



Summary of Meetings held in Sterling, Ninilchik & Kasilof

Sterling, June 18

Sponsored by: Grace Merkes, Assembly Representative
 Location: Sterling Senior Center
 Attendees: 6, including Ms. Merkes. Most owned property along the Sterling Highway, and two own recreation and/or tourism-dependent businesses along the Highway.

Ninilchik, June 29

Sponsored by: Paul Fischer, Assembly Representative
 Location: Ninilchik Senior Center
 Attendees: 7, including Mr. & Mrs. Fischer. One couple owns property along the Sterling Highway.

Kasilof, July 1

Sponsored by: Paul Fischer, Assembly Representative
 Location: Tustemena Elementary School, Kasilof
 Attendees: 6, including Mr. Fischer and Ed Oberts from Mayor Bagley's office.

Comments, Questions & Concerns discussed at the meetings, and the answers to those questions.

	QUESTION	RESPONSE
1	Would State Byway designation threaten my rights as a property owner?	NO. The official boundary of the Byway is the Sterling Highway road <u>right-of-way</u> . The only regulation associated with Byways is a billboard ban. The State of Alaska already bans offsite advertising (billboards).
2	How can I be sure that State DOT or the Federal Highway Administration doesn't use Byway designation as a tool to impose future land use restrictions within and beyond the road ROW, or as a threat to other funding sources?	The Byway programs, and their associated funding, are completely separate from all other road funding sources. If the Byway regulations change in the future, both byway programs include an optional "out" if the Sterling Highway corridor decides it no longer wants designation.
3	Who is responsible for the 20% match in the National Byway Grant program? Who would be responsible for maintenance of new facilities?	The 20% match can come from many sources including fundraisers, local organizations or groups, federal, state or local government, or any non-governmental agency. The party responsible for maintenance would be determined prior to submitting the grant application. Byway designation can be a springboard for the formation of non-profit groups that hold fundraisers for maintenance of corridor facilities.



	QUESTION	RESPONSE
4	Who will decide who manages the National Byway yearly stipend? (approximately \$20,000)	The Byway Planning Group would vote or select the person responsible for managing the stipend, which can be used to pay for basic start-up or on-going costs such as becoming non-profit, sending people to conferences, holding byway meetings, renting office space, P.O. Box, hiring an administrator, creating letter-head, etc.
6	How will the Partnership Plan and the Byway Planning Group interface with the Assembly and the other public land Agencies along the corridor?	Ideally, the Byway Planning Group has representatives from each agency, including the Assembly. A benefit of the byway group is that it becomes a tool for communication and cooperation between many groups.
7	Will the Borough Assembly be able to review and comment on the Byway Partnership Plan prior to final approval?	Yes, the Assembly will be given a chance to make comments on the plan, but the Assembly will <u>not</u> have official oversight of the process, nor the power to add regulations to the plan.
8	Will projects that require Borough maintenance be required to have Assembly approval prior to submitting for a grant?	Yes. Any projects that require the borough to maintain them after construction will be approved by the Assembly, prior to grant submittal.
9	<p><u>Byway Planning Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who decides who can or cannot be in the Byway Planning Group? ▪ How will we ensure that it is a balanced representation of corridor stakeholders? ▪ How many people will be in it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anyone can be in the Byway Planning Group, which should be composed of private landowners from several communities along the Sterling Highway, in addition to the public lands employees, economic development advocates, and tourism-related individuals. ▪ The consultants will be initially involved in recruiting members to ensure a balanced representation of corridor stakeholders. ▪ A comfortable, functional membership size is 10-20.
9	Will the Byway Planning Group be allowed political affiliation or advocacy?	No. It should not.
10	Can the Partnership Plan override the Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan?	No. The Byway Planning Group should include someone from the Borough Planning Department to ensure compatibility with approved borough plans.
11	How will landowners along the Highway be notified about the Byway Partnership Plan.	The Byway Planning Group is responsible for sharing information, gathering ideas, and communicating with the people they represent along the Corridor.

STERLING HIGHWAY SCENIC BYWAY PROJECT

The central section of the Sterling Highway, from Skilak Lake Road to Anchor Point, is being nominated for State Scenic Byway designation, to join the remaining sections of the highway, which have already been designated. If State designation is obtained and there is community support, we will proceed with nomination of the entire Sterling Highway as a National Byway, for its outstanding recreation opportunities, its natural & cultural history, and its scenic beauty.

We have received the following community support documents, to date.

Resolutions:

- Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council
- City of Homer
- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District

Letters of Support:

- Cooper Landing Chamber
- Soldotna Chamber
- Homer Chamber
- Anchor Point Chamber
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission
- Cooper Landing Advisory Planning Commission
- Anchor Point Advisory Planning Commission
- Friends of Cooper Landing
- City of Soldotna
- Soldotna City Council
- Central Area Rural Transit (CARTS)
- Birch Ridge Golf Course
- Ninilchik Senior Citizen Center
- Ninilchik General Store
- Anchor Point Senior Citizens
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
- Sackett's Grill-Cooper Landing
- Pioneer Village – Cooper Landing
- Soldotna B&B, Steven Anderson
- Kenai River Sportfish Association
- Kenai Watershed Forum
- Aspen Hotels, Soldotna
- George and Robin Nyce-Kenai
- Salamatof Native Corporation