

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #147 (2008-2009) REVISED November 12, 2008

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SITE SELECTION FOR THE SOUTHWEST ANCHORAGE AREA
MIDDLE SCHOOL - ALTERNATIVE SITE M-1A

ASD Goal: Establish and maintain a supportive and effective learning environment by providing safe, caring, barrier-free schools. Ensure public accountability through effective consultation with community to ensure wise use of financial resources and responsible construction and maintenance of facilities, and effective communication with students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the selection of Site M-1A for a Middle School as identified in the Southwest Anchorage Elementary and Middle School Site Selection Evaluation Amendment #1 Tract 9A Westpark Subdivision School Addition dated July 7, 2008.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The School District and the Municipality of Anchorage have jointly participated in the school site selection process as required by the Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Chapters 21.15.015 and 25.40.015.

In April 2003 Anchorage voters approved funding to acquire additional school sites to meet the future school needs of the community. With this funding, the District along with the Municipal Planning Department proceeded to search for sites to locate both an elementary and middle school in the southwest geographic area of Anchorage. The District contracted with F. Robert Bell & Associates, Inc. to assist in this effort and to perform necessary engineering work to evaluate and rank sites under consideration. The initial study ultimately focused on two primary site areas which were evaluated in multiple site configurations. One site, designated as Area 1, is located within the bounds of Kincaid Estates Road to the east, Kincaid Road on the north and Lucy Street on the west all located within the Westpark Subdivision. The second site, designated as Area 2, is located northeast of the intersection of Sand Lake Road and West Dimond Boulevard. While most options focused on locating the proposed elementary

school in site Area 1 and the proposed middle school in site Area 2, options were developed either reversing this or combining both schools within site Area 1. The final recommendation was to purchase a portion of site Area 1 for the elementary school and site Area 2 for the middle school.

Upon Municipal Assembly approval in May 2005 to purchase both sites as recommended, the Municipal Heritage Land Bank (HLB) entered into negotiations with the property owners for these sites. HLB was successful in acquiring the elementary school site but negotiations failed with the owner of site Area 2. With the acquisition of the middle school failing, the School District and Planning Department were required to reconsider previously examined site areas and examine expansion of the property area available for the middle school site. This effort focused on enlarging the area under consideration south of the southern portion of site Area 1 generally consisting of West Park Subdivision School Addition Tract 9A. This site is also referred to as Alternative Site M-1A in the Planning Department summary memorandum.

Prior to the Planning and Zoning Commission's and School Board's consideration of this site, the District has presented this proposed middle school site acquisition plan to the area community councils. Presentations have occurred at Taku/Campbell, Bayshore/Klatt, and Sand Lake Community Councils. The District also requested an appearance before the Spenard Community Council but was declined due to their lengthy agenda. The members present at two of these council meetings, Taku/Campbell and Bayshore/Klatt, expressed general support for the proposed site and recognized community value in the proposed plan and appreciated the potential efficiencies of co-locating the middle and elementary schools. Some efficiencies discussed related to reduced site size requirements and possible sharing of site amenities reducing development costs. Members at the Sand Lake Community Council expressed concerns about the purchase of additional acreage beyond the school site requirements, protection of the underlying water aquifer, the Municipality's plans for the pond south of the proposed school site located on Tract 10, and finally the future filling and development activities associated with the Lucy Pit now owned by the Municipality.

The analysis prepared by the Municipal Planning Department supports the selection. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the recommended site, M-1A, at their meeting October 30, 2008.

CC/GV/RA/jg

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