

MEMO TO: The Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

RE: OPPOSITION TO KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH ORDINANCE 2011-07; REDUCING THE NUMBER OF KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSIONERS FROM 13 TO 11.

It is puzzling to me why Mr. Johnson, after serving so many years on the KPB Planning Commission, would attack the very composition of the Commission so soon after his move to the Assembly. Rather than coming up with a legitimate plan to reduce overall costs of the Commission he has chosen to slash and cut two seats. Today it is Seldovia and Sterling. What area will be next?

Each commissioner brings his or her expertise to the Planning Commission. Yet, there are times when a commissioner is too close to the issue before the Planning Commission. And that's when it is especially helpful to have 13 members on the commission. It is much easier to get a broad perspective and a true consensus when many points of view are expressed.

When an item comes up on the Commission's agenda, all of the commissioners get to speak, ask questions, deliberate and then vote -- even those commissioners who do not live in the particular city or area under discussion. There are times these votes are unanimous but many times they are not. Just last meeting the commission deliberated on a land use issue. Some of the most probing questions were asked by commissioners not living in or around the affected area. Why deprive the Borough and its citizens for the sake of a few dollars?

As a first class city, Seldovia has been a member of the KPB Planning Commission since its inception. It was not one of the positions added in 2001. All of the commissioners that have represented Seldovia have been dedicated and conscientious in their commitment to the KPB Planning Commission. It does cost more but it also costs the Seldovia commissioner more in time and effort than any other commissioner. There have been times when they have been unable to attend because of bad weather but there are many more times when they make the extra effort and drive out the road to Jakaloff Bay and then ride the water taxi to Homer turning a 15 minute airplane ride into more than an hour of truck and boat travel. Many times they have spent hours at the airport, waiting for a break in the clouds or a lifting of the fog so they can get back to Seldovia. They willingly made and continue to make this additional effort without additional compensation, because they want Seldovia to be represented.

If the Planning Commission must show a savings, wouldn't the Borough be better served by reducing the number of meetings per month rather than the number of members on the Commission? Several meetings every year last less than an hour. Is it cost effective to have Commissioners from Seward, Homer, Anchor Point and Seldovia spend more time in getting to and from a meeting than the meeting itself? I am willing to work with the Planning Department to reduce costs, if it is truly needed.

As you may have guessed by now, I am the current commissioner representing Seldovia. I urge you to oppose Ordinance 2011-7 and let Seldovia keep its seat on the KPB Planning Commission. Just because Seldovia has not had a lot of issues before the Planning Commission does not mean that we are not affected by the decisions of the Planning Commission. Please do not deprive Seldovia of its voice and its vote. VOTE "NO!"

Respectfully yours,

Paulette Bokenko Carluccio  
City of Seldovia Commissioner

To; the KPB Assembly

Ref. **Ordinance 2011-07** Reducing the number of KPB Planning Commissioners from 13 to 11

I ask that you vote **against** Ordinance 2011-07 for the following reasons;

Each of the 13 planning Commissioners is unique with valuable knowledge about their city or area they represent. The value of Historic and personal knowledge far outweighs the small dollar savings that would be made by reducing 2 commissioners. With little compensation for the hours spent it is difficult at best to find qualified people to replace leaving commissioners.

Planning Commission cost ( EST. to end of year) \$73,600.00 (this year)

Average Cost per planning Commissioner       \$   257.34 (per meeting)

Savings by reducing 2 commissioners               \$11,322.96

Since the last censuses 10 years ago when the Planning Commission was increased from 11 to 13 members the Kenai Peninsula Borough's population has increased 11.49% (5709 people). Why should the commission be reduced on an increasing population? The general public and developers would certainly be short changed by any reduction.

Several Commissioners and I are working with the KPB Planning staff to reduce the number of Planning / plat **meetings** for the next calendar year especially during slow work load periods. It makes little sense to travel from Seward, Seldovia or Homer to attend a 15 to 20 minute meeting in Soldotna, in addition during heavy work load periods we are looking at extending meeting time hours. This way we can efficiently maximize time and reduce overall expenses. We are doing our part to reduce costs and represent all areas of the Borough.

My wife and I own a small business (Big John's) and pay lots of tax and believe it would not be to the best interest of the community to reduce planning commissioners and urge you to vote NO on this Ordinance.

Respectfully,

James Isham

KPB Planning Commissioner

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**Subject:**

FW: 2011-07

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**From:** Blair Martin [mailto:blair@diamondmbranch.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 03, 2011 12:46 PM

**To:** Blankenship, Johni

**Subject:** 2011-07

Dear Assembly members,

I was in favor of 2011-07 before I went to our last planning commission meeting. Now I am not! My mind changed as I presided over the public hearing for a gravel pit CUP in my neighborhood. In the lay-down packet was a letter from one of my neighbors. The letter raised the possibility of a conflict of interest for me to preside over decisions concerning an issue so close to home for my family and me. This letter forced me to contemplate 2011-07 from a slightly different perspective. I concluded that I was equally thankful for all 13 of the planning commissioners and the unique perspective each one brings to the discussion. The extra these two positions cost the public is far less than the value they contribute to making good decisions. I hope you will agree and defeat this resolution.

Respectfully yours,

Blair Martin

Planning Commissioner

May 3, 2011

Mr. Gary Knopp, President  
Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly and  
Assembly Members

Good Afternoon,

Briefly:::

Ord. 2011-06 ---- The Assembly has looked at this issue a number of times over the years, but this year I think raising the limit to \$1,000 would work. The largest concern in the past was folks driving to Anchorage to purchase larger items, tax free. However, with the dramatic increase in fuel costs, I think that threat is somewhat eased.

My continuing concern is for those paying rental. They in effect are then charged a property tax, in addition to their rental. For lower income, this is particularly difficult. If there is some way to exempt them, I would urge that.

Ord. 2011-07 Having had the privilege of serving Seldovia for nine years, I hear their pain. They are a first class city, not on the road system, with far more issues to deal with than any other entity in the Borough. I have to concur with Ms. Carluccio. If the Borough is so determined to cut costs, there are many times a meeting could be combined to one a month. A study of past history, would be a guide for those months where only one meeting is needed, and could be so calendared. I do not support this ordinance. Planning is an integral part of the Borough's mandated functions. And yes, there are some costs associated with it. Please retain the Commission as it now is.

Ord. 2011-08 Funding for the Homer Transfer Site. I think this is absolutely needed and I hope you will support it. To wait for a public vote will actually end up costing borough taxpayers considerably more.

Thanks for listening!

Milli Martin  
P.O. Box 2652  
Homer, AK 99603

September 6, 2011

President Gary Knopp  
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

Re: Ordinance 2011-7 deleting two positions from Planning Commission

Dear President Knopp and Assembly members,

It is my humble view that this is an ill advised action and I urge a no vote on this ordinance. I had the privilege of serving the Seldovia City and area for 9 years. I know the struggles they have and continue to endure. But I also know, being located off the road system puts them at a huge disadvantage in regards to Borough business. I consider it vital that they continue to have a presence on the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission, and thereby bring their perspective to the borough. Likewise for Sterling, a growing community with many issues.

Having read the supporting documents, I also understand where Mr. Best makes a valid point. However, I would rather see one additional member, than to delete membership from Seldovia and Sterling. Both are vital to the Borough. Both contribute and need that voice.

Please vote no on Ordinance 2011-7.

Thank you,

Milli Martin  
P.O. Box 2652  
Homer, AK 99603