

**Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Erosion Zoning Ordinance Development
Public Workshop
Butte Elementary
March 7, 2007**

PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS

WHAT KIND OF EROSION ORDINANCE?

Summary of those who spoke at Butte meeting (summary by project consultants)

1. Ordinance will limit uses of land, reduce land values
2. Instead of restricting land use, work is needed to limit erosion (e.g., through dikes, rip-rap, extracting gravel from the river.)
3. Map shows erosion problems in areas without any erosion risks – in particular along the whole Knik River. This area should be taken out of the ordinance.
4. Why is this ordinance being proposed – it's not wanted, not needed?
(response: ordinance is condition for continued agency support for erosion control)

Statements recorded at meeting:

- Take into account differences in rivers – Knik is very different from Matanuska River.
- Most of Butte is in 100 year flood zone.
- The Borough has already decided what they are going to have this ordinance. Consider other options, e.g. river dikes.
- Circle View is trying to get money from State for erosion control.
- What is the basis for writing this ordinance? Local views vs. Borough?
- What is definition of property – land, improvements?

- I'm against the ordinance – it takes private property.
- Can ordinance take private property without compensation? That's illegal.
- Borough knew about erosion risk when they approved subdivisions; borough should bear responsibility for preventing erosion to existing subdivisions.
- Borough caused problem by allowing subdivisions.
- Establishing erosion hazard zones for erosion will lower land values; will there be a corresponding revision in Borough's assessed value of the land?
- We've told the Borough we don't want this ordinance.
- The ordinance should say that homeowners can use their money to protect their land (e.g., on Knik).
- People in Circle View are paying for dikes (a portion of property taxes goes into erosion hazard district). These dikes also provide for protection of people further down the river.
- Will erosion risk policy be tied to changes in insurance rates (like flood control)? (Response from member of public: insurance can be reduced if policy provides special erosion coverage).
- What is status of previous erosion control ordinance (draft prepared summer 2006)? Borough has prepared an ordinance already; this meeting only pretends to ask local views.
- Why can Borough afford to buy people out vs. improve erosion dikes, maintenance.
- Gravel extraction in the river could solve erosion problem – community needs help on making this happen.
- Does digging a trench down middle of river hurt anybody? Whole of American society affects national resources - why restrict actions in the Mat River?

- Regarding ordinance goals: Protect property? Protect Life? Definitions offered are ridiculous – ordinance won't do either. (Real reason is desire by Borough to enforce a permitting process.)
- Knik River has no history of erosion problems. Slow river, with very little change in elevation – erosion is not even an issue. Drop whole Knik from consideration.
- What was process for determining which properties were purchased by the Borough? (under one-time federal earmark)
- You said one option for the ordinance is to limit it to a warning – that's what we want.
- Does planned ordinance use 2006 draft erosion code definition of water bodies? (No – there is not a current draft ordinance)
- The past acquisition program excluded all homes w/ dikes.
- Why do we have to pay engineer for analysis if there is already an engineering analysis in place?
- Why not more Borough staff at meeting – we want answers to our questions. (Like why are we being forced to adopt an ordinance we don't want?)
- When will we get answers to questions?
- Who is on erosion advisory committee, how were they appointed? (Volunteers from the community). Need to add people from Knik to the committee.
- What are stats on Knik River – past erosion problems, river flow, etc? There is no erosion problem on the Knik.
- "I live on the Knik – I've got erosion problems."

- Are you aware of past efforts over the years; for example MSB plan for Circle View?
- What is existing MSB rule re setbacks from rivers? (75' structure, 100' septic)
- What about proposed 1000' maximums? What source for these numbers?
- How will decisions for depth of buffer be determined? Who will do this work, with what data, with what public review?
- Grandfathering – what is definition? Will new uses be possible on existing developed parcels – they should be. I want to add five cabins for a B&B.
- We don't want any ordinance!!! “stay on your side of the river” borough already decided to accept erosion? wrong course of action, need erosion
- South Knik community council won't support ordinance affecting Knik.
- How/why this ordinance, bottom line is that federal & state agencies want ordinance as condition of continued findings
- Agencies oppose actions such as gravel extraction in rivers
- Construction of the Matanuska river bridge at Palmer was a major cause of the erosion problem (Wilder construction should be liable)
- Why not use salvageable concrete (e.g. from anchorage) to control erosion problems? Explore other option for controlling river, e.g. tires (like in Florida)