

**Resolution
of the
Basher Community Council**

Regarding

**The Chugach State Park Access Plan as an Element of the Municipality of Anchorage's
Comprehensive Plan**

Background: The Alaska Department of Natural Resources released a public review Draft of the Chugach State Park Access Plan (referred to herein as CAP) in January 2010. The CAP is now under consideration by the Municipality of Anchorage's Planning and Zoning Commission. The commission will make a recommendation on whether or not the CAP should be adopted as an element of the Municipality of Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan. If the CAP is approved by the Commission, it will then go before the Anchorage Assembly. The CAP is intended to be used in planning, platting and other specific land use authorizations employed by the MOA.

The Basher Community Council (referred to herein as BCC) has been involved with the planning effort since 2008. The BCC adopted resolutions on the Draft Chugach State Park Trail Plan (Oct 8, 2009) and the Draft CAP (April 8, 2010); these documents are available on the Basher Community Council website.

Resolution:

Whereas, the Basher Community Council represents the Stuckagain Heights neighborhood which is surrounded on all sides by public land. The community is surrounded by Far North Bicentennial Park to the west, Chugach State Park to the east and south, and Fort Richardson to the north. The residents of Stuckagain Heights are dedicated to a policy of inclusion of our fellow Anchorage residents into the natural assets of the Anchorage Bowl. Because of our unique location and knowledge of the character and history of the area, our community is well-suited to address the need for expanded access to this parkland and while also preserving character of the residential neighborhood.

Whereas, the BCC presented a vision for the expansion of access to DNR that endorses a significant amount of new public parking within the Stuckagain neighborhood. The council worked hard to develop community consensus and to offer a sensible 25-year vision for public access to the parkland along our neighborhood border. Descriptions of BCC access proposals are detailed in the resolutions referred to above.

The BCC access proposal supports access at all of the same locations as those proposed in the CAP. The main difference is that the BCC proposal is designed to distribute parking such that the impact to residential roads is minimized. Additionally, the BCC proposal presents a more realistic and financially attainable vision for expansion of access for the planning window. Furthermore, the BCC proposal is largely backed by the community. The following is a summary of the access points with parking supported in the BCC access resolution:

- Expanded parking at the Basher Trailhead (H6): recommend upgrading to a medium lot, currently a small lot.
- New parking area at Near Point (H2a): recommend a 2-6 car pullout, currently no developed parking at that site.
- Continued use of the Dome Trailhead (H1a): no change recommended, currently a 12-car parking lot.

Whereas, the proposed CAP will direct a significant amount of traffic through the residential neighborhoods within Stuckagain Heights. These roads are maintained by a LRSA, and as such, the increased cost of maintenance will be borne by the residents. The Stuckagain neighborhood is a single egress neighborhood with roads designed for residential use; additional traffic will require upgraded road designs. Directing most public trail users to the Basher Trailhead (H6) would reduce both the traffic on neighborhood roads and the dangers of congestion on the single ingress/egress routes in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Whereas, the BCC concurs with the following statement excerpted from the Subdivision Standards section of Title 21: “Lots and blocks should provide appropriate settings for the buildings that are to be constructed, make use of natural contours, and protect residents from adverse noise and vehicular traffic.... New development should reflect and maintain the character of the neighborhood through layout of roads and lots, consideration of connectivity with minimal cut-through traffic, pedestrian access to neighborhood destinations, and buffers or open space where appropriate to maintain privacy and views (CH 8, p 424).”

Whereas, the CAP acknowledges the need for addressing issues such as traffic, illegal fires, and late night parties that have been associated with some Chugach State Park trailheads (Neighborhood Impacts, CAP Public Review Draft pg. 9); however the planning documents do not provide guidance on mitigating the impact that these activities may have on adjacent neighborhoods. Because the CAP is the document that will provide guidance to Municipality of Anchorage on issues related to planning, platting, and other land use, this is the appropriate document in which to address these concerns.

Therefore be it Resolved,

That the Basher Community Council does not endorse the inclusion of the current version of the CAP as an element of the Municipality of Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan. Further, the council recommends that the planning process be geared toward attainable development that considers the cost and impact to the neighboring communities, as well as the cost to the state.

Respectfully submitted by the Basher Community Council

President, Dirk Sisson

Date
