

Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council

DRAFT -Regular Meeting Minutes – Sept. 19, 2007 at May Valley Alliance Church

Submitted by David Braswell, Secretary

Attending Members:

D1: Rick Spence X

D2: Eileen Lane X

D3: OPEN

D4: David Braswell X

D5: Tom Carpenter X

D6: Bette Filley X

D7: Marshall Brenden O

D8: Dick Fackenthall X

D9: Sharon Schimke X

D10: OPEN

D11: OPEN

At-Large 1: Rich Nelson O

At-Large 2: Doug Bandelin O

At-Large 3: Edie Jorgensen X

At-Large 4: Chuck Pillon O

At-Large 5: Larry Wright X

Call to Order: President Rick Spence called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Public Comments: There were extensive public comments, which are discussed below.

Police Report: Deputy Harmon was unable to attend and provide a police report.

Meeting Minutes: Approval of the September Meeting Minutes was deferred until next month's meeting to accommodate public comments.

Treasurer's Report: Approval of the Treasurer's Report was deferred until next month's meeting to accommodate public comments.

Public Comments: There were several members of the community present to voice their opposition to the proposed YWCA Passage Point facility. Viet Nyugen, a legislative aide to King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn was also present to listen to and respond to these community concerns. The public comments regarding the proposed Passage Point facility were uniformly critical, and there was not a single comment made supporting the establishment of this facility in the location presently proposed.

Tom Carpenter summarized the negative factors surrounding the Passage Point plan as presently proposed: 1) no access to bus lines for 3 miles, 2) no local access to employment sites, 3) lack of child care facilities, and 4) negative impact on local schools.

Sean Cronberg, a community member living near the proposed site, provided a detailed report on why the Passage Point project will likely be unsuccessful. He first noted that the YWCA's similar projects were much smaller in scale than the presently proposed facility. For example, the Discovery facility in Everett only has 8 units, as opposed to the 70+ units proposed for Passage Point. He also noted that while the other similar facilities are situated in downtown locations with access to bus lines and employers, the Passage Point location is in a rural setting without access to bus lines or nearby employers.

Sean reported that he attended a meeting concerning Passage Point, and that there were many concerns that Property Prices Will Drop if the facility is established. Moreover, he reported that local school boards are not aware of the facility, and that there is the potential for 120 additional students to be forced upon already stressed schools. Moreover, the question of how children living at Passage Point would travel to school remains unresolved.

Sean also reported that security was a major concern at the meeting. The entrance will not be gated. Linda Rasmussen reported that there will be a single guard shack at the entrance. Statistically, there is about a 50% recidivism rate for inmates released from prison. About 25% of inmates reoffend within their first year of release. Thus, there is the potential for crime rates to skyrocket in the community if the Passage Point facility goes into operation at the location presently proposed.

Sean also noted that there are concerns with Zoning and the facility's future Budget. The YWCA is planning on obtaining a Nonconforming Use permit, in order to get a 208 bed limit for the facility. Financially, the YWCA is proposing \$16 million for renovation of the facility, with \$900,000/year of the operating budget to be supplied by the YWCA. Much of the facility's proposed budget is contingent on the YWCA obtaining government grants. Thus, the future budget is far from certain, and there could likely be

future budget cuts. There is concern that future budget cuts would come from security and support staff.

Viet Nyugen, a legislative aide to Reagan Dunn, spoke next. He explained that the YWCA has received \$5 million in federal grants for the Passage Point project. He stated that the King County executive will have to send out a budget proposal for the facility in the future, and that the Council has not yet taken any action on the project. He reported that if no action is taken by the Council, then the \$5 million in federal grants will not be obtained by the YWCA. Viet reported that Councilmember Dunn wants to have a community meeting on October 1st with Linda Rasmussen and neighbors in the community around the proposed site. He reported that the YWCA is attempting to purchase the buildings on the site, and to get a long term easement on the land. Viet recommended that concerned citizens should voice their views at every opportunity, at every meeting.

Kim Kritsky, whose property shares a border with the proposed facility, spoke next in opposition to Passage Point. She explained that she had received no notice of the project's proposal at all prior to last week. She only heard of the proposed facility from a neighbor. She was concerned about the community's lack of notice and voice in this process.

Ms. Kritsky also stated that the proposed facility would undermine the expectations she had for purchasing her property. She purchased her property in order to live in a quiet, private area with low population density. The project currently proposed would effectively put an entire neighborhood right in her backyard. She does not really want 200 people living right behind her.

Ms. Kritsky was also concerned with the potential for trespassers on her property. In the past, when the project site housed a treatment center, she experienced high volumes of trespassers. She said she is worried this will happen again in the future if Passage Point is established, especially considering how many juveniles would be housed there. There is also the potential for increased incidences of vandalism and theft. Ms. Kritsky also noted that she supports projects such as Passage Point, however, she feels that the rural location currently proposed is unworkable.

Other citizens present also voiced concerns with slow police response times for the facility. One member stated that Linda Rasmussen told citizens that the police response times would be about 5 minutes. This was met with much skeptical laughter by the citizens present, who reported that current police response times in the area are usually over 30 minutes (if at all).

Kathy Ferrell, a citizen living near the proposed project site, also noted that the facility will house many teenagers who do not wish to be there. She stated there will likely be lots of noise, and there could be problems which are compounded by poor police response times. Furthermore, she stated that curfew policies for teenagers housed on the facility were not made available.

Mr. Craig Leonard explained that he had looked up the Passage Point project on Senator Murray's website. He stated that the website made the project sound like it was a done deal before citizens of the community ever had a say in the matter.

Dick Fackenthal wanted to know what an ideal model for such facility would look like, and if such an ideal model was available. He stated that it would be impossible for this project to gain support without comparing it to an ideal model. He was also skeptical that the proposed facility would meet any ideal model for such a facility.

Mike Neugard stated he was concerned with the utter lack of information made available. He also had concerns with security, falling property values, negative school impacts, lack of transportation, and lack of nearby employment opportunities. He also noted the lack of nearby recreation facilities. He further noted that most of the children (and many of the adults) housed at the facility would not be used to the rural environment and wildlife, which could potentially be dangerous.

Clint Weiss, the President of the Cedar Mountain Homeowner's Association, also voiced his concerns with the project's security. He further noted that the potential crime impact would be disproportionately high in a rural area as opposed to an urban area. For example, in an urban area with a higher population and a higher crime rate, the impact of new crimes from the site would be relatively negligible as a percentage. In contrast, in a rural area with virtually no crime, the impact of new crimes would be extraordinarily high in percentage. He also explained that the YWCA has no experience with dealing with a facility of this size. He stated that the YWCA has no track record of success for such a large project, and the YWCA has no solid plans for long term funding for the project.

Announcement: President Rick Spence announced that he will be stepping down from the Council after this year.

Citizen Comment: Tom Pruitt commented on the meth problem in the community. He explained that the former tenants of the problem house referred to in past meetings had relocated a mere two miles away. He also commented on the large numbers of newspaper articles outlining the growing drug problems in our region. He also stated that a marijuana grow house had been shut down on 160th Avenue a few weeks ago. He stated that people of the community have to band together and form community groups to address this growing problem, and to make sure that this type of activity does not go on in our neighborhoods.

Mr. Pruitt asked the Council to emphasize the severity of this problem to the King County Council. Rick Spence suggested that Mr. Pruitt could go to the County Committee of the Whole and ask to testify on it before the Committee.

Mr. Pruitt requested that the Council lobby individual King County Councilmembers and write a letter on this problem to the Council.

Motion: Tom C. moved, David B. seconded, that Tom Pruitt draft a letter to the King County Council, to be read and approved by the Four Creeks UAC, and then sent to the King County Council. Unanimously carried.

Tom Pruitt also explained that he had met with Chris Barringer of Reagan Dunn' office, Deputy Jeff Harmon, and a reporter and photographer from the Seattle Times. He said that the purpose of the meeting was to state praise for the work Deputy Harmon has done for our community.

Rick S. asked Viet Nyugen to try to give Tom Pruitt an opportunity to speak before the King County Council as a whole. Viet said that this may be a good opportunity for a briefing with the Law and Justice Committee. Viet said that he would speak to Reagan Dunn about this.

Election Committee: David B. provided an update on the progress of the Election Committee and the budget planning for the upcoming elections.

Motion: David B. moved, Edie J. seconded, that the budget for the November elections be set at \$2800. Unanimously carried.

Other Business: Tom C. noted that the Four Creeks UAC should discuss what the role of the UACs is in the future. He stated that we need to address where we are going in the future. Tom C. also explained that the UACs are a creation of the Executive, not the Legislative, brance.

Tom gave a key to the Council P.O. box to the Chair of the Election Committee (David B.), so that he can collect ballots and candidate statements in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05.