

Huffman/O'Malley Community Council
It's your HOCC!
July 2009

E-Newsletter

June Meeting Recap

As you can imagine, the Hillside District Plan was the main point of discussion at the June meeting. Read "HDP Hearing" for details.

Construction has begun on the Huffman roundabouts! This is the State project intersection at the corner of Huffman and Old Seward. Traffic patterns will change frequently, and pedestrian use and parking will be difficult during this construction. The other three roundabouts will begin next summer.

HDP Hearing

Unlike the crowds that formed before public testimony hearings during recent weeks at the Anchorage Assembly's meeting, there were no residents carrying signs or lining the lawns and library entrance at the June 15th Planning and Zoning Commission's Hillside District Plan hearing. Instead, the Assembly Chambers were filled with the familiar faces of Hillside neighbors, community council presidents, HALO representatives and families bringing their school-aged children to learn about their government "of the people".

The HDP is integral to the future of the Hillside and, most especially, our Council area. It was good to see so many other area residents in the chambers for this meeting. Issues of concern were addressed by homeowners who lived across the entire Hillside. It appeared that residents of the Huffman/O'Malley Community Council (or as it is referenced in the HDP as the "Furrow Creek" area) comprised the majority of people who testified and who also voiced the same concerns that our council has tried to make known during the public comment period. President Christine Monette's testimony was well received by the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, who asked pointed questions about the Furrow Creek history and the changes that would occur under this draft plan.

Residents spoke passionately about the beauty, wildlife, and rural character of our area and how those unique features of the Hillside may be negatively and drastically altered forever by the HDP proposed recommendations. A few residents had positive things to say about the Plan. However, many spoke about grave concerns regarding the push for higher density on the Hillside and how that could impact our rural roads, on-site water/septic systems, property taxes, green spaces, fragile infrastructure and abundant wildlife, especially in the Furrow Creek area.

The next Planning and Zoning Commission discussion on the HDP is slated for August 17, 2009. Commission members will deliberate on issues related to the HDP hearing

draft, previous public testimony, and public comments submitted to the Commission. Questions will also be asked of Municipal staff that worked on the HDP along with those consultants who were hired to assist. The hearing is open to the public; however, no public testimony will be allowed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The presence of HOCC members and other Hillside residents in the audience may help reinforce our commitment to this process.

The PZC will submit their recommendations to the Assembly, who will hold a public hearing on this document. This final phase before the Assembly will be another opportunity for the community to submit comments on that version, either online or at the meeting.

Hot Button Issue

Where Do We Go From Here?

Where do we go from here with the Hillside District Plan? Attend the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) meeting currently scheduled for August 17th at the Loussac Library at 6:30 pm. Even though public testimony is closed, PZC members will be deliberating on the HDP and will allow responses from Municipality representatives and consultants in an **issue/response** format. The PZC will review documents, input, previous testimony, and then submit recommendations to the Assembly.

To get more information on proposed ordinances and amendments to ordinances, go to the Planning Department's Web site at www.muni.org/planning/index.cfm, click on CASES ONLINE, and then type in the case number. Once you have located the case, you can view the **staff report** that may list the complete version of the proposed ordinance/amendment or additional reports related to the case. This is supposed to be available online 10 days prior to the meeting. To see the HDP case, type in case # 2009-090 in the **Cases Online** webpage (<http://munimaps.muni.org/planning/home3.htm>) and you can either review previous comments, the staff report, or submit an online comment.

To see how deliberations are carried out, study a previous case. A good example case is 2007-153 for viewing the issue/response format. This example shows the issues that PZC needed to address or issues that needed to be responded to by the Municipality before making their final decisions and recommendations to the Assembly.

Eventually, the HDP with the accompanying PZC recommendations will be placed on the Assembly's agenda. Public testimony will be allowed on the HDP at that meeting. Individuals will be allowed to voice their opinions either online or in person at the public hearing before the Assembly deliberates and votes on the final draft.

How long will the process take? Well that all depends on when the PZC submits recommendations and how long it takes to get the HDP on the Assembly's agenda. The Huffman/ O'Malley Community Council will send out an email and newsletter to alert those on our distribution and membership lists. Individuals can also visit the

Municipality of Anchorage's Web site at www.muni.org/homepage/index.cfm and click on the Assembly Clerk link at the top, which will take you to the Assembly's webpage at www.muni.org/assembly2/index.cfm From this webpage you can find out about Assembly Meeting procedures by clicking on the link **Meeting Procedures** (<http://www.muni.org/assembly2/meeting.cfm>) and you can look at the Assembly's Calendar to check on the HDP at <http://www.muni.org/clerk1/Calendar.cfm>.

If you want to contact all Assembly members at once regarding your views on the HDP, you can email them at WWMAS@ci.anchorage.ak.us . Our Hillside Assembly representatives are Jennifer Johnston JJohnston@gci.net and Chris Birch ChrisBirch@gci.net.

So what can you do at this point? Individuals who still wish to make their thoughts known regarding the HDP or at least track the progress of the HDP can choose among the following as it winds its way through the PZC meeting and Assembly:

- Attend the PZC meeting on August 17th;
- Submit comments directly or online to PZC, those received before July 1 will probably be reviewed and included in the packet at the PZC meeting slated for Aug 17th; comments submitted directly or online to the PZC after July 1st will still be passed along to the Assembly (go to the PZC web page at <http://www.muni.org/planning/Boards.cfm#Planning> for instructions or call them for further information);
- Individuals can email their Assembly representatives Chris Birch and Jennifer Johnston;
- Attend the Assembly's hearing (possibly testify) when HDP is placed on the agenda; and
- Watch for updates and information from HOCC via the E-NEWS!

We hope residents and property or business owners on the Hillside will make their views known and will continue to support the Hillside and the HOCC by attending the PZC meeting or Assembly hearings as the HDP becomes finalized.

HALO Update

The Hillside Area Landowners Organization will not be meeting in July. The August meeting will be on Thursday, August 2, 2009. HALO usually meets on the first Thursday of every month at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center, corner of Hillside & O'Malley, starting at 7 PM. Visitors are always welcome. Bobbi Wells will be presenting information at the August meeting. Bobbi is a long time Alaskan who has been tremendously active in the Chugiak/Eagle River Area, and has worked on both their roads, drainage plans, and their area District Plan.

Question of the Month

Should Elmore Road be pushed through? This is an idea that has been discussed for some time, and may be gaining traction in the minds of some Assembly members. Having an Elmore thoroughfare would shorten commute times but would greatly increase traffic through our neighborhoods. It would run through Section 16/Ruth Arcand Park and includes two very steep hills.

Should the Municipality extend Elmore Road? Yes or no? Let us know! Send your thoughts to hoccpresident@gmail.com.

Welcome New Members

HOCC is excited about our new members! While everyone living or owning businesses within our council boundaries is in the HOCC area, dues paying members are what keep the council going. A \$5 yearly contribution for membership ensures that we are able to continue protecting and defending our neighborhoods, and allows us to better communicate with you. We can of course accept larger contributions to cover operating costs. Thanks for joining us!

HOCC July Meeting

Plan now to attend the July meeting on Thursday, July 16th. Remember that we always meet on the third Thursday of each month at 7 pm. Our meeting location is the Christian Church of Anchorage, corner Lake Otis and O'Malley. Entry is on the O'Malley side of the building, and we meet downstairs.

Are your neighbors members of HOCC? Have you renewed this year? Has your information changed? Use this form as needed!

**Yes, I want to become a contributing member of HOCC
Enclosed is my contribution (\$5 minimum) for this year.**

Name: _____

Physical Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: (h) _____ (other) _____
E-Mail _____

Comments & Concerns:

**Mail to: Huffman/O'Malley Community Council, 1120 Huffman Road Suite 24, PMB 420,
Anchorage, AK 99515**