future use for the borough. If however, the community wants to sell it for commercial uses since it is along Main Street, then the borough would pursue that. He said that it is an old gym, but it's an asset that should be rehabilitated. A lot of activities could take place in that building, but there would have to be a large funding source identified. **VICK** said that his biggest concern with the Primary School Building property is that the borough may need it for wood storage, etc. **VOGT** agrees with respect to maintaining the land, possibly for use as snow storage. **SCHNABEL** clarified that when the idea was first proposed to sell the property to AMG, the property was subdivided. A lot was provided for a centralized wood-burning facility and that there is space that could be used for snow storage. **GOLDBERG** said that a planner's job is to try to look into the future to try to determine what the borough might need. The borough is outgrowing the present administration building. He believes that the borough should retain the properties rather than sell them. The preschool needs to be relocated and the Human Resource Building needs to be removed. The borough could benefit from a satellite University of Alaska location, a modern teleconferencing facility and a community recreation center. There's also the issue of parking as stipulated by the borough code. Perhaps the primary building should be removed and the property used for the required parking area. Or perhaps the primary school building should be leased. It is difficult to predict what the borough is going to need in the future, and it would be very challenging to reacquire land down town when the need arises. He believes that it would be a big mistake to let go of the properties. **HEINMILLER** said that if multiple uses were incorporated into the elementary building, there could be 3 different access levels for the different use. **VOGT** said that the courthouse could pay rent to use part of the building. **OLERUD** disagreed and said the lot right next to the Public Service Building would be good for the suggested uses. **BRASK** agreed and said that the downtown property should be used for something else. **VICK** said that he thought this was not a good piece of land. He said that he does not know if this parcel is any better than the school parcels. **OLERUD** said that there is a

huge field behind the borough administration building is suitable for wood storage and central heating. Why put something like that right on Main Street. The borough should accept a reasonable proposal for the primary school property. **TURNER** said that the borough should not remove the tiles at this point. **VICK** asked about the drawbacks. **BOLEN** said that the borough would pay for another mobilization. **GRAY** said that the Schafer property was over-valued. The former school property was to return to the tax rolls. He believes that it is a breach of public trust to not do this by taking \$350K and not replenishing it for the public good. **FOWLER**, downtown business owner, said that she gets upset about the pie-in-the-sky ideas while there are businesses seriously hurting. Downtown looks bad now and is suffering. AMG would revitalize the downtown. **HEINMILLER** asked if there is any advantage to having the primary school abatement done right now. **BOLEN** replied that the only interested party in the primary school indicated that they did not want any further material removed. Mayor **SHIELDS** asked chairman Heinmiller to have the Planning Commission make a recommendation.

M/S GOLDBERG/TURNER: The Planning Commission reiterates that the borough should keep the properties and not sell them, and to abate the properties as needed. There was no discussion. **The motion carried unanimously 5 to 0.**

M/S OLERUD/LAPP: To proceed with minimal abatement on the primary and elementary school buildings.

SMITH asked about the furnishings. **BOLEN** said that the administration will handle the abatement. **VICK** said that we have to have a plan for borough facilities. **OLERUD** said that the private buildings on Main Street are in just as bad condition. The buildings need to be sold. **BOLEN** asked if the borough has the ability to decide what level of abatement is needed at this time. It was agreed that the borough does have the ability to make that decision. **The motion carried unanimously 6 to 0**

SHIELDS said that the proposal deadline for the primary school property purchase is tomorrow (Sept. 30) and the assembly will consider those proposals. It will be on the 10/14 meeting agenda. **HUGHES** said the borough made a promise. The primary property should be sold to pay back the Schafer cost and the rest of it retained for the future.

Respectfully submitted 10/20/08

Steve Ritzinger
Haines Borough Planning and Zoning Tech