

"Take Back Our Campbell Creek Park"
Illegal and Inappropriate Use
7/20/09 Meeting
Discussion Highlights & Next Moves

Legislators in attendance: Anchorage Assemblymember Elvi Gray-Jackson, as Chair, and State Representative Berta Gardner. A meeting participant list will be distributed with the announcement of the next meeting date.

Note: This meeting & discussion is **focused on Campbell Creek Park only**.
 "Something has to be done NOW!" about the immediate situation

Current Challenges facing Campbell Creek Manor and Neighbors:

- ❖ Homeless camps and public inebriates
- ❖ Constant threat to residents, neighbors and visitor safety
- ❖ Prescense of Gangs and Drugs
- ❖ Victims of crime and life threatening incidents
- ❖ Vandalism of park and residential property
- ❖ Delivery of & Alcohol/Drugs; Honey Buckets, Trash
- ❖ Noise, Fighting

Objectives:

- ✓ Find a solution(s) to end the neighborhood frustration & pain
- ✓ Bring back a feeling of safety when using the park area
- ✓ Clear the brush making it easier to view area and activity
- ✓ Initiate a plan that will really work to clean up and maintain removal of trash
- ✓ ALL residents and Visitors need to know about the need & importance to report
- ✓ EVERYONE will participate in the "take back" program to ensure success

Reality:

- ⌘ Anchorage Police Department (APD):
 - Over 100 calls for service in this area this year
 - Community Action Patrol has to answer all-priority calls first
 - Unfortunately has taken 45 minutes to respond
 - Not enough staff to respond to all calls
 - Drunk in Public is not a crime
 - APD has identified unregistered sex offenders in camps
 - Mentally ill homeless are easy targets to be victims of crime
 - A good number of homeless live addicted lives and are barely functional
 - Majority of Homeless are functional-they adapt to get what they need
 - Ex. One man renting out tents to homeless

They choose to live this lifestyle-Homeless Can Hide!
APD Officer Gilliam has never seen a homeless family in the woods
In his 30 years with APD

⌘ Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) Chief Goodrich:

"We do not need another study to identify the homeless - We already have the data- we know who they are and what we are dealing with."

187 calls were related to homeless camp, person or public inebriate
CSP (Community Service Patrol) responded to this area 175 times-
97 were for client pickups & 78 were gone

*Note: the wildland fire was caused by an unattended campfire in a homeless camp. This Piper Street Fire burned about 10.2 acres & threatened many homes in the area.

⌘ Anchorage Rescue Mission-

"The Mission is supportive of any effort that cuts down on this problem with the exception of closing the Mission."

All Shelters in Municipality are Full

Rescure mission feeds average of 350-450 people a day

About 68 overnight bunks, of which 28 are residents in the NewLife

Discipleship rehabilitation program. residents stay there

300 homeless campers cannot make rental payments at \$7.75 minimum wage

⌘ Anchorage Responsible Beverage Retailers Association, Inc.—ARBRA/Brown Jug - Ed O'Neill & volunteers at 563-3815 ext. 225

Cleans up 35 tons of camper garbage

They clean up over 100 hot spots

Focus on 2-3 "hot spots" in this area the past 3 mos.

Limited funds do not begin to pay for all trash removal that's needed

⌘ Miscellaneous:

Youth Volunteer clean up groups-too much hazardous materials

Honey buckets (five gallon buckets used by homeless & left in woods

Huge issue- HAZMAT -they are illegal but CWS folks cannot touch them
Landfill won't accept materials.

Fecal/human waste found in the creeks

Previous use of porta-potties result in vandalism, crime victims,abuse

Perhaps Making it too convenient; comfortable

Campbell Creek Manor Resident, Community Activist, Concerned Park Neighbor & most importantly; Volunteer Jeff Wooden, has agreed to take the lead on forming the "Take Back Our Campbell Creek Park" Committee!

THANK YOU JEFF!!!

Assembly member and area representative Elvi Gray-Jackson has agreed to do whatever she can to help Jeff, the committee and area residents.

PLAN OF ACTION- Things to Do: (start for today)

- Increase Visibility (clear trees and brush in the area) of homeless camps. Contact Muni department heads responsible for clearing areas- obtain permits to clear for residents? Community Work Service or Muni Forester?
- Elvi to meet with Fish and Game, ASD, CWS regarding public safety, misuse, hazard of viewing platform to remove- Condo resident Greg will coordinate volunteers to tear it down.
- Condo Residents and neighbors will record license plates of "delivery trucks" to park area to report and contact Liquor License Establishment Owners- Enforce the Don't Serve Policy and certainly don't sell to a "delivery truck" for distribution.— Invite owners to a meeting and "educate" them to the reality of the problem—share facts and concerns of area (photos, facts, etc.)
- Coordinate efforts with Holly Kent (Campbell Creek-Anchorage Waterways) to provide technical and other assistance (creek clean up volunteers—including area residents) in clearing area and public education about pollution and protecting habitat.
- Invite a homeless person—resident of a camp; resident of the Rescue Mission, participant of Pathways to Sobriety program to join the committee to provide information, insight and suggestions on what can be done in the area-potential solutions from their perspective- (informal survey of "sober"(?) uninvited park residents-

- Invite participation and involve area businesses in the discussion and committee meetings to help find ways and coordinate efforts to effectively deal with issues in the surrounding areas.

- Research/Investigate the alternative "homeless camps"
 - Tent cities-investigate possibility at Veteran's Ridge location
 - Nomad Shelters; not transitional village- Operational in Homer
 - When APD picks up a homeless for a crime or disturbance take them out to Centennial Park- Use \$ for preventative measures - Don't waste program dollars on rehabilitation and prevention programs that don't work.
 - Provide a camp for chronic public inebriates where drinking is allowed (concern for female abuse and victimization)
 - Designate "controlled area" -pay what they can, limit stays
 - The Rescue Mission's community volunteer Frank Thomas-Mears has a sample "tent city"—Share/Wheel concept

- Officer Gilliam : We need to have attached consequences. Contact Senator Ellis regarding Title 47 amendments and what can be done to support this legislation

- Committee should not rely on enforcement ideas only. Discuss ideas on how to answer questions:
 - If we relocate homeless where will they go
 - Who will pay for the setup and maintenance of camps
 - Clean up of beverage related camper problems - Contact Ed O'Neill at 563-3815 ext. 225 of Brown Jug as he manages the ARBRA industry nonprofit.