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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

JUNE 26, 2014

P R O C E E D I N G S

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Interviewer (Q): Unknown female

Interviewer (Q1): Unknown female

Interviewee (A): D

Interviewee (A1): E

Qturn this on and do a little bit of sound check.

A Okay.

A1 Oh, oh, I better do something with.....

A You got to go to the bathroom?

A1 Yeah.

Q All right, I'll go ahead and just put this on. I'll go ahead and start that again. So it is June 26th and we are with D and -- I'm sorry, what -- E. So we're just going to be talking to you guys about the neighborhood of Fairview. How long have you folks been in Fairview?

A1 Since 2000.

Q Okay. And I suppose, I guess we can start with like what was it like back in 2000 when you got here, like is there any characteristics that stuck out to you that are different from now or is it relatively the same?

A For me, the difference was a lot more drug houses, you know, throughout the neighborhood. You know, one block would be great, another block would be terrible,

1 another block would be great another block would be
2 terrible. But it's always been real friendly. The
3 people, you know, wandering around, the chronic
4 inebriates, and you know, alcoholism and whatnot, it's
5 kind of always been the same. I'd say there's less
6 prostitution now than there was, probably more young
7 people on the street now than there were.

8 Back then, I don't think there was any indication
9 of gangs around Fairview. I don't remember, that came
10 a little bit later. But always friendly, always very
11 active community council, always, you know, similar
12 merchants. Kind of similar buildings, there are some
13 new ones, but not a whole lot. We were -- I mean,
14 we're still kind of undiscovered. Similar school.

15 A1 See, we moved from Fairbanks here to Anchorage in 1990,
16 we lived out in Mountain View when we first got here.

17 A Uh-huh.

18 A1 Then we worked a lot here in Fairview. I remember the
19 first job I went on, it was a lot of drug people down
20 there. I was afraid to even walk into the buildings
21 back then.

22 A Right. It's gotten quite a bit better as far as drug
23 houses go.

24 A1 Yeah, it has.

25 A Yeah. I think a lot of that contributed to the

1 community council being active and -- or proactive, Lee
2 Ross in particular. I don't know if you've interviewed
3 Lee, but he'd be a great one to interview. He pretty
4 much headed up the community patrol for probably 10
5 years and then recently, he found a passion for
6 photography. Now he does a lot of photography, he
7 still does a little bit of patrolling, but not as
8 nearly as much as he used to.

9 Community policing worked really well, you know,
10 when they founded it and then it left and you know, now
11 we see more -- a bit more crime, especially at 13th and
12 Gambell and the surrounding area over there. Yeah,
13 that's the main difference I think.

14 Q Yeah.

15 A1 Yeah.

16 Q Do either of you have like just kind of quirky stories
17 that you remember from back in the day or even
18 recently, just interesting or funning stuff that's
19 happened around your neighborhood?

20 A Well, shortly after we moved here, you know, E's
21 always concerned about noises, you know, I'm less so.
22 So she heard a noise outside and so -- I don't know
23 what time that was, probably 12:30, 12:00 o'clock,
24 shortly after we moved here. So I -- you know, I got
25 out of bed, I said I'll go check it out and so I opened

1 the door and there was a gentleman sleeping in our
2 arctic entry. I didn't lock the outside door and he
3 wasn't a predator or seeking to harm anyone, he was
4 just looking for a place to -- a warm place to sleep
5 and that was kind of freaky. And so I told him, you
6 know, time to move on, you know, nicely and he was nice
7 and he left.

8 Another time, we heard -- E heard something
9 outside, I went and looked out there and there's some
10 intoxicated person wandering around on the other side
11 of our deck before we had the deck and so I kind of
12 went back there with apprehension, you know, kind of a
13 little bit on the nervous side, not knowing who's
14 wandering around our deck. And so I got back there and
15 saw somebody, so I yelled at him and he said don't hurt
16 me, don't hurt me, I'm just -- I'm drunk, I have no
17 idea where I am, where am I? And so that was kind of
18 comical. I said well, this is 15th and Ingra and he
19 said -- you know, I forget where he wanted to go and I
20 said well, it's that way, you know, not knowing if he
21 was serious or not, but he just wandered away.

22 We used to have people urinate quite a bit in the
23 alley, broad daylight, in back of Shell. You know, we
24 talked to a couple of people that did that. It was a
25 funny story, not funny, but interesting. So one guy's

1 name is D, he's in and out of jail all the time.
2 And so he's back there going to the bathroom back of
3 Shell and so I said hey, what are you doing? You know,
4 I was in the building across the alley at the time and
5 I said there's kids around here, you can't be going to
6 the bathroom. And so he stuck out his chest, and you
7 know, came barreling over to me and I just held my
8 ground, I said it's just not cool, I mean, there's kids
9 around here. You know, a few cuss words and wandered
10 up the alley. And again, D's drug of choice is, I
11 think, any drug. You know, with the alcohol. A long
12 time resident.

13 And so I talked to L R about that situation
14 and he goes oh, I know who that was, I described him,
15 real Black guy. He goes that's D, he goes he's
16 been here forever. I said yeah, I've seen him
17 wandering around. He said next time you talk to him,
18 just use his name D, just say hey, D, how the
19 hell you doing? He goes and he'll probably be your
20 friend. And so next time he's over there going to the
21 bathroom, I say hey, D, didn't we talk before
22 about not going to the bathroom over here, I said
23 there's kids around here. And he was so shocked that I
24 knew his name, and all of a sudden, he was real
25 friendly, he goes oh man, I forgot, I'm sorry, you got

1 any work? And I said well, I do actually, yeah. I
2 mean if you're willing to work, I said give me a call,
3 I wrote my number down and gave it to him. Of course,
4 I never heard from him, but and now whenever I see him,
5 I call him D and he's friendly and he's in and out
6 of jail, but just that personal touch that I knew who
7 he was, I knew his name, it disarmed him. And instead
8 of being a thug, you know, that was loaded on something
9 or just getting in or going to jail, you know, he's
10 always been a pretty nice guy.

11 L R does community policing a little bit
12 different -- he doesn't -- he's not aggressive where
13 some of the other communities, they are. He just knows
14 people and then he will use his knowledge to help the
15 police shut down crack houses. And occasionally, he'll
16 help the person that is on the street, you know, single
17 woman on crack or, you know, he got to know them and he
18 would help them and with the development of the
19 relationship, he was able to help them get off the
20 stuff sometimes. And then help the police, you know,
21 arrest some of the people that needed to be arrested.
22 Those are a couple stories I remember.

23 A1 I remember when we first moved here in 2000, we had a
24 little girl, she was -- how old was she then, eight?

25 A Uh-huh.

1 A1 Back then and we just moved in and we went back up to
2 Dimond to get a load of our belongings. A was
3 the last one out the door and came home about eight
4 hours later, she had both doors wide open and no one
5 came in the house. I always remember that one. That
6 always stuck out.

7 A Uh-huh.

8 Q I was curious, what are you folks doing with your front
9 yard? It looks like you're making some big changes in
10 it.

11 A We are, it's a work in progress. Last year, we ripped
12 out our fence and all the old grass, and this year,
13 we're putting in gardens replacing the (indiscernible)
14 we're adding peat moss and top soil to the new gardens,
15 and so we'll have maybe 60 feet -- maybe 140 feet of
16 new gardens. Then we'll plant a lot of flowers, some
17 shrubs, some trees, then make it beautiful.

18 Q Do you -- have either of you gardened vegetables?

19 A Actually, we're just now debating that. We got some
20 rhubarb that we transplanted over here. We thought
21 about making a lot of the yard an edible yard, you
22 know, with some raised beds and so we're still -- we're
23 going to have the gardens with the flowers for beauty
24 and we're still debating whether or not we want
25 additional parking or we want some raised

1 vegetable.....

2 A1 Flower beds.

3 Abeds.

4 A1 And gardens.

5 A Yeah, vegetable beds because we have the garden -- or

6 the flowers.

7 Q Uh-huh.

8 A Shrubs and stuff. But now, we're trying to figure out,

9 you know, how much of the vegetable garden we want.

10 E has always want to do a lot of vegetables.

11 Q Uh-huh.

12 A1 I did potatoes one year and I think we got what, two or

13 three pounds out of it.

14 A Yeah, pretty good. Yeah, but with that, a lot of work,

15 you know, only so much time.

16 Q Uh-huh.

17 A And so we're still trying to figure out. We don't have

18 a landscaping plan yet, but we will, you know, a

19 written plan. But it's not easy. I mean, the planning

20 is probably as hard as the physical labor.

21 A1 The driveway we had before, I wasn't able to drive up.

22 The bottom of my car would get scraped, so.....

23 A Yeah, we're here to stay, so this is it. We're not

24 going anywhere.

25 A1 Uh-huh.

1 A And so we're going to make it, you know, like we want.
2 It's a project and it's been a 10-year project so far.
3 But yeah, some of the -- the main reason we moved here,
4 which might be interesting is we lived in south
5 Anchorage, but we had a lot of investments, we used to
6 own quite a few prop -- rental properties. And so we
7 were always in this neighborhood or midtown or Fairview
8 or east side. And we're always trying to, you know,
9 taking 20 minutes to drive somewhere we were going.

10 And where we lived, the people -- there was a lot
11 of families but they didn't really want to get to know
12 you. They just did their own thing and the kids played
13 with each other, but the adults were just kind of doing
14 their own thing, kind of silos, you know, silos on the
15 block. You know, one family didn't really want to get
16 to know because one of their kids were having trouble.
17 But it just wasn't real embracing or friendly.

18 But here, you know, the neighbors were always real
19 friendly. The tenants were pretty friendly, and if you
20 went to the community council, there's always action,
21 there's a lot of people trying to improve the
22 neighborhood. And so I suggested to E that why
23 don't we move here in this house, which you know, was a
24 rental and she was kind of apprehensive. We talked
25 about what school, you know, our adopted daughter

1 should go to, whether or not we wanted to enroll her in
2 Fairview or take her to an alternative or a charter
3 school. And so we decided yeah, we'll move here, see
4 how it works out. We'll enroll A in Fairview
5 Elementary School and that was really before I had knew
6 much about public education and so I thought that was a
7 pretty good idea.

8 But it was kind of funny why I thought it was a
9 good idea. I thought if she went to Fairview, you know,
10 it's a pretty aggressive school. You know, the kids
11 are pretty aggressive. It's -- you know, majority of
12 African Americans. You know, our daughter's a Native
13 gal from a little village on the Yukon. We thought,
14 you know, that'd be good because then she would learn
15 about bigotry and about bullies real early. Then she'd
16 figure out how to overcome it.

17 And it was one of the poorer decisions I ever made
18 because the education's all about, you know, getting
19 smart. They're mostly about getting smart. And you
20 know, the turnover of principals in Fairview, the
21 culture of Fairview, the expectations of Fairview and
22 the academic outcomes of Fairview has always been very,
23 very low. And so I didn't know that when I enrolled
24 her. But you know, I became pretty passionate about
25 education because I see what was happening at Fairview.

1 Then, you know, she went to Central, then over to
2 West and she went to four different high schools, but
3 graduated on time. And so I got pretty involved and
4 still involved with public education because, you know,
5 I saw the lower expectations for minority kids and I
6 saw the -- kind of the status quo of the system knowing
7 more than everybody else even though the academic
8 achievement gap has gotten larger over the last 20
9 years, not smaller. It's grown.

10 And you know, when I got involved, I realized that
11 I should probably do a bunch of research. And so with
12 the research, I found that there are some schools with,
13 you know, high poverty, high -- you know, with majority
14 and minority, demographics, you know, that do really
15 well. And so just because a school might be in a low
16 income, you know, minority neighborhood doesn't mean
17 the kids have to do poorly. And so when I saw that, I
18 thought wow, why does so many of our schools here in
19 Anchorage do poorly?

20 So I really start studying our school district and
21 our schools and some schools that you'd expect to do
22 poorly actually do pretty well with the right principal
23 with the right expectations and with the right
24 environment. But when that principal leaves, you know,
25 test scores go up generally like a rocket, then you

1 have a -- like a good principal. But when that
2 principal leaves, those soaring academic test scores
3 will drop like a rock.

4 And I've seen it at Fairview Elementary School,
5 I've seen it at Mountain View, I've seen it at Muldoon
6 and so I'm involved quite a bit in encouraging the
7 district in various schools and parents to pay
8 attention and to help change the system because kids
9 that are not doing well, typically it's because they
10 don't have the right environment, because the adult's
11 not giving them the -- you know, what they need to
12 soar. And so it's real exciting about our neighborhood
13 is, over the last 10 years, you know, talking to
14 neighbors about public education and (indiscernible)
15 education (indiscernible) the President of the
16 community council for a year.

17 And so we thought that public education -- we're
18 just -- any kind of education was really important,
19 probably as important or as probably just down from
20 public safety. And so we created an education
21 committee, had a summit, you know, and the result of 10
22 years of talking about education is, in the Fairview
23 neighborhood plan, it's an official document that has
24 to be approved by the assembly, by planning and zoning,
25 which they approved it and shortly by the assembly.

1 There's language in the plan that talks about
2 education. It talks about the high expectations and
3 the world class education and that after the
4 neighborhood plan is approved, then the community
5 council leadership will begin collaborating with
6 residents and others to create a neighborhood education
7 plan.

8 And it's fantastic because it shows that the
9 residents don't just talk about land use, they just
10 don't want to talk about, you know, public safety, they
11 just don't want to talk about, you know, the business
12 sector. You know, that education for our kids is
13 really, really important, so important that we've had a
14 standing committee for over 10 years. I don't believe
15 any other community council has had a standing
16 committee in education.

17 And it's so important that we put that chapter in
18 our neighborhood plan called education. And so that,
19 to me, is really exciting because as principals and
20 teachers and different schools within the Anchorage
21 school district have shown that the right classroom
22 environment, the right leadership and the right
23 expectations, the kids do very, very well. Just not
24 often enough and so my hope is to participate and help
25 Fairview Elementary School be the first elementary

1 school to eliminate the achievement gap and lead the
2 school district in academic growth for the kids.

3 But we have one of the largest concentration of
4 East African immigrant kids, refugees. You know, they
5 bring a lot of assets with them. They also bring a lot
6 of needs, you know, coming from a war torn community.
7 But those kids, like any -- all kids, are really,
8 really smart given the right environment and
9 expectations and leadership. So that's what I'm really
10 excited about. It's always controversial. There's
11 some people, you know, that regularly (indiscernible)
12 community council meetings. They blame the parents,
13 they blame the kids.

14 You know, some of them are leaders, you know,
15 blame the kid, blame the parents. But my view is,
16 don't blame anybody, let's figure out what the barriers
17 are to success and take care of business. And if we
18 can't, then let other people try because the evidence
19 is clear, it's not the kids, it's the adults, it's the
20 leaders of education. And so it's going to be exciting
21 because if we propose changes, maybe systemic changes
22 or changes, you know, within our neighborhood schools,
23 you know, we're probably not going to have everybody
24 sign on, but the hope is that we collaborate, create
25 consensus, you know, and work hard to help our

1 teachers, our principals, our administration, our
2 school board. (Indiscernible) kind of shrug their
3 shoulders and say it's always been crowded
4 (indiscernible) performing. We just -- you know, we
5 don't want to spend the resources and time to really
6 focus on that school or the other 15 to 20 schools that
7 have always been chronically under performing.

8 You know, we just -- you know, it's not our focus.
9 Then it'll be interesting to see what happens because I
10 don't think the neighborhood is willing to say okay
11 anymore like we have for a long, long time. You know,
12 hope the kids get lucky with a good principal and good
13 teacher. I think those days are over. So that's real
14 exciting.

15 A1 I remember when we first moved here in 1990 in the
16 rental business and a lady had called me about an
17 apartment and she said well, I'm on Mumford and people
18 told me in Mountain View, you got to watch out for the
19 drugs and alcohol, but she sounded like she was high
20 and then she said well, I'm on Mumford and I didn't
21 know what to say, I thought she was on a drug. And
22 then about eight months later, there was a birthday
23 party on Mumford Street, a lady had invited me over, so
24 I told them my story and they're like (indiscernible).

25 And then when we first moved here, I did not drive

1 and one day, D had set me up to go to the airport, so
2 that meant that I had to drive the car behind him, so I
3 did and instead of going home, she drove me all over
4 Anchorage.

5 A High expectation. I'm not going to be your chauffeur,
6 you know? You live in the city, you got to go out and
7 drive.

8 Q Yeah.

9 A And she did really well. Really well.

10 A1 And so I was really stressed by the time we got home.
11 And then he went to Seattle to care for his dad for
12 about three months? Three to six months?

13 A Yeah, six, seven, yeah.

14 A1 So I had to drive and we were on Dimond also, so I had
15 to drive. One day, I took a taxi, I was so afraid to
16 drive.

17 Q Uh-huh.

18 A1 And then when I got to (indiscernible), it was \$20 and
19 I said no way, I'm going to drive.

20 A Yeah, it goes to the same thing with the kids, it's the
21 confidence.

22 Q Uh-huh.

23 A It's having somebody to believe in you. I remember
24 telling E, I said you know, there's millions of
25 people that drive.

1 Q Uh-huh.

2 A1 Uh-huh.

3 A They're not all more talented than you are. You can
4 drive, you know, just close your eyes.

5 A1 So what I did, I noticed there was no traffic in the
6 morning after everyone went to work, so that's when I
7 left and then I waited until after lunch to go home
8 because the traffic was less too.

9 A She's been driving ever since. She drove so well, we
10 went on a road trip last summer, 5000 miles she drove
11 from the east coast to the west coast.

12 Q Oh wow.

13 A She did great. Yeah, did great, but it's that
14 confidence, you know, like the kids. You know, with
15 everyone, you know? If you believe, you can achieve,
16 you can generally achieve.

17 Q Uh-huh.

18 A You know, but those chronic under performing schools,
19 everybody knows which ones they are. You know, it's
20 those schools that have, you know, brown colored kids
21 in there as a majority. You know, quite often, they're
22 socially, economically, you know, lower than other
23 schools and that goes for -- back a couple hundred
24 years when public education was created. Those kids
25 never were expected to achieve.

1 But now, it's more important than ever for a
2 number of reasons. I mean, morally, because it's the
3 right thing to do, you know, we're not bigots, you
4 know, we believe that all kids, you know, can excel.
5 We believe in opportunity as a country, we believe in
6 equity, but aside from, you know, the moral part of the
7 responsibility to give all kids a shot and a great life
8 and a shot at being the best they can be, you know, the
9 country is fast becoming a majority/minority country.

10 And so you know, as it goes, you know, the
11 education levels of our country goes to our country.
12 So we'll have the -- probably still have the greatest
13 military the world's every seen and it's being managed
14 by, you know, people that are under educated. You
15 know, that's a pretty scary scenario.

16 Now as far as competition goes, you know, right
17 now, you know, the last 20 years, 25 years, we've
18 fallen behind the developing countries. But now we
19 have China and we have India that understand the
20 importance of education and how to -- with it being a
21 global economy. I mean, what China has, what, 1.3
22 billion people. More people in China speak English
23 than in the Americans. And now, they're just kind of
24 into their, what do you call it, industrial age, and so
25 the more and more people that have an opportunity to

1 get smart, you know, the more competition, unless we
2 can out think, you know, these developing economies,
3 we'll be left in the dust.

4 And so a lot of people that really study education
5 understand that it is now more important than ever to
6 educate all kids, especially the kids that have never
7 -- that have been under educated and those are the poor
8 kids and the minority kids. So great opportunity in
9 Fairview coming up in the next year or so.

10 Q Yeah.

11 A Will it be controversial? I'm not sure, but if it's
12 all about the kids, we'll succeed. If the adults
13 intervene, they'll want to divide and conquer because
14 they want to keep the status quo, play the blame game,
15 then it'll be the same as it has been for years. I
16 hope to be involved and contribute and hope to
17 understand the potential pitfalls of the status quo and
18 help overcome that successfully for the kids. So
19 pretty passionate for that.

20 I'm pretty proud that our daughter graduated on
21 time after going to four high schools. She wanted to
22 quit, she wanted to go to an alternative school and I
23 said you're not going to no alternative school, why do
24 you want to go to an alternative school? I mean,
25 because my friends are going, you know, and the

1 neighborhood kids. I said no, you're not going to
2 alternative school, you don't need an alternative
3 school, you can do just fine where you're at, you know,
4 and just start trying a little bit harder.

5 You know, the more I think about alternative
6 schools, why do we have alternative schools? We have a
7 lot of alternative schools because our neighborhood
8 schools are poor, and so why don't we just fix our
9 neighborhood schools? Why do we have, you know, the
10 conversation about vouchers? You know, we want -- kids
11 and parents have vouchers, take their kids out of the
12 neighborhood schools and go to a better school. You
13 know, go to a religious school, go to a charter school,
14 go through an alternative school.

15 But nobody's talking about why don't we just fix
16 our neighborhood schools? We were vested in what, 100
17 of them, why not just fix them, make them the high
18 standards that they're able to -- the highest standards
19 they're able to be. And so a lot of this public
20 education just seems kind of silly. Let's fix our
21 neighborhood schools. Our neighbors here would rather
22 their kids walk to our neighborhood schools than have a
23 responsibility to drive them someplace, which pollutes,
24 costs money and it's not a wise use of resources for
25 any neighborhood.

1 But again, the barriers are the adults. And so
2 how do we change that? Hopefully, the neighborhood
3 will figure that out and be successful and create a
4 neighborhood plan that results in our neighborhood
5 schools leading the way and eliminating the
6 (indiscernible) gap and helping kids be as smart as
7 they can get.

8 Q So what are like some of your favorite things about the
9 Fairview neighborhood and it can be like an old eatery
10 or like a historic site or just like something in
11 general. Favorite things about Fairview.

12 A1 D and I have been involved with the flower bed
13 committee about the beautification.

14 A Uh-huh.

15 A1 So every spring, we're down at the (indiscernible)
16 transplanting flowers for the municipality.

17 A Is that one of your favorite things?

18 A1 I don't mind doing that.

19 Q What kind of flowers do you put in there?

20 A Well, it has been, I guess, annuals.

21 A1 Uh-huh.

22 A You know, we're talking about the neighborhood changing
23 those to edibles or perennials. Some of my favorite
24 things about the neighborhood. Good question.

25 Q Well, just stuff you enjoy too, it doesn't have to be

1 (indiscernible).

2 A Mountains.

3 A1 Uh-huh.

4 A The mountains (indiscernible - simultaneous speech).

5 A1 We get the (indiscernible) kicking for the -- down here

6 and we had to pull all the trees.

7 A Oh, when they moved the building?

8 A1 Yes.

9 A Yeah. It's okay to have a landscaping that looks

10 great.....

11 Q Uh-huh.

12 Aand that's -- you can thank community council for

13 that.

14 A1 Uh-huh.

15 A (Indiscernible) preferred alternative to the 15th

16 Avenue safety improvement projects. (Indiscernible) to

17 go well way on 15th Avenue and another way on 13th I

18 think it was. Either 13th or 14th and so you would

19 have, you know, two super highways like Ingra and

20 Gambell, you have this island of residential facilities

21 in the middle. Ridiculous.

22 You know, Ingra and Gambell's ridiculous. And

23 they're doing the same thing here, but thanks to A

24 K and the community council, C B

25 was the President at the time, they stopped that

1 politically. When I think -- anybody that looks at
2 15th Avenue now says wow, that is beautiful, especially
3 compared to what it used to be next to 15th Avenue.

4 But I really enjoy the mountains. Wherever you
5 go, in Fairview, you can see the mountains and in
6 Anchorage. The mountains are just so awesome, they're
7 so close. That's one of the beautiful things I like.
8 I like hearing the birds sing in the morning time or
9 early evening.

10 A1 Uh-huh.

11 A I love to be able to drive 15 minutes down the road and
12 be out in the woods, either going to Girdwood or going
13 up to Wasilla. I love it. Anchorage still has a small
14 town feel, but it's -- we have a lot of the amenities
15 of a big urban area.

16 A1 We like to go down to the Lucky Wishbone sometimes
17 there. D has a friend that owns Lucky Wishbone.

18 A Yeah, that's what's cool is knowing people that were
19 here when very few other people were that are now in
20 the 80s and 90s. G B, just a solid human
21 being, you know, who came up and -- as his wife is, and
22 they developed Lucky Wishbone.

23 And the ability to call L G,
24 representative G and Senator E. You know, in
25 big cities, you know, I think you get a staffer. Here,

1 we know it's still small enough where you can call your
2 representative and I think that's pretty cool.

3 We have a few gangs, but nothing like a major city
4 has, yet.

5 Q Uh-huh.

6 A1 I like the 15th Avenue sidewalk where I can walk from
7 here all the way up to the light and back.

8 A Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

9 Q It sounds like proximity to nature is important to you
10 guys, living here in Anchorage, is that right?

11 A Yeah, peaceful environment.

12 A1 Uh-huh.

13 A And typically, nature likes neutral environments. You
14 know, they don't -- plants like neutral atmospheres,
15 you know, we have moose, you know, come down our street
16 occasionally. We have kids or dogs running after them,
17 so they just kind of stroll through the neighborhood,
18 keep on going and I really like that.

19 But our neighbors here, we know all of our
20 neighbors, we're friendly with every one of them.
21 They're all high quality people. They want to get to
22 know you.

23 Q Uh-huh.

24 A I plow my neighbors.....

25 A1 Driveways.

1 A Yeah, driveways, and you know, they didn't ask me, I
2 just did it. I'm plowing mind, I do theirs. You know,
3 so -- and occasionally, somebody will bring over some
4 coffee, you know, leave it on the door, but it's just
5 really nice to be able to wave at your neighbor as
6 you're leaving.

7 Whereas, in south Anchorage, you didn't have that.
8 People just kind of kept to themselves.

9 A1 Unh-unh (negative).

10 A You know, I like the diverse opinions of the community
11 council level and there's passion of debate. I like
12 that. And then, at the end of the day, you try to
13 reach a consensus or vote up or down an issue and you
14 work hard to make it happen, whatever issue of the day
15 is being debated. So I like the active people that go
16 to the community councils.

17 A1 And we adopted a Fairbanks park.

18 A Oh yeah, we've done that for 10 years or so.

19 A1 Yeah.

20 A There's another success story. Fairbanks Park, do you
21 know where that is?

22 Q No.

23 A Okay, that's down -- you know where Bishops Attic is?

24 Q Some.....

25 A You know where Gambell is?

1 Q Yeah.

2 A Okay, Gambell and 13th is.....

3 Q Yeah.

4 ACarrs?

5 Q Yeah.

6 A So two blocks north, same side of the street.....

7 Q Uh-huh.

8 Ais Bishops Attic and that's a secondhand store.

9 And so then their fence borders Fairbanks Park. It's

10 just a little neighborhood park. You know, it's

11 probably 15, 18 feet lower than Gambell, just a

12 neighborhood park for kids, for young kids.

13 A1 Uh-huh.

14 A And it had been neglected for years and so I don't

15 know, how did we get involved in that? I think it was

16 when we were -- I think it was when I was on the

17 executive board, either on the executive board or the

18 President of the community council. We -- at that

19 point, 13th and Gambell -- it is kind of a funny story

20 too.

21 A1 Uh-huh.

22 A So 13th and Gambell, we thought was the worst area in

23 Anchorage. And so when I talked to my friends, you

24 know, about moving here, they'd say what are you nuts,

25 why in the world would you want to move to Fairview?

1 We said we kind of like it, like the people. And so
2 they said but you know 13th and Gambell is like the
3 prostitutes, you got thugs, you got dope dealers, you
4 got homeless people, you got drunk people. And they
5 were -- I mean, just go there, just check it out and I
6 said I go by there all the time. They said, you know,
7 our wives, you know, they'll go through Fairview and
8 they'll pray that that light at 13th and Gambell
9 doesn't turn red. If it turns red, all they do is look
10 straight ahead, their doors are locked and they just
11 pray they get through this intersection before somebody
12 comes to the door or something bad happens.

13 And so Ella, I said, let's go down there and get
14 to know the people and so we went down there and we had
15 a hot dog, we brought our grill and we cooked hot dogs
16 for a month from about 6:00 o'clock to dark or right
17 before dark just to kind of get a sense of whose
18 hanging out at 13th and Gambell. And that's kind of
19 fun because most of the people that came up for free
20 food.....

21 A1 Uh-huh.

22 Awere pretty nice people even though they might be
23 homeless or might be intoxicated or on some kind of
24 drug. They weren't predators. It was a certain crew,
25 you know, that were the pimps that were the predators,

1 you know, kind of the dangerous people. But that was
2 enjoyable to kind of get a sense of that. What wasn't
3 very enjoyable was about the same time, there was a
4 woman murdered on Hyder. Her husband, I don't know
5 what was going on there, but he got mad and she ran
6 away from the apartment, he chased her and then between
7 13th and 14th and Ingra, caught up to her and shot her
8 dead in the parking lot. But that Hyder corridor has
9 always been real dangerous, there in no man's land.
10 But about the same time that we do the hot dogs, we got
11 to know people and tried to figure out solutions to
12 that unhealthy intersection, we adopted Fairbanks Park,
13 and at the time, it was just a place for.....

14 A1 The homeless people.

15 Athe homeless people to go, you know, and kind of
16 the thugs and some of the young people.....

17 A1 Uh-huh.

18 Athat were not doing well, just go down to the park
19 and hang out and do bad things. And it was designed
20 for young kids, you know, seven or eight or younger.
21 And so we adopted that park and then talked to the
22 community council that I didn't run for election again.
23 I got off the executive board, we just talked to them
24 about trying to improve the park and they thought it
25 was a great idea and so we collaborated with L

1 G, J E and with the municipality and the
2 Parks Foundation.

3 And there's a fence built to isolate the northern
4 side of that park paid for by, I think the
5 municipality, Parks and Rec bonds and then three
6 homeowners built a fence going the opposite direction.
7 Their fences went north and south and the
8 municipality's fence went east and west.

9 A1 Uh-huh.

10 A And that stopped people from going to the liquor store
11 to that park because they'd have to go over a six-foot
12 fence.

13 A1 Uh-huh.

14 A And it put a barrier around that park. And then Parks
15 and Rec planted a bunch of flowers and they got rid of
16 some of the old.....

17 A1 Rose bushes.

18 A Yeah, rose bushes.

19 A1 Uh-huh.

20 A And then they got rid of some of the old playground
21 equipment. They did a little bit of landscaping and
22 they talked to the people that border that -- that live
23 next to that park, they'll say that park has improved
24 95 percent.

25 A1 Uh-huh.

1 A Just because somebody had the expectation that, you
2 know, we can do better than this. At the time, you
3 know, we had a conversation about just getting rid of
4 the park and just, you know, sell the -- encourage the
5 muni to sell the land and just make it additional
6 housing, apartments or condos. Yeah, I'm pretty proud
7 that, you know, the community decided to keep it a park
8 and the community decided to try to improve the park
9 and had our expectations to take it back from the
10 inebriates. You know, they'd have sex in the middle of
11 the day, they didn't care who was watching. You know,
12 moms and their daughters would come over and want to
13 swing on the playground equipment and swing on the
14 swings and there would be some adults, you know,
15 howling at the moon or having sex in the middle of the
16 day. Just disgusting. People just forgot about it.

17 A1 Uh-huh.

18 A And so that was one of the -- one thing that was really
19 nice to see.

20 A1 Uh-huh.

21 A Because it was successful and it was a collaboration
22 between the public who -- you know, land owners who
23 built up their fences, the muni.....

24 A1 Uh-huh.

25 Aand the State and we did it probably 80 percent

1 under budget.

2 A1 And I think Barry's -- didn't Barry's Lounge pay for
3 part of it too?

4 A No.

5 A1 No? They didn't get involved at all?

6 A No, not that one.

7 A1 Uh-huh.

8 A So that was real successful, but you know, that's kind
9 of -- what I like the most is, you know, being able to
10 participate in helping improve the neighborhood. We
11 have neighbors helping us maintain the flowers at the
12 diverter. Yeah, so it's just really a sense of place,
13 a sense of belonging. You know, and it's really a
14 pretty safe neighborhood.

15 A1 Our daughter used to go down there and water the
16 plants.

17 A Yeah.

18 A1 Now she's older and 20 years old now.

19 A Yeah, they're an example to community service, you
20 know, to have opportunities to make a difference, and
21 so as we were raising our daughter, you know, here's
22 your opportunity, come on, let's go.

23 A1 Uh-huh.

24 A Turn off the TV and we're going to go water flowers or
25 play in the dirt.

1 A1 Our neighbors would knit her scarfs and hats and
2 whatever.

3 A Yeah. Yeah.

4 A1 Just to thank her.

5 A And she had to meet some of the neighbors like C
6 S who helped there for a few years. Yeah, so
7 it's truly about the people, I think. The nature's
8 good, the mountains are great, you know, but truly the
9 people that make a difference here and that's the logo,
10 people make a difference and we do.

11 And one of my concerns though is, you know, as
12 this neighborhood grows, you know, that more and more,
13 what do you call that, you know, real estate will
14 become more and more valuable. You'll have the
15 residents who have lived here for a long time, their
16 kids not being able to afford to live here because
17 you'll have money move in and then it'll change the
18 diversity of the neighborhood. Then it'll be more
19 upper class, you know, Caucasian and it's already
20 happening and that will be a loss to the neighborhood,
21 and so you know, with improved public education, some
22 of the kids will be able to compete for some of those
23 good jobs, then hopefully, they can buy, you know,
24 their own place in Fairview or they can improve their
25 parents place.

1 You know, but that's a real concern because it
2 happens all over the country. You know, this location
3 is very different than south addition, than the
4 demographics between us and south addition, you know,
5 night and day.

6 A1 For the first time this year, a couple weeks ago, these
7 homeless people started coming down and they kind of
8 moved right into the landscaping here off of 15th and
9 Juneau and the rain came so I haven't seen them for a
10 couple days.

11 A Yeah, they're not dangerous, they're just loud.

12 A1 Yeah, they start drinking and get loud.

13 A But they come and they go.

14 A1 Uh-huh.

15 Q Now we've been collecting urban legends from a lot of
16 people and I'm wondering if you guys had any urban
17 legends or urban myths or even ghost stories related to
18 the neighborhood or to the home that you had?

19 A Legends, myths, ghosts stories?

20 Q We had someone over in the scenic foothills talking
21 about like how there was a rumor about a
22 (indiscernible) of gold running underneath the
23 neighborhood somewhere, something like that. Just
24 those kind of stories.

25 A1 I better dig deeper to garden.

1 Q What was that?

2 A1 I said I better dig deeper to garden. What I heard was

3 -- I had a relative that lived over here and there was

4 -- was it a log cabin?

5 A I don't know.

6 A1 In this vacant lot here?

7 A It was a log cabin, yeah.

8 A1 They had said it was haunted and our neighbor had told

9 them that there was a murder over there. That's all I

10 know about that vacant property there. Robert had told

11 me there was a murder over there.

12 A I can't help you out on the ghost stories.

13 Q Yeah, that's okay.

14 A1 That's all I heard.

15 Q That's fine. Some people have a bunch of them and then

16 some people have none, so that's how it goes.

17 A Legends, I can't think of any legends.

18 Q Uh-huh.

19 A A lot of distinguished people.

20 Q Yeah? Like who? Infamous or famous?

21 A Huh?

22 Q Famous or infamous or both?

23 A Both. Both, yeah. Both. We were still a young city,

24 and so you got G B's of -- you know, that are

25 -- just going to work everyday taking care of their

1 business and their kids and their responsibilities.
2 You know, W H, you got H, E. You
3 know, that's one thing I think we really are losing is
4 statesmen. It seems like now everything is so
5 partisan, you know, that when you -- and a lot of it's
6 not civil debate anymore, it's uncivil debate, you
7 know, kind of ruled by the far left or the far right.

8 What I always liked was and what I still respect a
9 lot is, you know, consensus building. You may be
10 passionate about something, but I think what really
11 made the country great is consensus. You know, and
12 once you reach a consensus, then they'll work hard to
13 make it happen. And I see less and less of that and
14 more and more of power ruling the day. If you got the
15 power, then you're going to get your way. If you don't
16 have the power, then you know, you lost as opposed to
17 win, win.

18 You know, so that's one thing that I really
19 admired about our State, we had a lot of statesmen, but
20 now, we have less and less statesmen. People tend to
21 get into politics for less noble reasons, I think, more
22 about what's in it for me as about what's in it for
23 Anchorage or what's in it for the State. So hopefully
24 that'll change.

25 Q I hear a lot of people that we've talked to in Fairview

1 talk about south addition. What is that? Like what
2 area, like.....

3 A C Street.

4 Q C Street?

5 A Oh no, A Street over.

6 Q Okay.

7 A A Street to Minnesota.

8 Q Okay.

9 A And then from Minnesota.....

10 A1 South.

11 A Minnesota to the water.....

12 Q Uh-huh.

13 Aeast or west would be Turnagain.

14 Q Uh-huh. So it's the place in between that?

15 A Right.

16 Q So in between Fairview and Turnagain.

17 A Right.

18 Q When was it added?

19 A It was one of the original neighborhoods.

20 Q Yeah?

21 A And it's, you know, one of the most desirable
22 neighborhoods in Anchorage. You can walk downtown, you
23 got older buildings that have been remodeled, but the
24 land is so extremely, you know, valuable. And you have
25 one of the best school -- elementary schools in the

1 district, you have Chugach Optional School over there.

2 Q Uh-huh.

3 A And so our land in Fairview is very similar to their
4 land, but complete different demographics. But that'll
5 change over time probably. There's a word for that, I
6 forgot what that word was. Gentrification. Yeah,
7 that's a bad word. Run people off because they can't
8 afford to live where they grew up.

9 Q So do you guys try to do most of like your shopping and
10 business interactions in the community as much as
11 possible or do you kind of just go to wherever in town
12 you need to go to get done with what you need to?

13 A1 I usually go up to Sears Carrs.....

14 Q Okay.

15 A1and do my shopping there. When I did go here,
16 like if there's a lot of street people around and went
17 to -- I would go into the store and followed around as
18 I shopped and I usually don't get -- ask for help, but
19 that time I did, so it kind of scared me, so I'd rather
20 go up there to Sears Carrs.

21 A You know, that's one issue that's kind of divided the
22 neighborhood right now is the two liquor stores. And
23 so this community, you know, since the 60s probably,
24 late 60s, has been fighting the after hour clubs and
25 the irresponsible taverns that will easily permit it.

1 And so you had the HUD re-development of the flats and
2 once they redeveloped that, a lot of people moved up to
3 this part of Fairview. And about the same time, you
4 had the boom of the oil pipeline, so you had a lot of
5 new people coming through.

6 And so they'd drink -- a lot of drinking and drug
7 and then prostitution. But C S and
8 others, you know, they were active in community council
9 back then and they fought that and they won more often
10 than not. They closed down the Nevada Tavern and they
11 kept on putting pressure on the municipality and the
12 police department and you know the people that are
13 doing illegal activities. Now, you know, we've kind of
14 gotten used to 13th and Gambell being what it is and
15 there's a somewhat controversial ideas of how to
16 improve 13th and Gambell. Some people say you cannot
17 improve it until you get rid of the liquor because, if
18 you have liquor, then you have a free place to stay at
19 Brother Francis and you have food.

20 A1 Uh-huh. And churches.

21 A You have the three pillars of what addicted people need
22 to hang out and do illegal things. Other people say,
23 if I want to buy a beer, I don't want to have to drive
24 someplace else because you eliminated our liquor stores
25 because of, you know, a couple hundred people that

1 cause problems. And so there's -- you know, it's kind
2 of divided right now. You know, has Carrs been a good
3 corporate citizen? I don't think so. I think they've
4 been a terrible corporate citizen. When they are
5 pressured to do something relating to their alcohol
6 sales, they'll do something for a little while until
7 people aren't looking anymore, then they'll just do
8 exactly what they always have done.

9 And so it's kind of a repeated effort, you know,
10 to make Carrs responsible. Now, you know, Safeway
11 bought them out, now Safeway is being bought out, you
12 know, and so will it be the same ole, same ole with
13 that liquor store? Probably. And then politics gets
14 involved. You know, you have -- you know, the alcohol
15 -- what is it alcohol beverage control board or
16 something or commission that is responsible for
17 policing the standards of which the liquor licenses
18 have to operate.

19 But that's changed from public safety now to
20 community development or I think they're -- not
21 community development, but commerce, and you know, one
22 of our -- our past President, his dad is on the
23 commission, he used to be a number one guy for Carrs in
24 their liquor sales. And so you know, does that
25 influence, you know, whether or not some of our elected

1 leadership on the community counsel want to permit
2 liquor stores in our neighborhood? I'm not sure. Some
3 people think so.

4 Would we be better off without those two liquor
5 stores? A lot of people think so, but a lot of people
6 say it doesn't matter. We'd be better off. I wouldn't
7 be able to go there and buy liquor. I don't have to
8 drive someplace else to buy liquor. You know, my
9 feeling is when the public good, you know, outweighs
10 the individual good, then you know, that's your
11 decision. And so, you know, my belief is, you know,
12 based on the history of those two liquor licenses.
13 They're tearing our neighborhood apart by, you know,
14 not being responsible establishments. I think a lot of
15 our problems would be solved if those two liquor
16 licenses relocated, but that's probably not going to
17 happen, and so then you know, concerned residents just
18 need to continue to be active and participate and try
19 to put pressure on the community council as well as the
20 liquor stores, you know, to be -- you know, to address
21 public safety and the liquor stores that bring a lot
22 of, you know, poison in our neighborhood.

23 I like, you know, beer, I like, you know, a drink
24 occasionally, but you know, the damage that those two
25 liquor stores help people do to themselves has really

1 hurt our neighborhood for a long, long time. But now,
2 you know, it's always power and politics and so far,
3 the liquor stores have prevailed. But even so, you
4 know, it's still a neighborhood that's getting better.

5 Q Well, thank you so much for your time.

6 A1 You're welcome.

7 Q We've reached about an hour, so I'm going to go ahead
8 and.....

9 A Good deal.

10 (Off tape)

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