

## **LAND USE LAWS MUST FIT ALASKANS NOT LOWER 48 SENSIBILITIES**

Anchorage building codes must, accommodate the needs of Alaskan lifestyles. Urban people, who have never been off pavement, will seldom even think about these issues.

- Materials, equipment, and/or vehicles, that are stored on a homeowner's property should not be the concern of the local government or the neighbors if they are not visible to the street or neighbors. A homeowner should be able to store or repair an airplane, snowmachine, or ATV or antique car in his garage/shop or yard as long as it is not visibly, or audibly disturbing to the neighbors. There should be no enforcement against any legal activity that has no impact on the neighbors
- Similarly, if a homeowner is accumulating building materials for transport to a cabin site by snow machine or by plane when the season is right, he should be able to store them for some period, say 5-7 months. Current code does not allow for storage of materials that are for an off site use.
- We must not allow zoning that discriminates against working people and small businesses by prohibiting citizens from driving their work truck home if it has a logo on the door. The idea that working Alaskans cannot live in some subdivision is absurd, anti American, and elitist. The only restriction we should have, are those that are in place before the business starts. If a new business wants to work outside of the current rules, they should go through the variance process. If a business is in place legally in a neighborhood, city people moving in around them should not adversely impact them. The old solution of "grandfathering" the in-place business is not a good solution, in that it generally precludes the business from expanding or changing to respond to the evolving marketplace. Newcomers to an area should not be able to force changes on the old timers in the area.
- The same principles should apply to hobbies/businesses such as raising horses and dogs for fun and business. The newcomers should not be able to drive them out.
- Properly designed, installed, and maintained on-site wells and septic systems can be the safest, most cost effective, and environmentally sound way of dealing with drinking water and human waste. We must not have land use laws that impede these effective ways of protecting human health. Massive, expensive public utility systems are not the answer for all situations.
- We must not preclude private citizens from building their own homes or using innovative technology in the construction. The building industry is producing marvelous new developments for construction that needs to be encouraged. Our building codes must allow for innovation and owner

participation in the design and construction. Similarly, we must allow a generous time frame for the completion of an owner built house, and allow for construction in stages.

- Chugiak/Eagle River has prospered with no building codes for private homes for 50 years. Homeowners, contractors, and lending institutions are easily capable of constructing high quality homes without a government inspector looking over their shoulder. If a lending institution or home buyer does not have the expertise to detect an unsafe home, there are expert home inspectors around who will do the inspections for a reasonable cost. The primary responsibility for enforcing quality construction must remain with the owner or lender with direct fiscal interest, not with some Government functionary. At least leave Eagle River/Chugiak this option, because people out here are easily capable of handling this responsibility.
- Finally, our building codes must not sacrifice individuality and personal freedom to just gain "nice" neighborhoods. "Nice" and "attractive" and "pleasant" are good things, but freedom is essential. Do not make our town nice but dull and limiting and devoid of character and worse, a place where free people are not free. Uniformity and pasteurization might be good for milk, but it does not work for Alaskans.

*Thank you for considering these comments.*

***Fred Dyson***