

Please join your council on June 16, 2005 from 7-9 pm at the Christian Church of Anchorage, corner of Lake Otis and O'Malley. This month's agenda includes changes to the Council Bylaws, the Hillside District Plan, the Alaska Moose Federation's plans for Tanglewood Golf Course, and a representative from Animal Control.

New Officers and Members

At the May council meeting, new officers and steering committee members were elected. All current officers retained their positions: Tim Stevens, President; Ryan Stencel, Vice-President; Tami Holt, Treasurer; and Katie Nolan, Secretary. The rest of the steering committee, including a couple of new faces is George Arcand, Wayne Crayton, Paul Rasmussen, Jim Pekar, Beverly Landes, Joanne Ackerman, Pete Nolan, Wayne Westberg, Pete Peterson, and Christine Monette.

Gravel Pit Rezone Application

While there hasn't been movement in the Lake Otis Gravel Pit for months, an application for rezone has been submitted for the 3.1 acres adjacent to the Cange Airstrip. This area was not rezoned previously so the application is from R-6 to R-1SL. The public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission has been scheduled for August 1st.

Changes to Bylaws

At this month's meeting we will be addressing needed changes to the HOCC Bylaws. The Assembly has passed an Ordinance requiring minimum standards for Council Bylaws. Our Council met all minimums, but in review of the Bylaws a couple of issues were discovered. One of the changes that has to be made is a requirement of at least twenty non-steering committee members at the annual general meeting. We were unaware of this provision and hence have never followed it, in most cases it would have been impossible to hold an election - it was for this year, the elections having to be postponed a month. We always make efforts to get as much of the public at our meetings as possible, however, sometimes it is impossible, especially during the summer months when everyone is stocking their freezers.

If edits are passed, we will also be making provisions in the Bylaws for the use of e-mail, as the Bylaws were written by the community far before the thought of e-mail. The most significant change that is proposed is to our noticing section. By current Bylaws we should be mailing from a registered voters or property tax list. This is how the mailing list started, but through time it has been altered. We need to do an update, but since the Municipality charges us for that list, it has been on hold until the funds are found. It is the same story for the next change, the required yearly poll, which we need to loosen the language to give flexibility for lack of funds.

The next change was by the Assembly, which is that Councils may now allow the contribution of more than \$250 per year, which was previously prohibited. The final change is to the language concerning standing committees, which doesn't currently provide sufficiently for non-council members' participation.

Animal Control Public Outreach Campaign

Beth Wallen with Anchorage Animal Control will be at our June meeting.

Title 21 Rewrite

The release of the second draft of the proposed Title 21 rewrite has been postponed to June 21st. The delay is due to staff needed to review the large volume of public comments received on the first draft.

APD Coucil Liaison

One of the most productive developments in the past few months has been the appointment of an Anchorage Police Department liaison to the Community Council. Sergeant Cindi Stanton attends all of our Council meetings to hear community concerns, answer questions, and just about anything else we throw at her. She has been absolutely wonderful and receptive. Cindi can be contacted by calling her office at 786-2668 or on her cell phone at 317-0985.

Alaska Zoo Programs

The Alaska Zoo is hosting educational programs at the zoo. The children's programs in the Zoo Adventures Series are: The "Bear Blast" program will allow children to experience close encounters with zoo bears while learning about bear species in Alaska; "Caring about Conservation" teaches children about the many endangered species of the world with a focus on those at our zoo; and "Feathered Friends at the Zoo" will allow close encounters with zoo birds while learning about wild birds in Alaska.

For adults and children, every Friday evening from June 7 to September 2 will feature a live musical program on the Coffee Shop lawn and Tuesday nights through August 30th will feature an education program.

For more information, go to www.alaskazoo.org or call Katie Larson, Education Director, at 346-2858.

Large Animal Ordinance

The 'Large Animal Ordinance' has made its way to the Planning & Zoning Commission again. The public testimony has been concluded and we are anticipating a resolution passing it to the Assembly June 20th.

This Ordinance began 2-1/2 years ago to legitimize and legalize the equestrian and rural uses of Hillside, Chugiak, Birchwood, and surrounding areas. These areas have historically been mixed use and in the majority of the community's opinions needs to be protected for future generations and the availability of varying lifestyle choices.

The community, horse owners and non-owners, has had very strong feelings again the Planning Department's proposed limitations and has been very united in their demand that private property rights be protected. At the first Planning & Zoning Commission hearing a subcommittee was formed to attempt to achieve consensus between the community and the Planning Department, however, because of the Planning Department's unwillingness to back-down from their position, a consensus was not attempted and only minor changes were made to the proposal.

When this ordeal began, the community produced an alternative Ordinance that stressed site-specific land management. To no avail, much effort has been expended to attempt to educate the Planning Department and officials on the benefits of well and water source protection, soil erosion, manure management, etc. This was completely disregarded by the Planning Department. Then, before the latest Planning & Zoning Commission hearing a legal opinion from the Municipal Attorney was released that confirmed to the Planning Department that their current proposed version did not legalize and protect any of the properties.

In response to that opinion, community members drafted a new proposed Ordinance legalizing home-based businesses, which encompasses the properties with livestock, etc. Current code limits everyone, regardless of zoning, to 'home occupation' guidelines of 500 square feet of your home, or 200 square feet of an accessory structure. R-6 and similar zoning regulations currently provide for the commercial storage of vehicles, equipment, boats, etc. and historically these properties have been sold because of the ability to live on premise with their businesses that generate little to no traffic impacts.

All 'community' positions and decisions affecting that position have been carefully done in the public arena by maintaining open communications and adamant representation of community wishes, including numerous community meetings hosted by the HOCC and hundreds of personal conversations and e-mails. Special attention has been made to getting opinions from horse owners, non-horse owners, business owners, neighbors of equestrian and farm properties, water quality experts, etc.

So here's the big question that I need help with. The final 'community version' needs to define the line between acceptable and non-acceptable businesses in these areas. I need suggestions from everyone concerning the definition of that line. At this point, we know that businesses that don't generate traffic are acceptable, but where above that is the line?

Remember, what this Ordinance comes down to is the protection of everyone's private property rights. Through this process we have developed a definition of what 'private property rights' means...we decided it is the ability to develop and use your property as you wish, as long as it does not negatively impact your neighbors' private property rights.

Please send your remarks and suggestions of how to define this line, this may be the most important Ordinance to Hillside and like areas in twenty years in terms of protection of our quality of life, small businesses, private property rights, and diversity of lifestyles within the Municipality.

Current Area Cases & Status

Case S11172-2 18-month time extension, Dolly Varden Cir., no comments. Platting hearing June 1.

Case S11382-1 To subdivide one lot into two, east of 112th, west of Elmore, and north of Klatt. No objections heard to date. Planning & Zoning Commission (final, does not go to the Assembly) June 13.

Case S11384-1, east of Birch, south of Huffman, Platting Board hearing on June 20th. This plat will subdivide one lot into four lots to remain R-6. No objections heard as of yet.

Case 2005-137 The Large Animal Ordinance, P&Z final decision anticipated June 20th. See article above.

Case 2005-032, Site Plan Review for large facility on Baronik. Administrative decision postponed to June 24th. This case has many site-specific construction issues that the council is working on solving, and has the potential to severely impact the adjacent neighborhood. This application is for an approximate 650-person facility, with a 150-car parking lot.

Case 2005-014, Mona Street west of Lake Otis. Assembly hearing June 28th. The Council has concerns with this proposed rezoning and has worked with the developer of this property. Half of these properties abut Lake Otis Parkway, contain utility and access easements, etc. To allow these properties to be built too small will force the new residents' children to play on the street because of virtually no yard. The Council has asked for minimum 10,000 square foot lots, with the ability for these residents to install 6-8 foot solid wood fencing for sound barrier and protection of their property and children. This entire area was platted into 1/3 acre parcels many years ago, yet retained their R-6 zoning, thus although platted and ready for city sewer/water lines, they enjoy R-6 allowed uses. Another frustration to this rezone is that if successful, although lots will look and be essentially the same, the residents of the newly rezoned lots will have less rights as their neighbors.

Case 2005-076 Long Range Transportation Plan, hearing July 18. Preliminary comments have been submitted, biggest concern was that Abbott, O'Malley, Huffman, and DeArmoun are classified as major arterials in the proposed plan.

Case 2005-143 Assisted Living Facility, no hearing before the Assembly scheduled as of yet. The Council has taken a position of support for this Ordinance, though has concerns about certain provisions such as the by-right allowance of up to --- persons per home, plus staffing and property owner's family. While hillside has always been semi-commercial in nature such as equipment storage, home-based businesses, etc. there is a limit as discussed in the large animal ordinance discussion.

Jerome & Cleo construction - the latest issue to take front stage in the Council area is the apparent plan to build the remainder of Jerome Street and develop a 20-acre parcel with city water and sewer. No proposed plans have been submitted to the Municipality, will let you know when we see what is proposed.

To view all of the current road projects in Anchorage, go to www.AnchorageRoads.org