

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

Newsletter

August Meeting Recap:

Did you attend the August meeting? If so, you heard about the wrap up of the SAWIP project, the current status of the Huffman Road upgrades and the loss of 30 parking spaces at Carrs, and the changes to Chugach Electric's "Abbott Loop" Substation. This large facility will be crammed onto a R-6 lot at the corner of Hane and O'Malley, and apparently is needed to provide additional power for growing Hillside. This has become a controversial project, removing residential property and creating an "industrial" facility in an established neighborhood. Read "Hot Button Issue" for more information.

SAWIP Phase II Construction

As promised, most of the construction of the new water main was completed before school started. What is left is several locations that still need pavement, and finalizing and charging the lines. The fire hydrants should be fully charged this month. Residents, be sure to contact your homeowner's insurance carrier and ask for the reduced insurance rates that come with local fire hydrants!

Construction on the 5-million-gallon water tank at the corner of Elmore and Huffman will begin next spring. For more information on this project, visit www.awwu.biz/SAWIP

Hot Button Issue **New Chugach Substation and Tower on O'Malley**

After an interesting presentation from Chugach Electric, the HOCC learned of several more changes to the proposed "Abbott Loop" substation planned for the intersection of Hane and O'Malley, next to the Greek Orthodox church. Some improvements were made, including placing the 85' tall communications tower on a pole instead of a lattice-style structure. The communications tower was a surprise to the Council, an addition only mentioned in July. Chugach representatives are unable to say how much communication equipment might eventually be added to this tower.

With the exception of existing scrub willow, alder and devil's claw around the perimeter, most of the existing vegetation will be removed from the entire site, as the mature trees would cause potential danger to the substation. Minimal buffering is planned, including placing some evergreen trees in areas where they would not grow to become "danger trees".

Throughout the Chugach presentations, they have admitted that this lot is barely adequate for their purposes. In fact, this location is outside of their original search parameters.

The Council has been concerned about the inadequate lot dimensions since this project was announced. Additionally, this construction will replace a R-6 residence in an established residential area with an industrial-type facility. Lighting and noise are expected pollution concerns, as are property values.

Jim Rainforth, one of the immediate neighbors from Hane Street, brought a petition signed by every household in that area asking that the Chugach "Abbott Loop" substation be moved to a more appropriate location. In addition, members from the church have circulated their own similar petition. The HOCC will support the neighborhood in this effort.

Case #2010-087, the communications tower, will be by Planning Department decision only, without public testimony. Comments online are due by Sept. 7; a decision will be made by Sept. 10. Case #2010-105 will be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission at their meeting on Monday, September 13. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm at the Assembly Chambers of the Loussac Library.

Online comments can be submitted on both cases. To access the comments, go to <http://munimaps.muni.org/planning/home3.htm> and enter the Case number in item #2 "Search by Case". There will be a "submit comments" active link at the top right of the page.

All area residents are encouraged to attend the PZC meeting and to submit comments on these cases.

Huffman Road Reconstruction Project Update

Plans are still on to begin construction of the Huffman Road Roundabouts next spring. One of these will be at the new Walgreens, and two at the New Seward. Steve Nobel reported that the right-of-way has been acquired on all but two properties. The design is complete, and the goal is to go to bid this fall-winter.

Most impacted of the local businesses is Carrs, who will lose 30 parking spaces, but all of the local businesses and neighbors are concerned about construction impacts, especially for local traffic and the intermittent loss of water. At times during construction, AFD will either need to park their equipment elsewhere or rely on other fire stations for responses. The Huffman Road project is receiving priority funding from the State.

HOCC is still extremely concerned with pedestrian impacts on this high-alternative traffic area, especially for children, young families, and handicapped access. These back-to-back roundabouts have no protections for safe pedestrian crossings. Our concerns have been acknowledged, but there is no way to provide safe pedestrian access in roundabouts. Their goal is to move traffic, not pedestrians.

Information should be posted soon at www.hillsideroads.com/huffmanscope.htm. Comments are still being accepted at <http://www.hillsideroads.com/huffmansubmit.htm>.

Upcoming Meeting

Put it on your calendar now! Our next meeting will be held Thursday, September 16, 2010. Remember that HOCC always meets on 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.

President's Message: By Christine Monette, HOCC President A Call To Action: Get Involved!

Everyday people say to me, "why bother speaking up? It doesn't matter anyway". I can absolutely say "*it does make all the difference in the world.*" **Joining together** to defend your neighborhoods and area against forces wanting to effect change that may drastically affect your lifestyle, property values, and quality of life, **works**. The Huffman O'Malley Community Council proved this recently when we successfully fought the battle against bringing city water and sewer into the area known as Furrow Creek, a move that would have allowed for high density development and priced most residents out of their homes. We won that battle, but the War is still waging on, with new issues every new week. We need **all your voices** to be heard! There are many ways to get involved even if you have very busy lives....

We would of course love to see you at our Council meetings, open to the public, and held every third Thursday of the month between 7pm and 9pm, in the basement of the Church on the corner of Lake Otis and O'Malley Roads. Join us for informative presentations, spirited discussions and, of course, refreshments. It is a great way to meet your neighbors, and stay informed on what is happening in your neighborhoods and surrounding area before the heavy equipment rolls in with "no warning".

If your schedule is such that you can not make our meetings you can still stay informed and get involved by **reading** and **reacting** to the Council newsletter. A perfect example of this is our current HOT BUTTON issue for this month. This is a proposed addition to the Hillside that will have a lasting effect on the area, even if you just drive by it on your way up or down O'Malley Road. The utility had approached the Council about this project, telling us that the neighbors were okay with the new construction. None of those neighbors were in attendance that night, and as a result it took another month before we discovered that no, the neighborhood was NOT "okay".

Do you work swings or nights? You can still have your voice heard! On issues such as the substation, we will give you instructions on how to make your voice heard. You can

comment on the substation, for example, either online or by attending the PZC meeting on September 13. The important point is for each and every one of us to make our feelings known, and to work together on these vital issues.

We at the Community Council are happy to represent the interests of the council area residents and members, but we can not do it alone. We need the involvement of each and everyone of you, even it is just simply submitting a comment on a website. The more people stay informed and involved the better to protect your property and quality of life and effect positive change for your neighborhoods.

Become an integral part of your own destiny and get involved in YOUR Community Council.

Christine Monette, hoccpresident@gmail.com

Items of Interest?

Do you have an item of local interest you would like to share? Does your Homeowners 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 hoccpreservicesident@gmail.com.

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

HALO Update

The next meeting of Home and Landowner's Organization, Inc. will be held Thursday, October 7th. HALO always meets on the first Thursday monthly, 7 p.m., generally at the Holy Spirit Retreat, corner Hillside and O'Malley.

This month, however, HALO will hold their annual Candidate Forum, and the location will be at O'Malley's on the Green. This event will feature candidates from the major Hillside interest races. Refreshments will be available and everyone is encouraged to attend. Written questions from the audience will be a highlight of the event, and we can meet the people who want to represent us in Juneau. Plan to attend and bring your family and neighbors.

For additional information on HALO please visit www.anchoragehalo.org

Just a Random Thought...

The southbound lane of Elmore Road is lovely! Brand new pavement, no frost heaves or splitting. And it has a good base which should prevent those same road hazards from occurring again for a while.

The northbound lane of Elmore Road is an altogether different story. Although major crevices have been filled in, the frost heaves and water damage are still too obvious.

Is the reason we do not have a complete good road in both directions a wonderful example of government efficiency... or government inefficiency?

Welcome New Members!

Thanks you 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 \$10 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, because YES you can make a difference if you get involved. Feel free to pass this e-Newsletter on to your neighbors, then remind them to join.

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

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!