

Huffman/O'Malley Newsletter
September 16, 2004

If you would like to read this newsletter online or to visit our website, please click here or go to www.HuffmanOMalleyCC.org. To speak to a person, call our Vice-President, Ryan Stencel, at 345-4316 or email at council@huffmanomalleycc.org.

Plan to attend our next meeting, Thursday September 16th, 7-9 pm, at The Christian Church of Anchorage, corner of O'Malley Rd. and Lake Otis Pkwy. Enter at north door and go downstairs to the meeting room. Coffee and tea are provided, and please feel free to bring sweets.

AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 16th, 2004

The HOCC Agenda for the next meeting include: SAHS Traffic & Leyden Access; Turnagain View Estates Rezone; Large Animal Facilities Ordinance; A rezone from R-6 to R-1 for the property adjoining the Lake Otis Gravel Pit on Mona Street; and an update on the Lake Otis Gravel Pit development.

In addition to the main items on the agenda, our current list of continuing business that we are tracking, and update every month, includes the Assisted Living Ordinance; Road upgrades (Elmore, DeArmoun Phases 1 & 2, Huffman, O'Malley and various RAP (recycled asphalt) projects in the area); SAHS opening this fall; AWWU property rezone; Gregory Subdivision development; Fire Mitigation funding; Abbreviated Plat Ordinance; the Lake Otis Gravel Pit development; and the Mona St. rezone.

INEBRIATE CAMPS ON HILLSIDE

Ed O'Neil from the Mayor's Task Force on Homeless was a guest at the August HOCC meeting. The issue of homeless individuals and panhandling has been on the forefront of media attention lately, especially as problems escalate throughout downtown, adversely affecting tourism. Negative impacts include human excrement on our downtown streets, aggressive panhandlers, assaults, theft and vandalism.

Current estimates are that over 3000 individuals are homeless in the Anchorage Bowl. Of these, approximately a third are the result of severe psychological issues, a third chronic inebriates, and a third actual transients.

There are estimated to be over 60 major homeless camps from Huffman Road/Rabbit Creek all the way to Fort Rich. In Bicentennial Park, a major cleanup is underway to remove several tons of waste that these camps have left behind. And, despite burn bans and extreme fire danger, documented cases of campfires amid beetle-killed trees have been discovered throughout Hillside, especially in Bicentennial Park.

While most inebriates are turned away from purchases in liquor stores, mouthwash is a readily available and less expensive alternative, with (surprise!) a higher alcohol content. Hundreds of discarded giant-sized bottles of mouthwash are part of each pile of trash collected from these camps. Responsible retailers have, among other steps, posted signs that state "We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone for any reason without an explanation", and residents are encouraged to support businesses that take a stand against this problem.

For more information, or to see photos documenting this problem in Bicentennial Park, visit: <http://www.weddleton.com/CC/homeless.htm>

BRAGAW/ABBOTT EXTENSION

DOT/PF and DOWL Engineering have put out a summer newsletter for the Abbott Loop Extension project (Bragaw extension). The newsletter can be found at <http://www.dowl.com/projects/abbottloop/pdfale/flyer804.pdf>. Because of public comments received to date, DOT/PF has made the following changes to the draft plan: narrowed the driving lanes from 12'-14' to 11.'5-12', added sidewalks and pathways to accommodate pedestrian traffic, included bike lanes on the driving surface, and incorporated the 42" water pipeline into the 1000' of bridges to help preserve the wetlands and multiple creek crossings.

According to the newsletter the project is on schedule with public meetings planned this fall to present the 65% plan review and construction to begin in the summer of 2005. Unfortunately, missing from the newsletter was any discussion of the need and public desire to extend Dowling to connect with this project to create a much needed east-west connector. The HOCC encourages you to stay involved and continue to provide public input. Other project documents can be found at <http://www.dowl.com/projects/abbottloop/documents.htm>.

O'MALLEY ROAD UPGRADE

The Environmental Assessment and Draft Air Quality Conformity Documents are complete for the O'Malley Road project and ready for public review. The design alternatives are whether to use a center turning lane or whether to construct islands at key intersections. Up to date information is available online at www.hillsideroads.com

All comments are due by August 30th and should be sent to:

Lounsbury & Associates, Inc.
Loren Becia, P.E., Project Manager
723 West 6th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

or email to: comments@brooksandassociates.info

TURNAGAIN VIEW ESTATES REZONING

The developer of the property at the corner of DeArmoun and Cange has applied for a rezoning from R-1SL to R-1SL to change the special limitations that are in place for this property. The results would be a reduction of the required 40 foot vegetative buffer along DeArmoun Road to 20 feet. The property is 1.23 acres. The hearing is September 13th, case number 2004-127.

LAKE OTIS GRAVEL PIT

The owner of the Lake Otis Gravel Pit has obtained approval of his geotechnical (slope restoration) plan and had received a fill and grading permit for beginning restoration of the gravel pit. However, the council has been informed the developer is presently under a stop work order because of bonding issues.

No word from the Municipality on the date of a possible meeting with the public regarding status of the development and outstanding concerns.

ANOTHER MONA ST. REZONE

Two lots adjacent to the Lake Otis Gravel Pit on Mona Street have been proposed to be rezoned from R-6 to R-1. They are presently 1/3 acre properties and the total acreage of the two lots combined is .73 acres. The hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission isn't until November 1st, so we will invite the developer to the October council meeting to discuss his proposal.

LARGE ANIMAL (EQUESTRIAN) ORDINANCE

The Planning and Zoning Commission hearing is presently scheduled for September 20th, case number 2004-137. At present, the Planning Department's draft does not reflect the community's viewpoint, has flaws, and we continue to work with all the parties to educate and come to consensus before the hearing.

A pre-hearing organizational meeting is being organized. If you wish to attend, please let the council know by email or phone to be added to the list.

HUFFMAN RD. REZONING

Case number 2004-132 is scheduled for a public hearing on September 13th. It is a rezoning from R-6 to R-1 of the property adjacent to Huffman Rd., one property east of Gregory Road, 2201 and 2237 Huffman Road, 4.62 acres. The developer's representative was present at the August meeting and we discussed the council and neighbor's concerns regarding the wetlands present on the site and minimum size of proposed lots.

CANDIDATE'S FORUM

The Huffman/O'Malley Council has joined with Abbott Loop, Bear Valley, Basher, Glen Alps, Hillside-East, Mid-Hillside, Rabbit Creek, and HALO (Home and Landowners Organization, Inc.) to sponsor a candidates' forum on Thursday October 7 at O'Malley's On The Green, from 7-10 p.m. Just giving advance notice so you can put it on your calendars.

Summer is a great time to meet your neighbors! Have you invited them to join you and attend a meeting? Now would be a good time! Community Council is basic government at the neighborhood level, and we need more involvement. Invite your neighbors to the next meeting.