

Huffman/O'Malley Community Council
It's your HOCC!
April 2011 Newsletter

March Meeting Recap:

You probably noticed that our March Meeting had a full agenda, including an update on the 5 million gallon water tank going in at the corner of Huffman and Elmore, the Tanglewood Park Boardwalk Project at Bowman Elementary, and a presentation from the lobby group for the bonds issues.

We had hoped to have a great conversation with all the parties involved in the Huffman Elementary/Huffman Park projects, as these have seemingly been at odds due to lack of coordination between the two efforts. Unfortunately, the ASD construction/design team stood us up. We are continuing those efforts to create a "Safe Route to School" for our children.

Our Special Meeting regarding the proposed South Anchorage High School sports improvements including a football stadium was 'standing room only'. Thank you to all who attended and helped make this meeting a success.

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Hot Button Issue
SAHS Sports Field Expansion

While students and their parent booster clubs are excited about the potential expansion of SAHS baseball field improvements and new football stadium construction, nearby residents are concerned about the negative impacts currently experienced and the potential of exacerbating these negative impacts.

Most of these impacts were to have been reduced by the creation of a 40' vegetative buffer next to the 40' utility corridor on the west and southwest boundary of the school property. Unfortunately, it appears that the planned re-vegetation of this buffer was either not sufficiently done or has not grown as expected. The homeowners experience light and noise pollution from the school.

HOCC is attempting to address these issues, and is calling for a variety of solutions, from closing the campus during late night hours to planting new vegetation and allowing existing vegetation to naturally regrow in the buffer areas. If you are interested in joining the conversation, please contact HOCC President Christine Monette at hoccpresident@gmail.com or call her at 344-8782.

Did you participate in our Special Meeting? We had a standing-room-only audience. If that was the first time you have participated in your Community Council, please make sure it is not your last!

News flash! A Public Hearing on the SAHS sports fields improvements has been scheduled at the Urban Design Commission on Wednesday, May 11th. The meeting will

begin at 6:30 PM. If you want to make sure your voice is heard, plan to attend.

HOCC - Area Crime Statistics

The HOCC area and surrounding neighborhoods are not crime free! Compiled crime statistics for the HOCC-area (February 18 - March 1; no data reported for February 20) follow. The cumulative amount of reported offenses (beginning December 17, 2010 to date) are in parentheses.

Assaults: 2 (7)	Other Undefined Offenses: 1 (6)
Burglaries: 1 (7)	Theft Reports: 1 (9)
Disturbances: 2 (4)	Vandalism: 2 (3)
Drugs: 0 (1)	Vehicle Theft: 0 (1)
Fraud/Forgery: 0 (4)	Weapon Offense: 0 (1)
Liquor violations: 0 (1)	DUI: 0 (0)

The majority of crimes continue to occur in a corridor between Lake Otis (east), New Seward Highway (west), O'Malley Road (north), and DeArmoun Road (south). Noted were many reports of thefts at the Huffman Road commercial establishments; however, these reports are outside but adjacent to our HOCC boundary. If you are a crime victim, please be sure to report it to the Anchorage Police Department so that the information is logged into the MOA's crime statistics database.

Compiled by Wayne Crayton, HOCC Steering Committee Member. Information is from Anchorage Police Department records at <http://crimemap.muni.org/>

Upcoming Meeting - Thursday April 21st

Put it on your calendar now! Our next meeting will be held Thursday, April 21, 2011.

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.

Items on the agenda for the April meeting will include an update on SAHS field improvements, revisiting a variance for an additional encroachment into the setback on a Baronik residential lot, updates on the water tank construction, and addressing traffic concerns at Huffman and Elmore. We will also have a guest speaker from Alaska Waste, to give an update on company plans to mandate "roll bins" instead of trash cans, and the increased collection charges.

Attend and make your voice heard!

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 hoccpresident@gmail.com.

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

Message from the President

What is a Community Council, and why is it important? As we have discussed before, Anchorage is one of the only city or municipality where you will find a series of sub-groups mandated by Charter to represent the individual neighborhoods within the designated boundaries.

The Council is responsible for formatting opinions on a variety of issues, from variances to new development, from roads to liquor licenses. We exist to help guide individuals through the process, whether it be dealing with a neighborhood safety issue, giving guidance and education on local issues of concern, or advising our elected representatives about specific needs.

We meet monthly as a Steering Committee, and part of our responsibility is to communicate with all residents, listen to your concerns, and help you solve your unique neighborhood concerns. Our goal is to reach consensus, even when we need to “tweak” certain projects or demand adherence to prior promises.

We strive to have Council representation from all individual neighborhoods and homeowners organizations, a geographically-diverse representation of our boundaries. We encourage participation from the schools and churches within our boundaries. Those willing to serve agree to represent their neighbors, and to work for the greater good of the community. Sometimes this is a thankless task, but at other times we know that the hours we spend working for our community have been wildly successful, something that will make a difference to homes and lives for the future.

If your neighborhood has an issue of concern, please feel free to bring it to the Council. And if you have several hours a month you are willing to give back to your community, please consider offering your services to the Huffman/O’Malley Community Council.

Christine Monette, President

Tanglewood Park Boardwalk Nears Completion

A new outdoor classroom for Bowman Elementary School - and an easily accessible community park trail - is nearing completion in Tanglewood Park, a city wetlands adjacent to Bowman Elementary School.

In 2008, planning for the Tanglewood Park Boardwalk was begun with several grants. This 1400-foot of elevated pathway was designed to provide easy viewing of plants and animals in both natural and restored areas of the Tanglewood Bog. Large platforms

along the route provide gathering places for students during class outings. Now, after three years and hundreds of hours of labor from parents, students and community members, construction of the boardwalk is essentially complete. Volunteers have only a short stretch of ground to cover with planking once the ground thaws this spring.

This project is funded by more than \$40,000 from Anchorage Park Foundation / Rasmussen Challenge Grant, Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant, Lowe's South Anchorage Hero's Grant, Alaska Conservation Foundation Watchable Wildlife Conservation Trust Grant, and Bowman PTA. Business partners include Alaska Control Excavating, McKinley Fence Company of Alaska, Tag-Along Trailers, Treeline Construction, and Whalen Construction.

Phase Two of this project will be designing, writing and installing interpretative signs. The Huffman O'Malley Community Council has contributed \$100 in seed money to the Bowman PTA for a new fund specifically designated for these signs. An art contest is being held by Bowman PTA to design these interpretative signs, using wetland animal icons.

If you would like more information about this exciting project, or would like to contribute to the interpretative signs fund, contact Linda Hulen at hulen_linda@asdk12.org

You may also check out pictures and updates online at <http://tanglewoodparkboardwalk.blogspot.com/> or on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tanglewood-Park-boardwalk-project/119100204801805>

Submitted by Linda Hulen, Bowman Elementary School

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Huffman Elementary & Huffman Park Update

Most of the primary parties involved in coordinating projects between the Safe Routes to School project in Huffman Park and adjacent Huffman Elementary attended our March 17 meeting. Parks and Recreation Department Director John Rodda was very supportive of the all-volunteer project to improve access, safety, and appearance of Huffman Park. Megan Holliday is managing this project with the help of Trinity Presbyterian Church, HOCC, Huffman Elementary parents and students this summer.

Initially there were concerns that park volunteers were working on routes that the Anchorage School was intending to close, so some coordination appeared necessary. Unfortunately, despite confirmation, the Anchorage School District representatives did not show up to make sure their part of the project would be compatible with the adjacent park work. For example, while ASD plans to retain two access points, will they install a bollard to prevent snowmachines illegally operating on the school grounds from entering the Park?

We hope these questions can be addressed and that this project becomes another true community success.

Submitted by Mark Schroeder, HOCC Steering Committee Member

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HALO Update

The next meeting of Home and Landowner's Organization, Inc. will be held Thursday, May 5th - Happy Cinco de Mayo! 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 please visit www.anchoragehalo.org

Just a Random Thought...

Why does it take dynamite to get people to participate in their community?

Huffman & Elmore Traffic Hazard?

Have you experienced traffic concerns at Huffman and Elmore? Does the Enstar box on the northwest corner interfere with your line of sight? HOCC will be addressing this issue, perhaps asking Enstar to remove the slats from the chain link fence, perhaps asking that snow berms not be created at that corner. If you have an opinion, please attend the April meeting.

Are there other locations where you have encountered traffic safety issues? Please let us know!

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Public Record Notices going Online Only!

Have you noticed that you don't see any more Municipal Public Notices in the newspapers? All Public Notices are now online only. Also, remember that the responsibility lies with each of us to not only follow these Public Notices, but to verify them for accuracy. If you see a "blue sign" posted to a tree in your neighborhood, call the Planning Department immediately!

Online Public Notices are at: <http://www.muni.org/publicnotice/Pages/default.aspx> From there a variety of searches are available.

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 \$10 per person for this year.**

Name:

Physical Address:

Mailing Address:

Phone (home & 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!