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Planning Commission
C/O Community Development Department
Municipal Building
155 South Seward Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

March 17, 2008

Dear Planning Commission,

This letter concerns the application for an ORV park at the gravel pit on Fish Creek Road (Eaglecrest Road). My comments in are response to issues and information presented at the February 20, 2008 Planning Commission meeting.

First, decibel levels. Given the decibel level charts CBJ presented, one ORV, at a 350 foot distance, can easily produce 54 decibels. For each additional ORV, the decibel level goes up 3 decibels. This seems to be fairly easy math - at a 350 foot distance (which is the nearest neighborhood property line) , more than one ORV will break the proposed regulation of a daytime limit of 55 decibels. At night, the proposed regulation is 45 decibels. If one ORV goes by at night, at the 350 foot property line, the regulation will be broken. Furthermore, the Rough Riders have stated that more than 50 ORVs may be at the facility at any one time. According to the calculations given by CBJ, 50 ORVs would produce a level of 201 decibels. While I agree that it is unreasonable to assume that 50 ORVs would running their engines at high RPMs at the same time, I believe we can safely assume that more than 20 ORVs running at any one time will significantly raise the decibel level above the proposed 55 decibel limit. I believe the decibel limits may be reasonable, but the level of noise ORVs can make in a neighborhood is not. This facility needs to be in a place where it will not severely disrupt a neighborhood with high, unreasonable, levels of noise.

Second, the CBJ applicant stated, "If we can't stay within the sound levels, then we're closed." I agree with her. If the users of this proposed facility cannot stay within the sound levels approved by the city, then they should be closed. However, by the decibel levels stated in the city-presented information, more than one ORV is going to break the limits. As citizens of this city, we believe in the "promise" a city-approved rule, regulation, or law states. If the limit is stated, then we believe in CBJ to enforce that approved regulation and agreement - afterall, it's CBJ's promise to us as its citizens. But with the decibel limit stated, it is already impossible to stay within the limit. Please spend no more time or money considering this proposal that is already blatantly set up for failure within any neighborhood. If CBJ is truly concerned about noise levels in neighborhoods, then this facility needs to be placed far away from any neighborhood in order to be successful.

Third, cost. The CBJ applicant stated that it is hoped that user fees of the facility will cover all operating costs. I do hope user fees cover, or closely cover, the cost of having

a caretaker, garbage pick-up, etc. However, in other parts of the presentation, the CBJ applicant explained the extensive heavy equipment work CBJ would do in order to make the gravel pit more conducive to ORV riding. Also, it was stated by the CBJ applicant that this facility has always been thought of as being temporary while a better-fit facility is sought. Mr. Tipps of the Rough Riders stated, "26 acres is not enough. We want this until we get something better." Both the CBJ applicant and Rough Riders agree that this facility is a temporary "fix". However, plans demand that CBJ does extensive, expensive work in order to make it an operational facility. How much is CBJ willing to spend on something that is temporary and is not thought of by either applicant as a very good solution?

Fourth, North Douglas portrayed as a noisy neighborhood. I truly hope I don't have to explain too much the ridiculous nature of this statement. Ever since this statement was made by the CBJ applicant at the February 20 Planning Commission meeting, I have spent a lot of time on my front deck, which is fairly close to the North Douglas Road. I have been out there in rain, snow, sun, daytime, nighttime, weekends, and weekdays. By my less-than-scientific results, I can tell you that the infrequent "noise events" that happen only last 2-5 seconds (I did time them). An infrequent car that passes by is very different than a sustained "noise event" such as 30 or more ORVs running their engines, in a small area, at any one time. To portray North Douglas as "noisy" is completely false. To state that our neighborhood is noisy because of streams and wind and birds is absurd. To imply that our neighborhood would be conducive to an ORV park because it is already "noisy" is ridiculous. Most of us live in our neighborhood because of the quiet nature of the area and we do not consider the tricking streams running and wind blowing through our property "noise".

Fifth, property values. The city assessor stated that, in his/her opinion, our property values will not be affected. Is that the value according to our city-assessed property values/taxes or the value according to market value as determined by a market appraisal? Of course CBJ will not drop the assessed value of our property - it would mean less property taxes paid to the city. But market value is a very different measure. I truly believe the MARKET VALUE of our properties will decrease dramatically, making CBJ responsible for loss in the value of large personal assets.

Sixth, sound studies. As stated in my letter from last month, if sound studies are done, they need to be done by a professional, outside contractor. The "sound studies" conducted by the applicants are incomplete, non-scientific, and laced with conflict of interest.

I believe ORV users deserve a place to ride. However, I am adamantly opposed to this location for the ORV facility. I believe any location in or near a neighborhood residential area is absolutely unacceptable.

Sincerely,

Cinda Stanek