

Traci Gilmour

Open Letter to Juneau Planning Commission

In consideration of Fish Creek OHV Park

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My name is Traci Gilmour. I live @ 9343 Rivercourt Way in the Mendenhall Valley. I am present to address concerns in regards to opening an OHV Park directly behind a residential area in North Douglas.

I would like to ask the Planning Commission if and when you approve this park, would you live in the homes that are nearest this park. Just for six months, say, April – October. I expect those months to have the highest numbers of riders at a relatively constant level of riding.

I would like to ask the homeowners in the vicinity if they would allow you to be a guest in their home, or possibly trade homes with you to allow you to experience what they are being asked to tolerate. These homeowners have been told to alter what they have come to expect as a high quality of life for an increase in noise, traffic and possibly tragedy. I would ask which one of you would do the same willingly in your neighborhood? Do you believe you would take this sitting down if it were happening 350' behind your sanctuary? Do you not expect to go home after a day's work and relax without a constant drone of 90 decibels out your back window? Do you believe you should be allowed to sit on your deck or backyard with your children and barbecue on the weekends without the proven assault of ATV's disrupting your experience with your family? Should you be able to expect a nap on a Saturday afternoon, put your small children to bed @ 8pm or go to bed yourself @ 9pm? Do you like to sleep in on weekends? Should you expect to be allowed to be sick on your couch in the middle of the day and not be assaulted by constant ATV noise? Should you be able to open your doors and windows on one of our few beautiful days? Should you be allowed to open your windows @ night for fresh air? Or, should you just stay shuttered in your home that you built in this space specifically for the ~~scenery~~, close proximity to nature, and safety and serenity of being away from downtown or the valley and the high traffic volume expected?

These people purchased their homes with careful consideration and an expectation of peace and quiet. They are now being asked to trade that for disruption and an audibly stressful environment. Is that a fair trade on their investment? Would you step up and purchase their home knowing what would be in store on a daily basis? The Rough Riders themselves won't be putting up with it on a daily basis, they can go home to peace and quiet. For the residents in the vicinity of the park, they are home.

I ask what the City is expecting from the Rough Riders in regards to a User Group. Will they be paying a minimum of \$9.00 per hour for use as the other Field User Groups do? Will they be paying a possible \$6,000.00 per season to cover themselves and the City from lawsuits from riders who get injured on public property? I head the Juneau Softball Association and we pay these fees ~~to the City~~. The insurance policy must be in place before we can set foot on a softball field. What is Risk Management requiring from a much more proven dangerous recreational activity?

Is the City prepared for the increase in traffic flow to North Douglas, possibly at a high rate of speed and possibly being under the influence of alcohol? You already have runners and bikers using North Douglas and Eaglecrest Road for recreation as well as training for upcoming events. Hikers and residents with children and dogs can be found along Eaglecrest Road. Are you prepared to assume responsibility for an accident in relation to the increase in traffic?

Will there be an age limit, a signed waiver of liability (that won't stand up in court, but, please sign one anyway)? Who will enforce these rules? A person assigned to stay @ the park will come from the Rough Riders; will that person be able to stand up to his or her friends and enforce park rules? Or, will this become another situation that the City will have to pour money into once we find things are out of control? We will be building a fence to appease homeowners due to the fact that a few bad apples have ridden out of bounds or the noise is finally proven too much for residents to bear?

When do we show respect to those already in place and living the lives they have chosen and say no to space invaders? When can we expect to be allowed to have the homes and environment we bought into without tolerating a situation we deliberately worked to avoid?

Thank you for allowing us to speak to you.

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