



## CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 12, 2009

5:30pm-7:30pm

### NOTES

**5:30pm – 5:35pm**      **Introduction**

**5:35pm – 5:45pm**      **Guest Speaker**  
*Claire Steffens – Background of Section 36*

*Claire Steffens presented the background of Section 36 which included discussion about development issues and public requests that Section 36 remain park land. A settlement agreement resulting from a 1995 lawsuit required the HLB to perform soil tests and groundwater monitoring to determine the area's suitability for residential development. Based on these studies, it was decided that the majority of Section 36 was not desirable for residential development. Claire also discussed the importance of Section 36 for migratory birds and wildlife and its value as a moose calving area. She also mentioned that historically the community councils supported a resolution to keep Section 36 as wild park land.*

*Claire also commented on the type of development that was suitable for Section 36. She suggested the construction of few low-impact structures with parking primarily at Storck Park and possibly a smaller lot at the east end of Section 36. Outdoor education facilities should be located near road access. The lower part of Section 36 could be used as a bird and wetland preserve with equestrian trails along the flatter ridge, to minimize erosion. Camping should be prohibited and there has been strong opposition to lighting in the area. She also mentioned a possible connection to Chugach State Park along an existing easement near the northeast corner of Section 36.*

**5:45pm – 7:15pm**      **Vision/Goals/Program and Review of Conceptual Maps**

*Susan Luescher (DOWL HKM) described the three draft concepts that have been developed. Holly Spoth-Torres (MOA) suggested increasing development in Concept 1, while Julian Mason supported Concept 1 being a no build option. Susan explained that Concept 1 will maintain the current level of access and only upgrade the existing trails as needed to be sustainable and reduce erosion. It was also proposed that increased trail development with little facility development should be considered for Concept 2. The general opinion was that Class 4 trails should not be developed in Section 36, but that Class 2 and 3 trails were more appropriate to maintain a more natural area. Some members indicated support for expanding the trail system without additional facilities except restrooms.*

*Holly asked the CAC about putting gravel on the trails in Section 36 similar to the Campbell Creek Science Center. Susanne Comellas agreed that Class 2 and 3 trails are appropriate for the area, but thought that it would be difficult to bring in gravel. Susanne suggested involving Bear Valley Elementary School in a trail loop with an ADA- accessible Class 4 trail or boardwalk, possibly on all three concepts.*

*Laurie Holland suggested using Bear Valley Elementary School as a summer outdoor education facility. David Mitchell suggested evaluating the boardwalk project near Bowman Elementary School to determine if a similar scenario would work for Section 36. He also suggested keeping the majority of development near the school and Storck Park.*

*There was discussion about whether Section 36 trails should focus on accommodating snowshoeing and backcountry skiing, or if they should be able to be groomed by a piston bully. The north/back side may be better suited to accommodate skateskiing, equestrian use and bike riding. Julian noted that there is little desire to ski at higher altitudes except when snow isn't present at lower levels. This would eliminate the need for clearing a trail wide enough for a piston bully since snow machine grooming would be sufficient. Julian also noted that gravel is expensive and is an unsuitable surface for mountain biking. All agreed that mountain biking would be popular in the area and that multi-use trails should be maintained.*

*Holly asked about combining education with trails. Suggestions included educational displays with names of peaks in view from various locations, types of trees, etc. Interpretive facilities and staff could also be present in the park, particularly on the south side in the parking lot and at destinations.*

*Holly would like to know what the public has to say about having an educational chalet in Section 36, though some suggested leaving it off the table for this master plan and revisiting it at a later date.*

*There was discussion regarding the potential for developing a day-use/picnic area. It was generally agreed that Storck Park should remain the main picnic area, though there was discussion that having small, one-family picnic tables could be provided in a natural setting within Section 36, which would give children a chance for "unprogrammed" play in a more natural area.*

### **7:15pm – 7:30pm      Next Steps**

*Susan stated that since people are generally busy in the summer and many community councils do not meet, the CAC meetings would be suspended for the summer as well. The CAC meetings will resume in the fall and a public meeting will be scheduled after that. The*

*Vision Statement and Goals were reviewed and edited by the CAC and a final draft vision and goals were developed. The program elements and three concept maps will continue to be developed and refined throughout the summer, with CAC input acquired through email. The fall public and CAC meetings will be used to determine the preferred concept.*