

# UNIVERSITY AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## ~~~UPDATE~~~

### SEPTEMBER 2004

#### **GENERAL MEETING:**

Wednesday, September 8, 7:00P, College Gate Elementary School Library, 3101 Sunflower Street

#### **PROPOSED AGENDA:**

- **Piper Street Extension:** Brad Doggett, DOWL Engineers
- **Bragaw/Abbott Loop Extension Update:** Robert Kniefel, DOWL Engineers
- **UAA Facility Master Plan Update:** Michael W. Smith, Director, Facilities Planning & Construction
- **University Lake Dog Park Update:**
- **Annual UACC Election of Officers:** (\*nominated slate below)
- **President's Farewell Report:** Tim Neale

\* Proposed Slate of officers:

President - Craig Valentine

Vice President - Jena Fowler

Co-Secretary/Treasurer - Betty Adkison/ TBA

Member-at-large #1 - Susan Klein

Member-at-large #2 - Michelle Sturdy, Terri MacDonald

[Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor.]

#### **JUNE 2 MEETING NEWS:**

• **Anchorage Police Department:** APD Sgt. Ken Spadafora appeared at the June 2 UACC meeting, taking questions from council members regarding crime in the council area. His strongest words of advice among his extended remarks were:

- Call APD if anything looks suspicious. If APD doesn't know about it, nothing can be done.

- Neighbors need to look out for one another.

Some calls that come into APD have a higher priority than others, thus the reason it may take a while to respond to a nonviolent crime. If a burglary is reported as being in progress, APD responds quickly. If a burglary is discovered afterwards by the resident it may take APD several hours to respond. The resident has returned, the home is now secure, and the report moves down on the response list. any of Anchorage's problems with juvenile crimes are not necessarily a problem of youth violence, rather a society problem. When juveniles are picked up by APD they attempt to locate a parent. Failing that, the juvenile is taken to Covenant House where s/he is released within a few hours. Society must ask lawmakers for necessary changes - requests coming from the community rather than the police officers. Senator Ellis is asking the state to help fund programs such as the National Guard Youth Corps program on Fort Richardson in order to curb youth violence. The purpose of Sgt. Spadafora coming to the meeting was to point our community council in the right direction, and to be the UACC point of contact when questions arise.

• **Composting Dog Feces:** Crystal Leonetti, with the Dept. of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service, Anchorage Field Office, presented information about a successful project in Fairbanks that converts dog feces into useable fertilizer. Within a compost enclosure, one part carbon can be mixed with two parts feces; the mixture must get hot enough to kill the bacteria (usually 175 degrees for at least three days). **NO ODOR** occurs with the process. The resulting material can be used for flower gardens, lawns, containers, and baskets. Food gardens should not have this soil mixture used in it. Leonetti is looking for local volunteers who have dog kennels that would be willing to pilot an Anchorage area project. One kennel in South Anchorage has agreed to participate.

• **Anchorage Transportation Myths and Realities:** Cheryl Richardson, Anchorage Citizens Coalition, gave this topic a Power Point presentation. The format was to present the myth, then her opinion of the reality:

**Goal:** The goal of Anchorage Transportation is to make sure people and goods move around town. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is the key implementation tool to achieve transportation.

- **Myth #1: Anchorage Roads are congested...** Reality: According to the Texas Transportation Institute, Anchorage scored 75th out of 75 in its survey of city road congestion.
- **Myth #2: Building Roads will relieve congestion...** Reality: More roads create more traffic. Nationwide, road lane miles are up 14.8% when population is up 11.4%.
- **Myth #3: Can't use transit to relieve congestion...** Reality: Portland metro area has about 3.5% transit usage • Portland city area has about 17% transit usage • Portland Central Business District (CBD) has 27% transit usage • Goal for Portland CBD work trips is 40% transit usage
- **Myth #4: People won't walk...** Reality: Americans need more exercise such as walking. People will walk when the walking conditions are safe and convenient.
- **Myth #5: Anchorage Buses drive around empty...** Reality: Anchorage buses average more than 30 passengers per hour. Anchorage has not kept up with the population growth - population up 20% and bus hours down 20%. Transit growth rate is higher than vehicle growth rate.
- **Myth #6: Anchorage hasn't built any new roads for 20 years...** Reality: Numbers from Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) show we have 300 more lane miles in last 20 years. Numerous projects during this period have added lane miles to the system.
- **Myth #7: Seward Highway Freeway through Fairview will relieve congestion...** Reality: People drive into town, not through town, so a freeway will not help. Traffic will jam up when leaving the freeway.
- **Myth #8: Building Bragaw (Abbott Loop Extension) will relieve congestion...** Reality: Most Hillside cars are traveling to downtown or midtown, not to the U-MED zone. No evidence is available showing the NE - SW travel will be greater than travel to Downtown or Midtown.

Richardson suggested the Anchorage Comprehensive Plan may need to be revisited to include ideas for the SW area of UACC regarding higher density and neighborhood retail. She visited the East 42nd Avenue / Piper Street project area and had the following comments:

- Minimize the pavement width. Wider roads increase speeds, severity of crashes and injuries.
- The proposal to build a 6' tall buffer fence along the proposed East 40th Avenue between Piper and Folker Streets is insufficient for the residential neighborhood on the south.

Vegetation is needed.

- Consider neighborhood traffic circles to reduce speeds, relieve congestion, and provide safe pedestrian walking routes.

Brian Whittle, Assembly member, noted we need to come up with innovative ways (i.e. U-MED bus pass) to solve transportation problems; focus on combinations of ideas and encouraging businesses to help.

• **Piper Street Extension:** A council member gave an overview of the proposed Piper Street Extension between Tudor and Providence Drive. Attendees were informed that this neighborhood is very interested in becoming a Renaissance Zone to include a Walkable Community. Piper Street bisects this residential area, and its design will set the tone for this future project. [Sep 1 UPDATE: The Piper Street Extension's First Phase construction commenced August 2. The paved, lit trail was removed to extend Piper St. from East 40th Avenue to AK Providence Medical Center's West Access Road. Construction is projected to be completed by late October. Until then, pedestrian/bike traffic through this area is restricted to a path extending north from Dale Street through the Prov campus, the Prov East Access Road or via Lake Otis Parkway. Construction of the water line is on schedule and will be completed by Oct. 1. Construction of the East 40th to Providence Drive road is set for next summer.]

## **OTHER NEWS:**

• **Regional Psychiatric Residential Treatment Center for Youths:** June 15, UACC's Board met with CORNELL COMPANY to hear its preliminary proposal to place an Anchorage residential long-term psychiatric treatment facility for male youths within the UACC. No decision is imminent. The two UACC locations under consideration are: 1) The Alaska Day Surgery/Medical building on Laurel Street, across from the Blood Bank; 2) A new building project on the Mental Health Trust property SE of Lake Otis and 36th. A third location is proposed for Downtown.

• **University Lake Dog Park:** A 2003 ordinance creating dog park locations within the MOA 'sunsets' at the end of September unless renewed by the Assembly. A public hearing is scheduled for the Sep 7 Assembly agenda. UACC is concerned about current practices at University Lake that impact the park and its multi-users. The UACC board wrote about some concerns to the MOA Animal Control Advisory Board (ACAB), the Mayor, and the Assembly on May 24, with copies to other MOA officials and the Parks & Rec. Dept. The letter was in response to the ACAB's Mid-Year dog park report in March to those same officials that included inaccurate remarks attributed to the UACC and APU presidents. UACC's letter included: • the effect of designating a dog park in an institutional/residential neighborhood park that had been denied a Master Plan by the MOA, citing funding • Little public parking for dog park users • Erecting a fence between APU property and the dog park • Protecting waterfowl, which includes nesting grebes and a visiting loon • Loss of vegetation, and erosion • Inherent problems with previously designated multi use trails • Interfering with or ignoring the "Friends of University Lake" rehabilitation efforts from the preceding ten year period

A recognized need for taking the load off University Lake was noted in the ACAB Mid-Year Report. Connor's Lake dog park was restricted from water access during the summer months - water and waterfront quality noted, also due to nesting waterfowl. These criteria apply to University Lake Park also.

Recently, Animal Control and Parks/Rec have met to identify a new water area for off-leash use. They will request it after the Assembly decision on the five current off-leash parks. Anchorage Unleashed has created a small committee to look into finding a fenced area.

While dog owners consider the University Lake dog park a 'real success' UACC offers that success will be achieved when conflicting uses are resolved. To read various dog park comments: [www.muni.org/healthmsd/dogparkcommentspage9A.cfm](http://www.muni.org/healthmsd/dogparkcommentspage9A.cfm)

• **Helicopter Noise Complaints:** In July pilots were briefed, again, following noisy low flights to/from Providence during night hours over residential areas. For complaints contact Merrill Field Airport Manager's Office, 343-6305, David A. Lundebly, Airport Manager, [lundeblyda@ci.anchorage.ak.us](mailto:lundeblyda@ci.anchorage.ak.us)

• **Thank You Note:** August 12 e-mail To: [WWStreets@ci.anchorage.ak.us](mailto:WWStreets@ci.anchorage.ak.us), Cc: [mayor@muni.org](mailto:mayor@muni.org)  
"Thank you to the street maintenance department for fixing the potholes on E. 42nd Ave. I just wanted to let you know we appreciate it and your good work did not go unnoticed - all the neighbors were "abuzz" last night."

Sincerely,

Kelly Haney-Brown

## **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION:**

• **Sep 20, Case # 2004-153,** A site plan review for a medical (renal care) facility. MHTL Subdivision, Tract E. Located on the southeast corner of Lake Otis Pkwy and Providence Dr., PLI Public lands & institutions district. Petitioner: The Trust Land Office, Representative: Dowl Engineers, Tim Potter

• **Oct 14, Case # 2004-156,** A parking variance to reduce the required parking spaces from 169 to 152 spaces. Tudor Centre, Block 1, Lot 1A. Located at 4341 Tudor Centre Drive, B-3 General business district. Petitioner: SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION, Representative: Dowl Engineers, Bob Kniefel

## **COUNCIL ORGANIZATION:**

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Kelly Brown, 569-5678, [kellybrown\\_ak@yahoo.com](mailto:kellybrown_ak@yahoo.com)

Past President: Jim Parsons (deceased April 4, 2004)

1st Member-at-large: Hugh Wade, 332-4844, [hughwade@hotmail.com](mailto:hughwade@hotmail.com)

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