

**Huffman/O'Malley Community Council**  
***It's your HOCC!***  
**February 2010**

# Newsletter

## **January Meeting Recap: What you missed**

There was a lot of good information shared at our last meeting, including an update on the Huffman Road and SAWIP projects. We also learned about plans advocated in a recent visit from the White House's Director of Housing Henry Cisneros, to provide "work force housing." "Work force housing" is the new national code word for low-income housing, designed for "police, firefighters, nurses, teachers, and other low-income occupations."

The "Save our Furrow Creek Neighborhood!" petition is still up. Have you signed yet? Have you told everybody you know to add their names? Go to <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/FurrowCreek/> to find the petition. Uniting together, our voices must be heard.

*Help us save our Furrow Creek Neighborhood!  
Sign the Petition NOW!*

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## **Dues are Due!**

Dues are due every new year, and while we hope everyone will "re-up", it is mandatory for Steering Committee members. If any of your contact information has changed, make sure to give the HOCC Secretary an update.

Happy New Year!

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## **Hot Button Issue** **Hillside District Plan - Public Hearing March 23rd!**

The Planning and Zoning Commission has released a 30-page document of recommendations for the Assembly. The website <http://www.hillsidedistrictplan.com/> has finally been updated with PZC Resolution

2009-047 for Case 2009-090, and the Assembly Public Hearing date has been set for March 23rd. This document has many of the same recurring issues we have been protesting, including calling **all** of our Hillside area soils either "somewhat limited", "limited" or "very limited" for onsite waste water systems. And, unfortunately, the "Furrow Creek Transition Area" is still included. Go to: <http://www.hillsidedistrictplan.com/publications.htm#PZCresolution> to read this document for yourself.

The majority of the Huffman/O'Malley Community Council area is zoned R-6 suburban residential district (large lot) according to Title 21 (Land Use Code). This Code, 21.40.080.A. states that R-6 zoning is "intended for those land areas where large lots or acreage development is desirable as an adjunct to the more typical urban and suburban residential zoning districts. The R-6 district is designed to encourage low-density residential development while at the same time protecting and enhancing those physical and environmental features which add to the desirability of suburban residential living."

As regular readers know, the Huffman/O'Malley Community Council has been involved in the Hillside District Plan since its inception. Our goal was to protect our existing development while guiding future development. When we first learned of the plans to push higher density development in our area, we first determined that this was not what our residents wanted, then we promised to stand firm in our commitment to protecting our neighborhoods and do everything we could to preserve this established, large lot residential area. Unfortunately, it appears that others outside of our council area are willing to "toss us under the bus" by giving this area up in the name of compromise, not understanding the precedent that will be set that will someday affect their own neighborhoods.

In a hypothetical situation, in R-6 Suburban residential district (large lot), a 19-acre parcel could be developed to hold 15 homes under existing Title 21 (Land Use Code). In a PUD (Planned Unit Development) allowable under existing Title 21, that same parcel could be developed to 23 homes, with existing wetlands and other development obstacles utilized as common space. Under the scenario offered by the proposed Hillside District Plan, that same 19-acre parcel could be developed to hold 57 homes at 3 DUA ( Dwelling Units per Acre) to 76 homes at 4 DUA.

Plan to attend our February meeting, where we will be finalizing our response to #2009-047. Put March 23rd on your calendar, and tell your friends and neighbors how vital it is for everyone to attend. Not everyone needs to speak, but we must show strength through numbers of our absolute opposition to the creation of the "Furrow Creek Transition Area." This is where we will need each and every resident of the HOCC area to fill every seat in the Assembly Chambers.

Also, if you have not yet signed the online petition to Save Furrow Creek, please do so right now and have your family, friends and neighbors add their names with yours. Go to [www.ipetitions.com/petition/FurrowCreek/](http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/FurrowCreek/) to sign the petition, and watch for the notice of hearing date. Remember that this is our last opportunity to effect change and protect our existing properties!

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## SAWIP Update

Work on the South Anchorage Water Improvements Projects will begin February 15th. GMC, the contractors for this project, have asked to be able to do the creek portion of the project during the winter freeze, and will be working from Feb 15 to

March 15. Beginning in May the rest of the project will begin, starting from the creek and heading South. This line will be 10' deep, and will affect the West side of Elmore Road. Construction will be done in increments of less than 300'.

This SAWIP project will bring a high-pressure water line along Elmore Road to DeArmoun, where it will head uphill. It will include the addition of seven fire hydrants along Elmore Road. It also includes two massive water tanks, one on the corner of Elmore and Huffman. The stated goal of this project is to improve water pressure in other areas, including the area of Old Seward and Klatt.

For more information regarding these SAWIP scheduled projects, please go to [http://www.awwu.biz/public/project/sawip/project\\_frame.htm](http://www.awwu.biz/public/project/sawip/project_frame.htm)

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## KABATA - Another View

Diane Holmes provided HOCC information regarding the Anchorage Citizens Coalition (ACC) concerns with the proposed Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority (KABATA) Knik Arm Crossing (KAC).

1. KAC's funding will require a substantial "risk sharing agreement" with the state in order to be feasible. Jamie Kenworthy has created a fact sheet regarding his concerns and whether tolls would be sufficient to cover costs.

2. KABATA's maps show a savings of 7 minutes drive time for a trip to Houston, and an additional 11 minutes of drive time to Wasilla.

3. KABATA's plans rely on the hope that the traffic would reach the numbers currently using the Glenn Highway within three years.

4. The proposed bridge route would eliminate part of an existing Government Hill neighborhood and direct heavy traffic, including trucks, through downtown Anchorage.

5. While the KAC would open industrial lands across the inlet, there would also be a significant loss of revenue from these industrial lands, resulting not only in reduced property values, but the erosion of Anchorage as the economic capitol of the state.

6. KABATA claims that Anchorage is running out of room to grow, yet the 2020 Comprehensive Plan calls for infill and redevelopment in areas currently supported by infrastructure. The economics of infill far outweigh the costs to create a new city across the Knik Arm, and would require state funds to support new schools and public safety services.

The ACC believes that, while some Knik Arm Crossing will certainly be needed in the future, it is not yet economical. Their Web site can be found at <http://www.accalaska.org/>.

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## Huffman Road Reconstruction Project Update

Steve Nobel, one of our neighbors and the DOWL/HKM representative, attended the January meeting with Kelly Peterson of DOT and Scott Thomas of Muni Traffic and Safety. Steve reported that he has discussed the current maintenance

problems, especially along the section of Huffman Road from Lake Otis to Pintail and he indicated there have been commitments to address this situation.

The project will go to bid late this summer, and work is expected to commence in 2011. Unfortunately, the website at <http://www.hillsideroads.com> still has the 2008 designs posted. There have been no changes to address the Council's roundabout concerns, especially regarding pedestrian issues. Roundabouts eliminate all pedestrian signals and, while there are fewer pedestrians using Dowling, the Huffman business area sees tremendous pedestrian and bicycle use year around.

The local evening news, KTUU, did a news report in September 2009 on the Dowling Roundabout, which was rated the second "least safe intersection" in Anchorage. While representatives have touted the lower severity of accidents at roundabout intersections, they have not also discussed that in some cases, roundabout intersections can increase the number of less severe accidents (such as in the case of the Dowling Roundabout). Steve explained that everyone is constantly trying to improve the design of roundabouts to address these issues.

A news report on February 2, 2010 by KTVA also highlighted another issue regarding pedestrian safety and roundabouts, especially for those who are blind or visually impaired. An interesting solution offered in the news broadcast was the possibility of adding *pedestrian crossing signals*.

Right-of-way acquisition is underway. You can still add your comments about this project at <http://www.hillsideroads.com/huffmansubmit.htm>. Contact information for the design consultants at DOWL HKM and the State can also be found on the homepage at [www.hillsideroads.com/huffmanscope.htm](http://www.hillsideroads.com/huffmanscope.htm).

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## Upcoming Meeting

Put it on your calendar now! Our next meeting will be held Thursday, February 18, 2010. We meet the third Thursday monthly at 7 PM, at the Christian Church of Anchorage, corner of Lake Otis and O'Malley. Enter on the O'Malley side, come downstairs, and enjoy some cookies and conversation.

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## By-Laws Revision

HOCC member Mark Schroeder is working on a By-Laws revision for the Council. Your Steering Committee members will be collaborating through Google Docs. If you have any ideas you'd like to share, contact either Mark or the Secretary at [hoccsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:hoccsecretary@gmail.com). We hope to have the revision ready to be posted in March and voted on at our annual meeting in April.

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**President's Message:  
By Christine Monette, HOCC President**

**Do you know how your Community Council works?**

Sometimes, we just assume everyone knows how community councils work. After all, community councils were created in the original Municipality Charter, ensuring that "we, the people" have a real say in our government. Anchorage is the only city in the USA that has this form of grassroots government involvement.

The Muni is divided into 32 individual areas, each represented by a community council. The duties of these councils are to provide input into decision making, an acknowledgement of the fact that no one knows an area as well as its residents.

The HOCC operates with a "Steering Committee" form of representation. Each year at the annual meeting, those members in attendance elect a Steering Committee. That new Steering Committee then chooses Officers. In public, our council is represented by the President, and, as in any body, the President is responsible for representing the interests of the people.

The Steering Committee meets each month, and these meetings are open to the public. Anyone can offer their opinion or ask for assistance at a meeting or by contacting either myself or another member of the Steering Committee between meetings. Members of the Steering Committee represent the interests of the body, answer queries, and respond to the variety of communication with our government. These include input on variances, platting decisions, zoning questions, and notices from the RCA. We are tasked with putting aside our own interests and representing the will of the people.

We are often the first contact when an individual sees a problem, and strive to maintain a good working relationship with all of the Muni departments. We also, in most cases, are the first place to discover upcoming issues that will affect our area. Attending monthly meetings will keep you informed as to what is going on in your neighborhood.

While we will need you to help us during the Public Hearing for the Hillside District Plan, we would also like to get to know you at one of our meetings. Please plan to attend.

When newcomers move into your neighborhood, please make sure to welcome them and let them know that they are now residents of the Huffman/O'Malley Community Council!

Christine Monette, [hoccpresident@gmail.com](mailto:hoccpresident@gmail.com)

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**Items of Interest?**

Do you have an item of local interest you would like to share? Does your Homeowner's Association, Road Service Area or Neighborhood group have information that needs to get out? Is there a particular concern on your street? Let us know! We can put your short pieces in the body of the newsletter, or link to longer items. Email your items to [hoccpresident@gmail.com](mailto:hoccpresident@gmail.com).

You can also attend our meetings and share your concerns in person. Community Councils exist to serve the community!

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## Question of the Month

We hear there are a number of lots that have experienced drainage issues in the last few years following construction changes. If you are one of these properties affected by a road improvement or new development, would you let us know? Some lots that had historically been dry became wet after the Elmore Road reconstruction ten years ago or so, and the Pintail improvements have caused other issues. We understand there are a number of other locations where this may also be an issue. You may remain anonymous if you wish. We just need to know how area-wide this issue has become. Please email [hoccpresident@gmail.com](mailto:hoccpresident@gmail.com) with your information.

*Thanks for your input on our question about road maintenance. We are working on addressing your comments and concerns, and are starting to get some good promises from "up above".*

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### HALO Update

The Home and Landowners Organization, Inc. will host a Candidate Forum on Thursday, March 4, 7 pm at O'Malley's on the Green. All candidates for all offices representing Hillside have been invited to attend this event, where questions will be asked by the audience. Put this date on your calendar now, so you can be part of the action!

HALO Board members have decided to support the proposed Hillside District Plan, especially in allowing cluster systems for septic and water. Unfortunately, this means that HALO has also decided to support allowing increased density development in the Furrow Creek "Transition Area".

HALO always meets on the first Thursday monthly, 7 p.m., at the Holy Spirit Retreat, corner Hillside and O'Malley. For additional information on HALO (Home and Landowners Organization) please visit [www.anchoragehalo.org](http://www.anchoragehalo.org)

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### Just a Random Thought...

Traffic Engineers are now addressing the major issue of dangers of pedestrian crossings on roundabouts. One idea floated is the potential of adding crossing signals. Isn't that called a "signaled" intersection?

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## Welcome New Members!

Thanks so for your support! Dues paying members are vital to our mission of two-way conversation and grassroots community input.

If you are not yet a dues-paying member, simply use the form at the bottom of this newsletter. Membership fee is only \$5 per person each year, and yes, we do accept larger contributions (please see instructions below). Your donations pay for a gratuity for our meeting location, community outreach events, office supplies and our priority - this newsletter! For our "snail mail" residents, you can become an "email person" by just letting us know, and save us some postage in the process!

And remember to contact us with your comments and concerns. We like that "two-way" thing!

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

**Name:**

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**Physical Address:**

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**Mailing Address:**

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**Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (other) \_\_\_\_\_**

**E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_**

**Comments & Concerns:**

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

**Please note:** Donations in a higher amount are greatly appreciated and accepted. For donations to be tax deductible, please make your check out to: FCC (Federation of Community Councils) on behalf of "Huffman O'Malley Community Council". Please send this donation to the above mailing address and a tax deductible receipt will be provided. Thank You!