

Rabbit Creek Community Council

NEWSLETTER April 2004

<http://www.communitycouncils.org/rabbit>

Rabbit Creek Community Council * P.O. Box 112354 * Anchorage, AK 99511-2354

Comments from the President

Our April meeting will be our first general meeting focused on long term planning. We are shifting our meeting format from all general meetings to at least three general meetings a year with plans for extra effort to publicize the general meetings with a special event or focus of interest to a larger number of residents. The remaining meetings will be called as board meetings and focus on the routine business of the council of interest to people directly surrounding proposed projects. We hope these changes will increase the overall interest and involvement in council issues and make the meetings more productive for those that attend.

One way we are trying to increase involvement is by having committees working on special projects so that there is an opportunity for residents to work on an issue of interest and to accomplish more between meetings to streamline monthly council discussions. It is a challenge to add another meeting or task to our already full schedules, however, the council recognizes that there is more than can be accomplished during the monthly two hour meeting. It is essential that residents and council members pick up some responsibilities that was previously shouldered by outstanding but overworked council Presidents. I am relying on a more active council and their efforts to organize other residents to help maintain the high quality of our work and ease the load any one person takes on for meetings or task assignments. This works only if we are well organized and take the time to work together on the quality of our community. I don't like wasting time at meetings, but I actually like community meetings and the chance to work together when I know I'm able to contribute and make a difference.

I hope I will see you this Thursday and that you will find the time to talk with our legislators and neighbors worth your time. Ky

Hillside District Planning

Many people involved in community affairs in southeast Anchorage have dreams of a comprehensive "Hillside District Plan" (HDP) that would unify major separate plans and bring more specific guidance to development in

the rural areas of SE Anchorage. This area contains the last large tracts of undeveloped land in Anchorage, yet has only a patchwork of plans to guide how the roads, schools, public utilities, open spaces, and infill will be accomplished to protect the current rural characteristics and support the appropriate development requests. At the RCCC April meeting we will kick off the planning process and discuss the major issues influencing the future of our neighborhoods and our vision of the future. Please come!

The HDP is talked about frequently, but it doesn't actually exist yet except as an anticipated component of the comprehensive plan. Once adopted by the Assembly, the HDP would be a binding part of the city's comprehensive plan and be a required standard for future platting and zoning activities. For developers this would clarify how and where development should occur, reducing their risks and delays of project approval. For residents it would ensure that future development will be part of a master plan for traffic, school, fire protection, safety, and access to open space and trails. Currently we have a HUGE hole in our planning processes that entire subdivisions can drive through. Current development has been a patchwork of incremental growth without thought to the community that results when this development is completed. Our assembly representatives Dick Tremaine and Janice Shamberg have generously offered an initial \$1000 to help the process and a meeting April 3 with other councils has kicked off discussion of how we will work together and with the city to complete this plan possibly as soon as February of 2005.

Please join us at the April 8th meeting to learn more about this plan and be a part of defining the process and content that will create the plan. At the meeting we will also hear about Context Sensitive Design techniques used in transportation projects to insure that community goals and plans like the HDP are used to ensure that transportation projects support long term land use goals instead of having surrounding land use driven by the transportation projects.

Agenda Topics for the April 8th Meeting

7:00 pm Call to order

Treasurer's report

Minutes from March Meeting

Comments from Floor

Announcements

7:15 PM Teleconference with Bunde & Hawker

7:30 Planning our future

Hillside District Plan

Context Sensitive Design – Transportation project design

Trails & Access

Committee Reports:

MHT/Major SE development - Forest Heights Development status

Neighborhood Association Reports

New Business:

Misc. P/Z, Rezone & Platting issues

Rabbit Creek Greenbelt Grant Award – INFO or Approval

9:00 Adjourn

Meetings are held at Rabbit Creek Community Church (Rabbit Creek and Snowshoe Lane), the second Thursday of each month, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m..

The Treasurer's report lists the latest membership data from which a quorum is determined (20% of the membership).

2004 Membership Form

Return to: Rabbit Creek Community Council, PO Box 112354, Anchorage, AK 99511

Dues: \$3 /person or \$5 couple

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

Location of property or rental within RC area _____

E-mail or Phone No. _____

To receive the newsletter, circle the preferred format: E-Mail, regular, fax, none.

Committees on which you are willing to serve:

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> By-Laws | <input type="checkbox"/> Roads | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning & Platting | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks/Trails | <input type="checkbox"/> School Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Water/Sewer | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) | | |

Rabbit Creek
Community Council

2004 BOARD

President: Ky Holland 346-1729
e-mail kyholland@gci.net

Vice President: Wayne Skidmore

Secretary: Susanne Comellas

Treasurer: Donna Van Flein

Other Board Members

Jess Grunblatt

Vivian Mendenhall

Charlie Barnwell

Dan Case

Jess Grunblatt

Dianne Holmes 345-1514

Thom Janidlo

Mayor Holds First Quarterly Meeting

Keeping his promise to meet regularly with community council representatives, Mayor Begich held the first of what will be quarterly meetings on March 23rd. Each council had a few minutes to state the most urgent problems in their area. Rabbit Creek urged the completion of neighborhood and district plans (sub-plans of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan). A Hillside District Plan (HDP) would help ensure better quality planning and reduce piecemeal development for the hundreds of acres of undeveloped land in SE Anchorage. Guidance from the HDP would reduce Planning staff's time as well as council volunteers who constantly must testify at hearings.

The short plat process was also stressed. While the Assembly promised to amend the ordinance last October to restrict the process to smaller parcels for developed areas, that amendment has not been offered. Short plats do not require public hearings and some developers are using the process to develop successive parcels—some as large as 40 acres—without any form of master planning for the overall subdivision(s) to address issues of transportation, roads, vegetation retention, drainage, and open space. This lack of planning that accompanies this process is deleterious to our area and to the quality of our neighborhoods.

PLANNING & ZONING 1st/2nd Mon, 6 PM Loussac

ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY Tuesdays, 6 PM Loussac

Platting:

April 7, S-11135 E. Pickett St, ROW vacation

P/Z Comm:

April 12, #2002-207, S10950. Villages View (Potter Valley) 23 lots.

Postponed. #2004-078 & 053 Mental Health Trust/Forest Heights

(Goldenview Dr), 120 acres rezone to R7.

May 3, #2002-070 Undergrounding ordinance

May 10, #2004-021 Parks Plan review

RCCC Resolution on Forest Heights

The developer of the Forest Heights subdivision (Mental Health Trust Land on the southwest end of Goldenview Drive) is asking the Municipality to allow a re-zone of the 120-acre subdivision from the current PLI (Public Lands and Institution) zoning to an R7SL and remove parts of the development from the Hillside wastewater Management Plan (HWMP). The proposed R7 zoning would allow 20,000 square foot lots (1/2 acre) in most of the area. The Special Limitations (SL) specify larger R6 lots along existing R6 (1.25 acre lots). Originally scheduled for review April 5th, the request has been withdrawn by the developer to complete a traffic impact analysis and drainage study requested by the council and city staff. The application is expected to be ready for P&Z review in June.

The RCCC supports the petitioner's conceptual plan to use this parcel to provide a transition from the existing large lot rural neighborhoods on the northern boundary of this parcel to the more densely zoned, but undeveloped property to the south, if he can provide data supporting the basis for the petition and addressing RCCC concerns. However, the RCCC recommends a Master Development Plan in order to fully understand the way this development will "transition" and still maintain the integrity of existing neighborhoods. The RCCC also supports the petitioner's request to remove a portion of the 120-acre development from the Hillside Wastewater Management Plan. The RCCC concurs that this area would best be served by on-site septic and water, but only with relatively large lots of 1.25 acres, consistent with R-6 zoning and the adjoining neighborhoods.

One of the more important deficiencies about the petition is its lack of detail. The petition sets forth a general idea of transition in housing types, but the request to rezone this area is lacking specifics and supporting documentation and analysis. This rezone of 120 acres is of sufficient scale to warrant careful analysis of (1) traffic loading and access; (2) soil; (3) surface and groundwater hydrology; (4) impact on the Moen Trail and (5) drainage (streams that feed Potter Marsh); (6) connectivity to public lands; (7) fire, life and safety issues regarding road egress and capacity for the new subdivision as well as the existing neighborhoods; and (8) wildlife habitat and wildlife corridor functions, all prior to the rezone. The RCCC, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the community all need this additional information to fully understand the scope of this development and how it impacts the remaining Southeastern hillside area. The RCCC is strongly opposed to having the size and configuration of this request defined at the platting phase. In a development of this magnitude, the petitioner should address these concerns before any rezone is approved. Contact Ky for a copy of the complete resolution.

Links and Contacts

Assembly members for RC

Janice Shamberg, 343-4124, jcsamberg@gci.net

Dick Tremaine, 343-4122, tremained@ci.anchorage.ak.us

Zoning/Code Enforcement 343-8380

Private Dev/Subdiv., 343-8310

Planning Dept. , Counter 343-7900

Platting Dept, 343-7900

Rabbit Creek Fire Station, 345-2555

State Legislature

Con Bunde, 800-892-4843; Senator.Con.Bunde@legis.state.ak.us

Rep. Michael C. Hawker, 800-478-4950,

Rep.Mike.Hawker@legis.state.ak.us

LRSAs

South Goldenview : Dan Heynen, 345-3102,

Birchtree Elmore: Ed Bosco, 345-4530; Ted Pease 345-1235