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September 2003

ROGERS PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Newsletter for the Rogers Park, College Village and Anchor Park Neighborhoods

Meeting: Rezone, Oxford House

In May, the Mental Health Land Trust got Planning and Zoning Commission approval for a rezone of the lot on the southeast corner of 36th and Lake Otis. The intent as we understand it is for the property to house a large commercial or institutional building; MOA's new health department facility is one possibility. The rezone goes to the Assembly for approval in September. DOWL Engineers, who represents MHLT in the rezoning process, will have someone at the meeting to explain the details.

What began before summer break as a complaint from a Cottonwood Resident about the appearance of a substance abuse halfway house in the neighborhood (as discussed in our June newsletter) has grown over the summer into a municipal issue. A national orga-

nization, Oxford House, is coordinating a process that may eventually see 30 of these facilities in Anchorage. This summer, another Oxford House facility opened at 28th and Juneau in Fireweed Manor, so RPCC has two of the first four or five in town.

RPCC member Gary Zipkin, who initially brought the matter forward at our May meeting, appeared recently at the Assembly to raise zoning issues. Muni admin-

istration agreed at that time to finalize research on the matter, issue an opinion, and inform the Assembly. There are said to be complex legal factors involved, including a federal housing law. The muni opinion should help neighbors and the council generally to understand the situation.

This month is the first time we've had a chance to invite an Oxford House rep to a council meeting to explain how Oxford House operates and to answer questions from neighbors and other council members. We also hope to have someone from the MOA Code Enforcement office make a presentation.

As time permits, we'll also get updates on some of the capital projects discussed in "News Shorts" in this issue.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE

Monday, September 8, 7-8:30 pm
Rogers Park Elementary Library

1. Introduction of officers and guests
2. Rezone: 36th and Lake Otis property
3. Oxford House halfway houses
4. Updates and announcements

*Meeting schedule: second Mondays
except in summer months.*

NEWS SHORTS

Assisted living ordinance

At our September 2002 meeting, College Village residents brought forth concerns about an assisted living facility starting up in their neighborhood. Their comments and a presentation by a state licensing official left some council members concerned about the lack of municipal input and control in the licensing process.

A new draft ordinance may address some of those concerns.

The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold public hearing on October 6 on an ordinance amending Title 21 (land use code) regarding assisted living and other residential and health care facilities. RPCC has received a draft copy of the ordinance, which addresses quite a number of related issues—39 pages in all. Comment is due by Sept. 26. For questions or a copy of the draft: 343-7943.

APD offer/request

APD has asked us to designate one area within our boundaries of particular concern for special police attention. Examples are, 1) areas of concern to the community, 2) areas of numerous police calls, 3) traffic problem locations, and 4) problem structures and/or vehicles. You can vote for a particular problem or location (if you haven't already by email) by contacting Loren at the council address or phone number by Sept. 10. *cont. on back page*

ROGERS PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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[http://www.communitycouncils.org/
rogers.html](http://www.communitycouncils.org/rogers.html)

News (cont.)

“Abbott extension” meeting

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and its consultant DOWL Engineers, Inc. have announced a public scoping meeting about the proposed extension of Abbott Loop Road from Abbott Road north to Bragaw St./48th Avenue, to solicit public comments on the project for consideration during preparation of the environmental document and the project design. The parties have given notice that fill material may be placed in wetlands as part of this project. Meeting details: Monday September 15, 7:00 to 9:00 PM,

open house with formal presentation at 7:30, Kasuun Elementary Multipurpose Room (4000 E. 68th Avenue). Questions: Bob Kniefel, DOWL Engineers: 562-2000 or rkniefel@dowl.com.

Capital Projects

The extensive efforts of an RPCC committee to obtain funding for sound barriers in the Northern Lights-Benson corridor were commendably successful in this year’s legislative session but ultimately did not make the budget. The committee and our legislative delegation got about \$250,000 to the governor’s desk, where the funding was included in a large package of vetoes. The effort will continue in 2004; please contact committee chairman Dan Graham at 258-9203 if you’d like to help.

MOA Traffic Division tells us they’re moving toward implementation of the first phase of our long-awaited traffic calming and safety project. They hope to get at least some of these things done yet this year, though at this point we suspect some may have to wait for 2004: speed bumps on Bannister and Wentworth; electronic speed monitoring signs on Fireweed, and LaTouche north of N. Lights; tex-

ured (brick) crosswalks at Cornell and Stanford, Cottonwood and Zarvis, and the Fireweed-LaTouche-Bannister intersection; and closure of Redwood Place at Benson. They are also working on funding for a Maplewood sidewalk and at least one other sidewalk on a school-walking route, subject to bond passage next year.

MOA Real Estate Services is in the process of completing purchase of the half-block-wide strip of undeveloped land on New Seward, north of Fireweed. This will be conveyed to Parks and Rec. This completes another stage in a project begun some years ago and shepherded by a number of council members, Jerry Hupp and Bob Butera primary among them, that has now put the strips on both sides of Fireweed in MOA hands. Former House Rep. Brian Porter and his staff were instrumental in getting the funding through the legislative process. We hope that future developments will include sound fences, designation as protected park land, and possibly landscaping.

For more information on any of these projects, contact our Capital Projects Coordinator, Heather Rice, at 258-6877.

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