

Annie Foruria

From: Beth Leban [bleban@searhc.org]
Sent: Friday, April 11, 2008 1:03 PM
To: PC_Comments
Subject: North Douglas ATV use of land

To the Planning Commission:

I would like to take this opportunity to express my strong opposition to the proposed ATV area off of Fish Creek Road. As a property owner in the city and borough I strongly oppose creating an ATV area anywhere near established residential properties. The plan for an ATV area at the quarry on North Douglas is a serious injustice to the home owners with property adjacent to the proposed ATV area and a disservice to those residents who have chosen to live in the rural and quiet North Douglas neighborhood around Fish Creek Road.

As a North Douglas resident I am concerned about the destruction of a peaceful and wild place in my neighborhood. Fish Creek Road is a destination which is frequently used by myself, my family and many North Douglas neighbors. Fish Creek Road and the quarry path are places where many of us walk to avoid the narrow shoulder on North Douglas Highway.

The areas along Fish Creek Road are places we share quietly with the deer, the birds, and the bears. This road and the quarry path provide year round use to us as we recreate near our homes often on foot, snowshoe, skis or by bike, scooter or roller blade depending upon the season. We hunt, berry pick and watch birds there. We make use of the land in a gentle, non-disturbing way. I urge you to consider the many activities you would displace and disturb by development of an ATV area off of Fish Creek Road.

I am also very concerned about the noise pollution caused by ATV use.

The noise generated by ATVs would be annoying to the neighborhood in general and as studies have shown quite unhealthy for people whose homes are adjacent to the property who would be subjected to the engine sounds from potentially early morning to late evening hours. The testing conducted by the city in an attempt to estimate noise levels for the ATV area is far from adequate and, I believe, misleading. The use of a chain saw to simulate the sounds of multiple ATV engines seems highly dubious. I am concerned by the inappropriateness of the testing not just with the chain saw simulation, but also by the city and Rough Riders who together conducted the tests. I am also concerned by the description of North Douglas as an area already plagued by noise. While at times - ski season, boating weekends, and float planes in the summer - we experience the occasional higher levels of noise, for the most part, our surroundings on North Douglas are peaceful. I would like the peace and quiet of this out of the way area to remain. It is this peacefulness that first attracted me to North Douglas and the primary reason I purchased my home there.

Another disturbing aspect of the city's plan to provide the Fish Creek quarry area for ATV use is the unreasonable assertion by the city assessor that property values in the neighborhood would not be impacted. This is very hard for me to believe and facts from other communities who have accommodated such areas has certainly demonstrated quite the contrary. Though my property is not directly adjacent to the proposed ATV use area it is clear that my property which is within a quarter mile of Fish Creek Road would be impacted - by the noise, the increased traffic and therefore by decreased property value. I am greatly concerned for neighbors whose properties are adjacent to the quarry area. It is clear that their property values would be significantly harmed and I am alarmed by the potential loss in value to my own property should the quarry area be developed for ATV use.

It is for these various reasons that I strongly urge the committee to stop the plans put forth by the city in collaboration with the Rough Riders to develop land at the Fish Creek Quarry site for ATV use. It is clear that there are a number of compelling arguments which make the quarry site off of Fish Creek Road incompatible with the residential neighborhood and the quiet and peaceful recreation which has historically taken place there. I strongly urge the committee to stop this proposition and to not harm this area in North Douglas. I urge the committee to chose options for development of city land which are compatible with the surrounding environment.

Sincerely,

Beth Leban
9161 N. Douglas Hwy.