

TURNAGAIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

c/o Federation of Community Councils
1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Sent via email

November 1, 2016

Municipality of Anchorage Community Development Department
Planning Division
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

RE: **ADDENDUM TO PREVIOUS TURNAGAIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMMENTS
ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN - PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT**

Dear Planning & Zoning Commission and Planning Dept. Staff:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional input on the 2040 Anchorage Land Use Plan (2040 LUP) Public Hearing Draft with the extension of the comment deadline. The below comments provide input on items not previously addressed in our October 17th handout or May 27th/September 9th comments. In order to submit comments by the extended November 1st deadline, the Turnagain Community Council (TCC) Land Use, License & Permit Review Committee is submitting this input now; this letter will be presented at our November 3, 2016, general meeting for formal ratification.

2040 LUP Map — Designation of Parcels West of Forest Park Dr.

- **TCC OPPOSES the Draft 2040 LUP Map RE: DESIGNATION OF SPECIFIC PARCELS WEST OF FOREST PARK DR. AS “NEIGHBORHOOD – COMPACT MIXED RESIDENTIAL – LOW”**

TCC thanks Commissioner Spring for bringing this particular item to our attention at the October 17th hearing. After discussing this with active TCC members who have a home located within the parcel area proposed to be designated “Neighborhood - Compact Mixed Residential - Low (Compact Mixed Res.),” and seeing what kind of development this designation would allow (page 28 of the Draft Plan), TCC does not support the proposed designation.

Instead — *excluding the two most southern parcels located within the proposed Compact Mixed Res. designation* — TCC requests that the parcels located directly along the west side of Forest Park Dr. be designated “Neighborhood – Single Family and Two Family” on the 2040 LUP Map.

- *Reasons for this request include:*
 - As the “Areas of Growth and Change” map (page 19 of the Draft Plan) indicates, the proposed land use designation for these parcels along Forest Park Dr. would change uses currently allowed by existing zoning, which is R-2D. This zoning was specifically requested (and approved) by homeowners in 1979, to protect the existing single and two-family homes vulnerable to higher-density development under the R-2 zoning that was in place at that time.
 - The existing single and two-family homes are consistent with the development density of other homes in the Forest Park Dr. area to the east and north.
 - Potential higher-density development would likely increase traffic on Forest Park Dr., which has a Local Street designation. There are no sidewalks or bike paths along this street, yet it is regularly used by pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists; more traffic would create a greater safety risk for these non-motorized users.

- Higher density housing should be avoided in this area, as these parcels fall under the “High Seismically Induced Ground Failure Hazard” in the Hazard Mitigation and Resiliency Map (CC-6).
- Even though the West Anchorage District Plan Land Use Map (page 73 of that plan) designates these parcels along Forest Park Dr. as “Low/Medium Intensity (>8-15 units per gross acre), which is consistent with a Compact Mixed Residential - Low designation, **TCC sees development of the 2040 LUP as an opportunity to override that inappropriate designation — and ensure that the parcels directly west of Forest Park Dr. in the Turnagain area have the proper designation of “Neighborhood – Single Family and Two Family” on the finalized 2040 Land Use Plan Map.**

Please see additional rationale for TCC’s designation request in comments submitted October 31, 2016, by Marnie and Jon Issacs, long-time residents who live in this area along Forest Park Dr. (Their comments are attached to our comments as well.)

Parcel Designation Along La Honda Dr.: In hindsight, the parcels along La Honda Dr. (west of Forest Park Dr.) should probably not have been built on — or built at a lower density — due to their location within the “High Seismically Induced Ground Failure Hazard” in the Hazard Mitigation and Resiliency Map (CC-6) and the Fish Creek floodplain. But because they are already developed at a higher-than-single/two-family density, TCC’s designation request for “Neighborhood – Single and Two Family” does not include these parcels.

2040 LUP Map — Designation of the Mobile Home Park along Hillcrest Dr.

- **TCC UNCERTAIN RE: DESIGNATION OF MOBILE HOME PARK ON HILLCREAST DR. AS “NEIGHBORHOOD – COMPACT MIXED RESIDENTIAL – LOW”**

Again, TCC thanks Commissioner Spring for bringing this particular item to our attention at the October 17th hearing. After review of this land use designation proposal, TCC submits the following for consideration by the Planning & Zoning Commission, as we have mixed feelings about this proposal:

- Unlike TCC’s strong position stated above with regard to supporting a change to the WADP Land Use Map, TCC is uncertain whether this would be a wise change for this area of the Turnagain residential neighborhood.
 - First and foremost, has the owner of the mobile home park land been contacted by the Planning Dept. regarding this proposed land use designation change — and, if so, what was the response?
 - As the “Areas of Growth and Change” map (page 19 of the Draft Plan) indicates, the proposed land use designation for the mobile home park parcel along Hillcrest Dr. would not only change the use currently allowed by existing zoning, but would also change the land use designation in the West Anchorage District Plan (page 73 of that plan), which is “Low Density – Attached and Detached” (< 5-8 units per gross acre).
 - The residential density provided by the mobile home park, which has been in this location for many years, has provided relatively low density, compatible homes adjacent to the surrounding residential areas north, west and south of the development (West High School is to the east).
 - The proposed designation of “Compact Mixed Residential – Low” would allow a higher density development of 8 to 15 units per gross acre. This increased density would likely created more traffic on Hillcrest Dr., which is a high-use street for both vehicle traffic and student pedestrian and bicyclers to the West/Romig campus. While the TCC Safe Routes To Schools Committee identified the need for a sidewalk along the south side of Hillcrest Dr. from Forest Park Dr. to the campus (and TCC has included this project in its CIP list), currently, no sidewalk or bike path exists.
 - While mobile home parks may not provide an ideal housing option for many Anchorage residents, the remaining mobile home parks in our city have been providing affordable

housing for many years. Neighbors who reside in mobile home parks may not be able to afford other forms of housing, such as apartments. And most apartments provide little or no yard for pets, gardens, storage, etc., which the mobile home park on Hillcrest Dr. does offer its residents.

Once again, TCC appreciates the opportunity to provide additional comments on the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Public Hearing Draft. This comment addendum — along with our previously submitted comments — reflect long-held positions and proposals we hope will be incorporated into this important land use document for our city. TCC hopes that our input — and our continuing dialogue with the Municipal Planning Dept. — result in a positive outcome for the Turnagain neighborhood and our community.

Sincerely,

Anna Brawley & Cathy Gleason
Turnagain Community Council Land Use, License & Permit Review Committee Co-chairs

CC: Turnagain Community Council President Jonathan Tarrant
Turnagain Community Council Treasurer Gloria Manni
Turnagain Community Council Board Member-at large Kennis Brady

Attachment:
10-31-2016 Memorandum from Marnie and Jon Issacs











2040 Land Use Plan Map

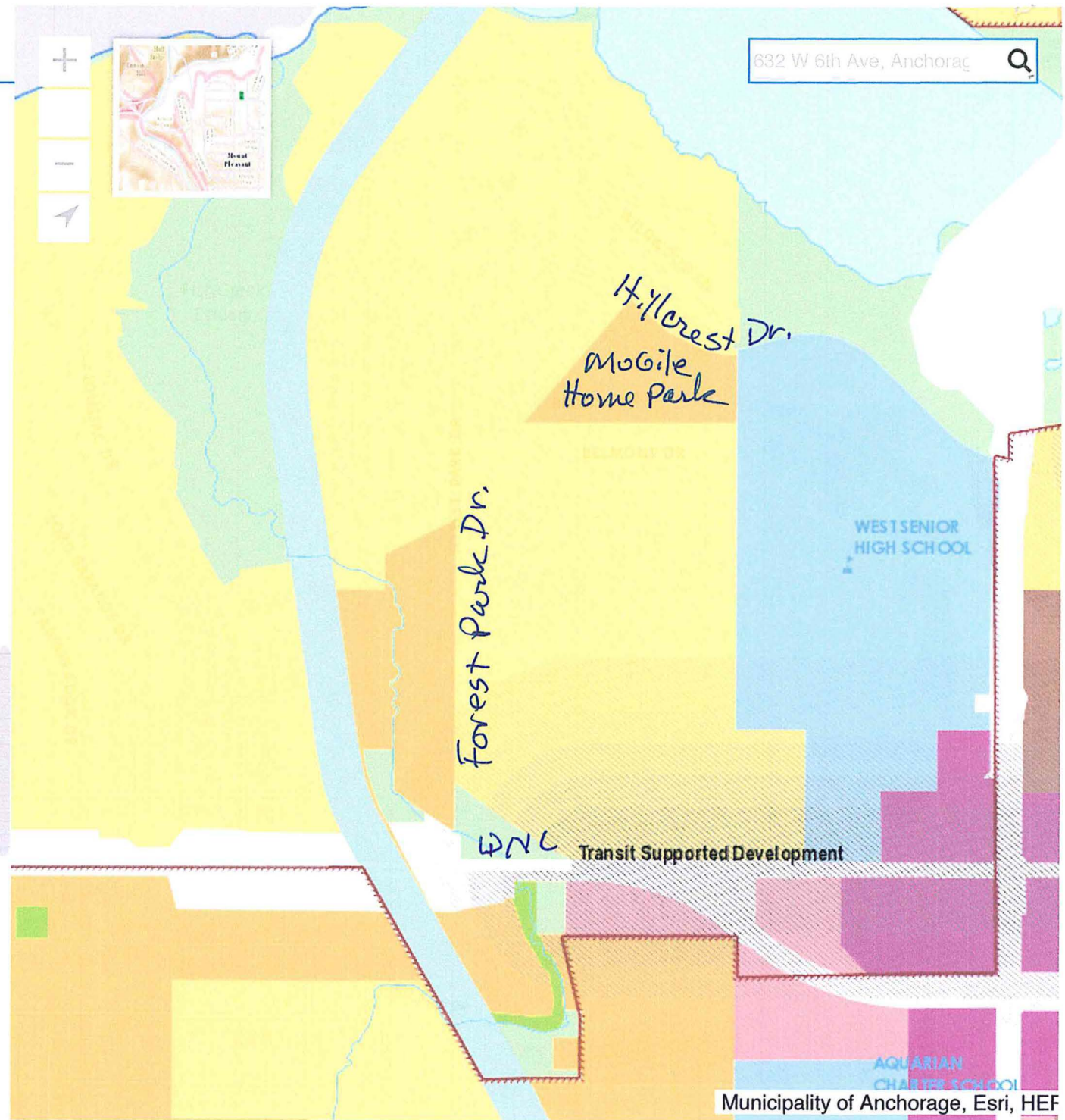
LEGEND

INFO

LUPM Parcels

Descriptions

-  Park or Natural Area
-  Park or Natural Area (Airport Expansion Alternative)
-  Other Open Space
-  Neighborhood - Large Lot Residential
-  Neighborhood - Single Family and Two Family
-  Neighborhood - Compact Mixed Residential - Low
-  Neighborhood - Compact Mixed Residential - Medium
-  Neighborhood - Urban Residential - High
-  University or Medical Center
-  University or Medical Center with Greenway Supported Development



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Tom Davis, Senior Planner
Municipality of Anchorage

Commissioners, Planning and Zoning Commission
Municipality of Anchorage

FROM: Marnie and Jon Isaacs
2418 Forest Park Drive

Jon & Marnie Isaacs

RE: Public Comments
Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan

DATE: October 31, 2016

We have reviewed the draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan and offer the following comments. These comments are restricted to the proposed land use designations contained on the map found on page 19 of the draft and only address the proposed changes as they apply to the west side of Forest Park Drive.

BACKGROUND: We have lived at the current address since 1978, and have been pleased to be part of this diverse and integrated neighborhood. The proposed changes presented on the land use map appear to recommend a land use designation of Compact Mixed Residential Low for a section of Forest Park Drive. This would allow "single family, attached single family and small lot housing. Townhouse and smaller multifamily are also considered as long as the areas scale and density are maintained." This designation would likely be vigorously opposed by residents in the area.

In 1979 homeowners along the west side of Forest Park Drive requested and received approval of a re-zone from R-2 to lower density R-2D to protect the residential character of the neighborhood's single family homes and duplexes. The older housing stock on some lots was vulnerable to high density re-development, including ours. The area's homeowners believed the protection offered by R-2D zoning over time would allow improvements and/or replacement of these older homes with newer single family or duplex structures while also protecting the area's quiet neighborhood characteristics. An additional consideration was avoiding an increase in traffic volume associated with higher density development in an area used by joggers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Since that time, new single family homes have been constructed in this specific area and substantial improvements have been made to existing single family and duplex residences, enhancing the Forest Park Drive neighborhood as a desirable area to live.

BASIS FOR ARGUMENT: The proposed land use designation of Compact Mixed Residential Low is inappropriate on the west side of Forest Park Drive specifically because:

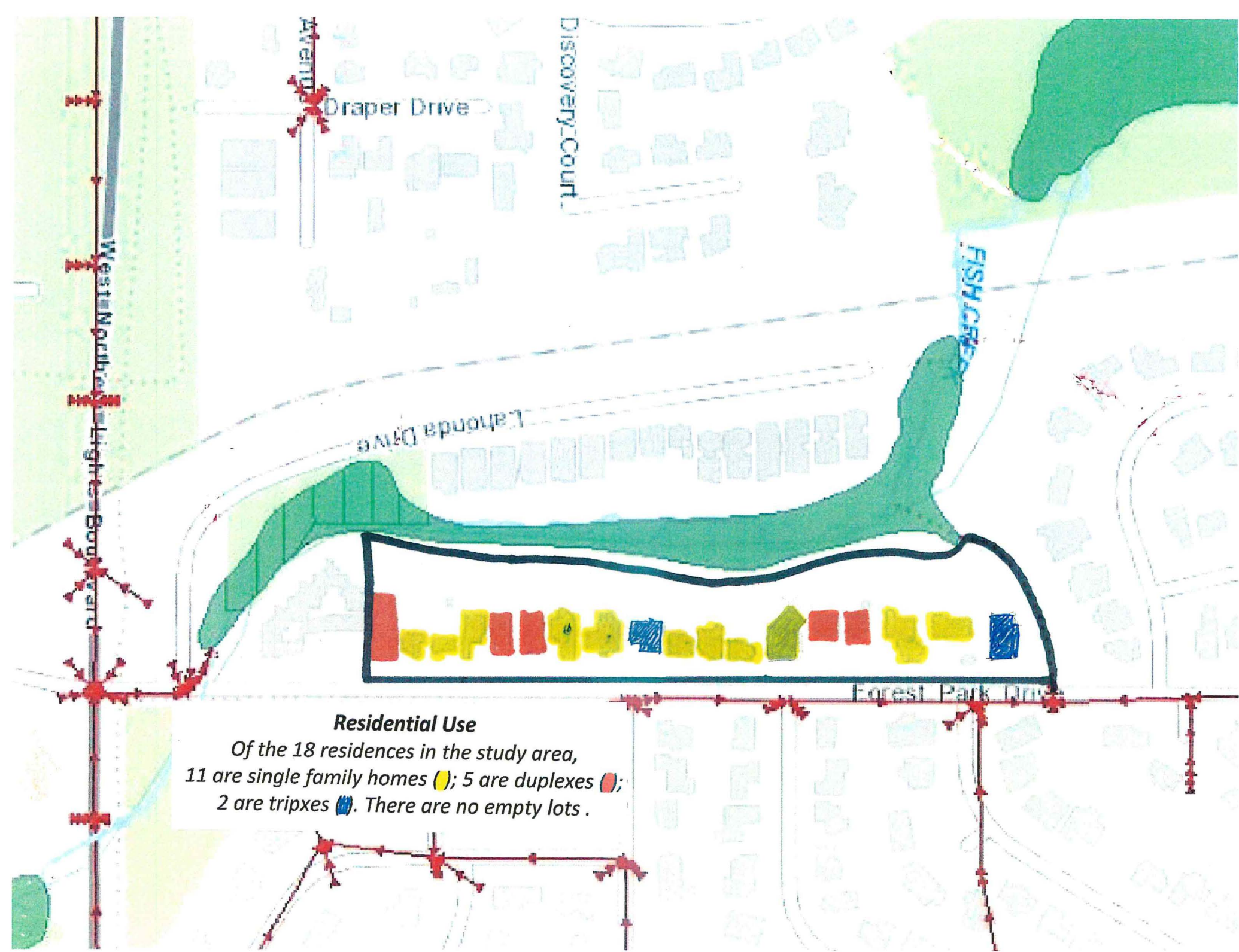
- Higher density residential is not compatible with this residential area;
 - Existing inventory is 1-2 stories, not three
 - Existing inventory is largely single family/duplex, anything larger would overwhelm the “area’s scale”;
 - There are no vacant lots or abandoned buildings in this area so higher density would require destruction of current housing.
- The lots in this area are narrow, long and drop off steeply to the Fish Creek floodplain which limits the actual square footage available for higher unit development.
 - The area is in seismic zone 4
 - Seeps and springs in the slope bordering Fish Creek create unstable soils
 - The designated floodplain boundary prohibits development and location of the required parking areas.
- Higher density residential development will add traffic and create unsafe access/egress conditions

Due to the extremely compressed public comment period for citizens to review the final draft of this plan, not all of the area’s property owners could be contacted. The attached petition reflects unanimous opposition by those homeowners that could be contacted, including nearby homeowners accessing Forest Park Drive from Huntington Park.

CONCLUSION: We request the designation of Compact Mixed Residential Low in the Draft 2040 Land Use Plan be removed from the Forest Park Drive properties and that the area remain designated for Single Family and Two Family structures. This would be in keeping with the area’s existing mixed residential land use and maintain the quality and character of the neighborhood.

Attachments:

- Current residential use of the Forest Park Drive area under review



Residential Use

Of the 18 residences in the study area, 11 are single family homes (yellow); 5 are duplexes (red); 2 are triplexes (blue). There are no empty lots.

NEIGHBORHOOD PETITION

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED LAND USE RECLASSIFICATION FOR FOREST PARK DRIVE

Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan

We the undersigned are residents of the Forest Park Drive neighborhood between Arcadia Drive and Northern Lights Boulevard. The draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan proposes to change the area's land use designation on the west side of Forest Park to higher density from the current R-2D which is single family/duplex. The proposal in the plan would allow:

"single family, attached single family and small lot housing. Townhouses and smaller multifamily are also considered as long as the area's scale and density is maintained."

If this language is allowed to remain in the Plan the character of our neighborhood would likely change significantly in the coming years with the addition of higher density multi-unit buildings. We petitioned the Assembly in 1979 to designate the area R-2D to protect the neighborhood. We request the proposed land use change be deleted from the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan. We further request this portion of Forest Park Drive remain R-2D to protect the quality of this established and desirable neighborhood.

Marilee: Jan Isaacs 2418 Forest Park Dr.

Richard Weet / Michelle McArthur 2442 Forest Park Dr.

Paul Barnett 2226 Arlington Dr. N.

Tatiana Coe 2200 Arlington Dr. N.

Edward & Sarah Hattness 2215 Arlington Dr. 99517

Peter J. 2253 Forest Park Dr

Myra M. Maynard 2237 Forest Park Dr. 99517

Kenneth Maynard 2237 Forest Park Dr. 99517

Chris McConnell 2410/2412 Forest Park Dr. 99517

Jessie Banas 2410/2412 Forest Park Dr Anchorage - 99517

Stanislava Cooper 2255 Forest Park Dr. Anchorage AK 99517

~~Stanislava Cooper~~ M.S. Cooper 2255 Forest Park Dr. Anchorage AK 99517

Gene Mueller 2434 FOREST PARK DR. 99517

Walter For 2403 FOREST PARK DR
Arthur MARTIN & STACY BUSTIE ANCH, AK 99517

Frank & Jackie Danner 2206 Belair Dr. 99517

Frank A. Danner 2206 Belair Dr 99517

Jordan and Susan Marshall
2336 Forest Park Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99517

Messrs. Tom Davis, Jon Cecil and Ms. Jody Seitz
Long-Range Planning Division
Planning Department
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

Subject: Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan – West Anchorage District Plan (WADP) – Turnagain/Spenard Land Use Detail

To Whom It May Concern:

The Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan for West Anchorage, Turnagain/Spenard proposes to change a stretch of the southern west side of Forest Park to higher density land use designation. There are several reasons this is problematic.

First, the current R-2D, which is single family/duplex, is currently consistent on both sides of the street and further north up Forest Park. What could possibly be the justification for selecting one side of the street, and only the southern half of Forest Park, for higher density housing? This is an established neighborhood. Singling out one section arbitrarily is oddly discriminatory.

Second, among the goals of the Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan is to “encourage redevelopment of underutilized land.” However, the plan appears to overlook the fact that more than half the land on the parcels along this length of Forest Park Drive is unsuitable for construction. The back half of the properties are comprised of wetland and bluff. To suggest that these properties can accommodate Residential (Low-Medium Intensity) construction is to suggest it is possible to put 6 to 10 units on footprints smaller than ½-acre.

Third, another goal of the Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan is to “maintain the density and character of established residential areas.” How does one designate this length of Forest Park Drive as higher density while at the same time state in the same document, “[higher density is achievable] as long as the area’s scale and density is maintained.” Higher density is not compatible with maintaining current density. This illogical juxtaposition of definitions is both troubling and ambiguous, and should be rectified before any new designations along this length of road are approved.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Jordan and Susan Marshall
Property Owners, Taxpayers

*E-mailed by
Marshall's to MOA*

November 1, 2016

**Tom Davis, Senior Planner
Jon Cecil, Senior Planner
Jody Seitz, Associate Planner**

Commissioners, Planning & Zoning Commission

RE: Draft Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan; Forest Park Drive

Attached please find comments from residents of the Forest Park Drive neighborhood concerning the proposed land use change for a portion of Forest Park Drive to "Neighborhood Compact Mixed Residential Low".

There is strong opposition to this proposed change and residents request the land use designation remain "Single Family & Duplex". This neighborhood is an older, established area of mixed residential use. Higher density development on the steep, narrow lots would need to be located in the front third to -half of the lots creating a wall-like effect. Eventually this would destroy the woodland character and quality of the area known as Forest Park.

The residents of this area request the current designation "Neighborhood Mixed Residential Low" be amended to "Single Family & Duplex" in the final Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan to be brought before the Anchorage Assembly.

Thank you.

Property Owners, Forest Park Drive

October 31st, 2016

Re: Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to my attention that the Municipality of Anchorage is proposing a change in its Land Use Plan that could very negatively impact the land values and community character of the Forest Park Drive Neighborhood.

I have been a real estate Broker in Anchorage since 1980. I am presently the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX Dynamic Properties, one of the leading real estate company in the State of Alaska. Additionally, I have been a property developer in Anchorage and the Valley since early 1980. My personal residence is located in the Huntington Park Subdivision, near the Forest Park Drive area in question. Recently, I invested considerably in improvements to a property I owned at 2512 Forest Park Drive, now a single family home. I recently sold that property and am convinced that the current R-2D zoning protected my investment as well as the current owner's property value.

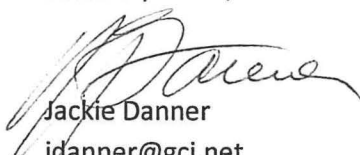
The 2040 plan proposes a change towards higher density land use. I am concerned that this change would encourage developers to invest in this area with the intent to construct multi-family units. Presently, this neighborhood consists of a good mix of a variety of housing categories; higher density would add traffic, parking issues already existing, and mostly would impact property values for the homes already in the area.

The Southern area of Forest Park was re-zoned in 1979 from R-2 to R-2D to protect the neighborhood from high density development. Since then, the older homes have steadily been updated/remodeled or replaced in some cases, which was the intent of the re-zoning. As a resident of Huntington Park, I would like to see the process of positive neighborhood evolution continue, with Forest Park remaining a quiet neighborhood with mainly single family homes and duplexes.

I would like to request that the final Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan remove the proposed higher density land use designation for Forest Park Drive to allow this neighborhood to remain as it is today, zoned R-2D.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely Yours,


Jackie Danner
jdanner@gci.net
907.242.7611