

HB

437

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

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May, 1988

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Mary Van Nimwegen

House Transportation:

2/17/88

STATE OF ALASKA 1988 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FISCAL NOTE

Bill Version: HB 437
Publish Date: _____

REQUEST

Revision Date: 2/23/88
Title: Replace Parks Highway Signs
with Mitchell Expressway Signs
Sponsor: Trans. Committee
Requestor: Cato

Agency Affected: DOT&PF
BRU: Northern Region
Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING						
CAPITAL		10.0				
REVENUE						

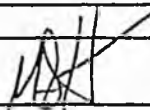
FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		10.0				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		10.0				

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS: See attached analysis

Prepared by: Ron Tanner Phone: 451-2276
Division: DOT&PF Date: 2/23/88
Approved by Commissioner: Mark S. Hickey  Date: 2/23/88
Agency: DOT&PF

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)
- Senate Secretary

FISCAL NOTE ATTACHMENT

(Replace Parks Highway Signs with Mitchell Expressway Signs)

ANALYSIS:

The name change of this section of highway from Parks Highway to Mitchell Expressway will require replacing the old signs with 271 square feet of new signs. The contract price for the new signs will range between \$40 to \$50 per square foot, placing the cost of the change between \$8,688 to \$10,880.

It may be necessary to replace some of the support structures, as the new signs are larger than the old, due to the increase in the number of letters in the legend.

Several of the signs are located on signal mast arms and the increased size of the sign will necessitate checking the structural adequacy of the signal poles and mast arms with new signs. If the signal poles are not adequate for the new sign legend, it may become necessary to decrease the size of the legend below what is considered acceptable in the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

AMENDMENT

to House Bill 437 (Robert J. Mitchell Expressway)

page 2, line 2:

delete: "Parks Highway and"

page 2, line 3:

delete: "to"

and insert: "and"

ROBERT J. MITCHELL
Pioneer Memorial Service

First United Methodist Church
Fairbanks, Alaska
February 27, 1980
1:00 p.m.

Brother Robert J. Mitchell, known to his many friends as "Mitch" was a life-long Alaskan. He was born in Fairbanks on November 2, 1918, the son of Eliza and Charles Mitchell. His mother, Eliza Hatch Mitchell, attended school in Fairbanks and later worked in the Fairbanks Postoffice for many years. His father, Charles, was associated with Waetcher Brothers and was a member of Igloo #4, Pioneers of Alaska, Roll Call number 1597. Mitch and his sister, Dorothy Hardy, grew up in Fairbanks and attended local schools. On occasions, in reminiscing about his school days, Mitch would grin and remark "what a difficult time Benji Adler had with him in her English class." During high school he played basketball, a game in which he maintained an active interest throughout his life. After graduating from Fairbanks High School in 1936, he continued to play basketball as a member of "Sticky" Griffins Wolverines in a league that had players such as John Butrovich, Joe Franich, Bill Stroecker, Jack Wilbur and the Ringstad brothers. When queried about the success of his team, his answer was, "We played a lot of games but Johnny Butrovich's team always seemed to come out ahead."

Like many other local boys, Mitch worked for the Alaska Road Commission during high school summer vacations and later he was employed full-time in the various highway camps in the Fairbanks District. He did his job with enthusiasm and was always interested in learning more about his work from experienced fellow workers.

The result was that he developed a knowledge of heavy-duty equipment, construction and transportation that would serve him well in the years to come. His sense of detail and balance also came into focus while working with the road commission. About 1937, Bob, after receiving a paycheck, decided that he was being under paid for the period. He went to Frank Nash with his analysis and Frank took him to the time-keeper who showed "Mitch" that he was credited with all the hours that he had worked. The offsetting feature was that "Mitch" was attending too many meal sittings and that his account was being deducted for every one of them.

After service in the Army during World War II in Alaska, Canada and Montana, he returned to Fairbanks and his stories of the "Fighting 83rd" provided amusement for his associates--but often left the conclusions to their imagination.

The happiest day of Mitch's life was on January 20, 1945, when he married Mary Maureen Ludvigson, a vivacious, petite girl who had come from Barron, Wisconsin, to work for Metcalf, Hamilton Kansas City Bridge Company at Ladd Field during World War II. Bob and Mary continued to live in Fairbanks and were blessed with three children, Gregory Charles Mitchell, Janelle Lois Weaver and Judith Louise Jaspersen, all, who with their respective spouses, Jacquelyn, Tom and Jim, ~~are~~ reside in Fairbanks. Grandchildren are Joann and Douglas Weaver, Peggy Jaspersen, Roberta and Gregory Mitchell II.

After returning to Fairbanks, Mitch, with his life-time friend Clyde Geraghty, formed Mitchell Truck and Tractor, Inc.

The Company was one of the early pioneer trucking companies hauling over the Richardson Highway from Valdez. The two partners were forward looking and always searching for more efficiency that resulted in such innovative equipment as a booster engine and drive

train for hill climbing--a unit that was installed under the flat bed of a 30-foot semi-trailer.

In 1952, Bob Mitchell, together with Clyde Geraghty, Carl Heflinger, Carl Erickson and Harvey Marlin, Jr., formed GHEMM Company, Inc. This company started out in earth work and equipment rental and has grown over the years, performing general contract work throughout central, northern and western Alaska, including construction of the Alyeska pipeline-highway Yukon River Bridge jointly with the Monson-Osberg group of Seattle, Washington. Good friend Conrad Frank joined Ghemm Company in 1959.

In 1957, Bob formed Tip Top Chevrolet, together with other longtime Fairbanks associates such as Bob Ginther and Clyde Geraghty and was President of this company. He was also a partner in Metro Company and Tria Company and was President of New State Lands, Inc.

In the early 1960's, GHEMM Company performed several difficult construction jobs jointly with Guy and Dick Rivers and also one fairly large bridge job across the Susitna River at Sunshine on the Parks Highway jointly with the Rivers Brothers and Bill Vehmier of Fairbanks.

One of the original Mitchell Truck and Tractor employees, Willis Lundberg, is still with GHEMM Co., Inc. Bob and Willie always worked together through thick and thin to make things come out for the company.

Bob Mitchell was an enthusiastic Fairbanks booster with an outgoing personality that gave an air of welcome and confidence to those with whom he came in contact. He was instrumental in the development of many beautiful residential subdivisions and the industrial area of South Fairbanks and Metro Field including its

airport and the rail spur to the International Airport. Mitchell Truck and Tractor participated in the development of Mitchell Subdivision, Lemeta, Aurora and Westgate. Later, GHEMM Company, Inc. was involved with New State Lands in Fairwest and Edanella.

"Mitch" was especially proud of Metro Airport and the Railroad Spur to the International Airport. His associates often joked that when a tanker train went by or a Herc or other large airplane landed, Mitch was probably out there standing at attention in salute.

During these years, Bob was an instrument rated pilot and would fly personnel and needed parts and equipment to the projects to help keep the jobs on schedule.

Mitch was always dedicated to leading young people and from him many fortunate young men and women learned skills in the operation of equipment and most of all, the value of hard work, a positive approach to all endeavors and attention to detail. The young people who worked for him were very concerned about performing their job correctly as he had directed but all too frequently when he would be away from the scene, some unfortunate event would happen, such as a tractor getting stuck. They would try with feverish desperation to correct the problem but invariably he would return before recovery had been made, would quickly survey the problem, then simply climb on the tractor and walk it out or do some sort of thing "so apparently simple" to overcome the problem. Many of these young people are here now and will be carrying on for the good of the community and future generations.

Bob was a special person who was enthusiastic and energetic in all of his activities. More often than not he could be found on a tractor at 4:30 - 5:00 a.m. catching up on work that needed

to be done to assure continuity of projects. Also, he was a man of action and has been known to stimulate activities of others by throwing a full bucket of ice water on a partner enjoying a leisure shower. You can imagine the results.

His excellent personality and sense of humor were catching and, as a result, he was highly respected by his fellowman in all walks of life and those who came in contact with him were that much better off because of the association.

Mitch's philosophy of life can be summarized to a degree by the following thoughts.

1. There is far more time and money lost by indecision than by wrong decision and his success proved the point.
2. No matter how difficult or adverse a problem, treat it as an opportunity.
3. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

Brother Robert J. Mitchell, Roll Call Number 2194, joined Igloo #4, Pioneers of Alaska on October 2, 1951. He passed away in Palm Springs, California on February 23, 1980 while in the company of his friend and partner of long standing, Clyde Geraghty. He is survived by his widow, Mary, who resides at the family home at 665 - 10th Avenue, Fairbanks and his children and grandchildren. His sister, Dorothy, preceded him in death.

The outstanding contributions that Brother Robert J. Mitchell has made to family, friends and colleagues will be long remembered. Fairbanks and Alaska are that much richer for his having come this way and pioneered on various fronts for the benefit of society in the true tradition of Alaskan Pioneers.

Editorial Opinion and Comment of

FAIRBANKS

Daily News - Miner

"Independent in All Things . . . Neutral in None"

Other opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the Daily News-Miner.

The Mitchell touch

One doesn't have to look far to see the marks Robert J. Mitchell left on Fairbanks, and we'll all miss his brand of full-speed-ahead promotion for a long time.

Bob Mitchell was born here in 1918 and devoted his whole life to his belief that Fairbanks has a big place in Alaska's future. He had a contagious enthusiasm for the future of the Interior, and he never avoided the hard work necessary to make his efforts pay off.

All of Mr. Mitchell's work was important to him, but perhaps his biggest dream was the development of industrial property south of Fairbanks. He's the man who convinced other businessmen to finance and donate the materials and labor necessary to build the rail spur to Fairbanks International Airport. It might have been done eventually, but his efforts got it in time to serve through the trans-Alaska pipeline years and provide low-cost jet fuel shipping from the North Pole Refinery now.

He and his partners also invested their own labor and encouragement in Metro Field and some of the industries that have grown up around it after this industrial air park opened. This was Mr. Mitchell's way—he never waited for things to happen; he made them happen.

That's the way things were ever since he came back from his World War II hitch to get married and form Mitchell Truck and Tractor, a pioneer name in Richardson Highway transportation. He was also president of Tip-Top Chevrolet, one of the founders of Ghemm Co., a partner in Metro Company and Tria Company and president of New State Lands Inc. Both his family and his businesses are still here, and still thriving.

But perhaps Mr. Mitchell's greatest contribution was the lasting spirit he left here through his work and inspiration for young people in Fairbanks. He was as devoted to our community as he was to the business world, and because of that we'll never forget Bob Mitchell and the special touch he had in making our town a better place to live.

Norm
John
Greg
Morri
Jimm
Delbe
Harol
Keith
Arder
Glenn
Georg
Jame
Willia
Darw
Jerry
Frank
Hans
Geral
J Bew
Walle
Dale
Virgil
Quent
Kenne
Raym
Willar
Chark
Verno
Leona
Gary
Leona
Kenne
Trumi
Edward
Donak
Danny
Garfle
Richa
Fred
Frank
Lamos
Herbe
Patric
Darry
James
Andy
Brigg
Kenne
Betty
Georg
Richa
Edward
Fred
Sandr
Larry
Herbe
Edward
Cliffor
Rodne
Williar
Gary F
Ovid T

evaluation of the inmates' at group. Huston said mates said the parole heavy emphasis on that it seems to give no credit participation in the AA

said the meetings are a consist of tape recor- A program, he said, is people on the street who alcohol, not for inmates access anyway tified that he was sent to to receive the counseling red. Others testified that commended psychiatric d none has been received aid he has been in prison about the counseling d they are not allowed to tional report given to the nor the parole counselor's r to prepare a defense. s are not taped, and in- they believe the parole ne greatest emphasis to eselor's report alone on occasion lectured in- ile hearings, reportedly son as a good example, ales for alcohol use, and t records, inmates said. f they are not learning id don't stand much of a g a job upon release. they are reluctant to try oyer to write a letter ve a job. If they have to ployer they were denied

if chance would I have if te second time?" an in- m still fighting my case The whole focus of the ison that," he said. tes said they are unable p, that public defenders the prison to assist them inmates have a parole a job lined up, a place to as upon release, that to get credit from the rged instances, judges have at sentencing that the sed after serving a third a, but the parole board f parole after the time is ad. said his residence was parole officer and police urch warrant, that his re confiscated and that eive a speedy arraign-

seen in a bar, drinking and moving from his residence without notifying his parole officer. He said the last point was not true. Still another inmate, in for selling marijuana, said he has refused to go before the parole board and will instead serve his full three years rather than play games with a parole hearing. "I had Rev. Lyons say that I'm an insult to come up for parole," one inmate said. "This is my first adult offense," one man testified, but the board dwelled on

though the board should have professional members, and several said yes. Inmates also said they would like to have hallway houses to help them re-integrate into society. "We have a lot of people in here for three and four years because they got drunk or left their areas of residence without the parole board's permission. It costs the state \$26,000 a year to keep a man in here--over a drunk? It's pretty serious," one inmate said.

Box Boy

arged with disorderly 30 block of Lacey Street police said

ham, 18, of 1127 Park l the theft of a tape akers valued at \$170 nday.

2 Mile Freeman Road, ne padlock was broken a small TV was taken.

k rite set

Robert Mitchell rite Wednesday

A memorial service for Robert J. Mitchell, president of Tip-Top Chevrolet and one of the founders of Ghemm Co., will be Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, 915 Second Ave.

The service will be conducted jointly by the church and the Pioneers of Alaska.

Mitchell, 61, died Saturday while vacationing in Palm Desert, Calif.

He was born in Fairbanks Nov. 2, 1918, to Eliza and Charles Mitchell and had lived here all his life.

Mitchell attended grade school and high school in Fairbanks, graduating in 1936. He was active in basketball and played with "Sticky" Griffins Wolverines in the same league as John Butrovich, Joe Franich, Bill Stroecker, Jack Wilbur and the Ringstad brothers.

After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II in Alaska, Canada and Montana, he formed Mitchell Truck and Tractor Inc. with Clyde Geraghty.

He married Mary Maureen Ludwigson on Jan. 20, 1945. Their three children, Gregory Charles Mitchell, Janelle Lois Weaver and Judith Louise Jaspersen, live in Fairbanks.

The Mitchells' grandchildren are Joann and Douglas Weaver, Peggy Jaspersen, Roberta Mitchell and Gregory Mitchell II.

Mitchell Truck and Tractor was one of the early trucking companies hauling over the Richardson Highway from Valdez.

It built such innovative equipment as a booster engine and drive train for climbing hills that was installed under the flatbed of a 30 foot semi trailer.

In 1952 Mitchell formed Ghemm Co. with Geraghty, Carl Heilinger, Carl Erickson and Harvey Marlin Jr.

Ghemm began in earth work and equipment rental and expanded over the years to perform general contract work throughout Alaska. In a joint effort with a Seattle company, Ghemm built the Yukon River Bridge.

In 1957 Mitchell founded Tip Top Chevrolet along with other longtime Fairbanks residents. He was also a partner in Metro Company and Tri-



ROBERT MITCHELL

Company and was president of New State Lands Inc.

He was instrumental in developing several subdivisions and the industrial area south of Fairbanks.

"Mitch," as he was known to his friends, was dedicated to leading young people and instilling in them the value of hard work and a positive approach to life.

The family asks that memorials be given to the Alaska Special Olympics, 1024 Kellum St., or to the United Methodist Church.

Honorary pallbearers are Peter Eagan, Randy Frank, Steve Frank, Mike Geraghty, Steve Geraghty, Robbie Gunther, Bill Gordon, Harvey Marlin III, Gary Norrgard, Gary Wilken, Carl Erickson, Con Frank, Clyde Geraghty, Harvey Marlin Jr., Rob Bettisworth, Jack Cook, Jim Dieringer, Dan Eagan, Bob Gunther, Bud Meyeres, Francis O'Connor, Ralph Paden, Mark Ringstad, Jack Wilbur, Clyde Hovik, Gene Rogge, Gene Miller, Harry Porter, Cliff Burglin, Wally Burnett, Tom Miklautsch and Leo Schollfeldt.

ATTENTION

All Members of the

CULINARY UNION LOCAL 879

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Alaska State Legislature

Senate Transportation Committee

Sen. John B. (Jack) Coghill, Chairman
Sen. Paul Fischer, Vice-Chairman
Sen. Mitch Alwood
Sen. Jim Finks
Sen. Joe Josephson



Text from Public Hearing in Fairbanks

Thursday, March 27, 1986

On House Bill 664, Senate Bill 461

12 Noon to Two P.M., Noel Wien Public Library

Senator Coghill

"Okay, we will bring our public hearing to order and its 12:10 p.m. and its the 27th of March 1986. The purpose of the hearing today is to discuss and gather opinions on House Bill 664 and Senate Bill 461, Both entitled an act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway. My name is Jack Coghill and I am chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. It is my responsibility to hold the hearing. In order for us to name a road or a expressway after a person using federal funds we have to have a public hearing in the area in which it is going to effect.

I have known Bob Mitchell for as long as I can recall, I remember when he was working with the old road commission. After we all got out of the service he had already started his truck and tractor business. A lot of us boys, when we got out of the service, the first place that we went was to work with Bobby Mitchell. We were either greasing cats or working in one way or another. It was his way of keeping the home town boys going. After he expanded to the point that he had a freight service and got involved with Ghemm Company and was involved and was a tremendous supporter of the Interior of Alaska...the purpose of projecting this name forward as far as the transportation committee is concerned is that it is time that we in Alaska start naming some of our road and rights-of-ways after our old timers that are our contemporaries. We have people signing up, and as you come in we would like you to come forward and sit on one of the front seats so that we can tape you and put you in the record."

Senator Coghill read the letter from Bruce Stacer, dated March 26, 1986.

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1986
Page 2

Testimony Given

Francis Erickson
1205 10th Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701
456-5358

"I am also a life long Alaskan, I have lived in Fairbanks for 64 years. I believe that this is very fine and very commendable, however, there are a lot of other pioneer truckers in this country that have not had much recognition, like Gezzy (spelling?) and Roggy (spelling?) just to name two. I think that it is about time that we get these older timers in. As far as a pioneer trucker, of course, Bobby started in 1945-46 after the war; and his partner Gerhatty, and his family, are certainly well know here. They have extended themselves over quite some expanse. Clyde is going to be the grand president of the grand igloo here in a couple of years. I think that he deserves some recognition also.

There are quite a few here, and as far as the Railroad Spur and the Mitchell race way and so on, there are other partners in that enterprise that never have received some recognition either. I don't know if you have to be deceased to receive recognition, but it kind of seems that way. I think that it is about time that we turned to some of the others here. Don't misunderstand, I was a friend of Bob Mitchell's and knew him all my life, but you people have a little more say so and when you get behind all of these things, it seems that when I read in the paper it has already been done. By the time that we get here and get to the hearing...this is the first time we heard of it. I didn't have time for...well to get background on some others that I would have named probably, because I just read it in the paper yesterday. So sometimes, I feel that we need a little more advanced warning of these hearing too."

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1936
Page 3

Joe Tremarello
Box 80974
College, AK 99753

"I am a forty year resident of the Fairbanks area and I feel that it is very appropriate, and certainly support, House Bill 664 and Senate Bill 461 as stated. Not only for Bob's contribution to the area of construction, but as a parent raising his family here and his support to my background in teaching. His support to the schools and the staff over the years has been commendable. He did a lot for youth and I feel that it would be very appropriate to name this expressway after Bob."

Ken Fanning
Box 80292
College, AK 99708

"I would like to continue on the previous comments. I appreciate the fact that you are considering naming something after somebody of recent generation who, in fact, has left a strong family unit that is continuing on that way. I think, personally, that it is a good idea to consider naming this road after people that are continuing to support the community."

Oliver Backlund
No Address Given
President of the Fairbanks Pioneers Igloo

"I support this bill, I think that there is going to be a lot of other roads that we can name a lot of other Alaska pioneers after. I think Robert Mitchell was really active in the area and a respected local businessman. I really support this bill."

Joe Balch
7665 Salcha Road
Salcha, AK 99714

"I like Mitchell, although that was a few years ago, to tell you the truth. I would like to see the roads named after a man that was so industrial instead of some politician. He has seen his schooling through the school of hard knocks, actually, and I think that this is an appropriate name for it."

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1986
Page Four

Shirley Demientieff
1205 Kennicott
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I have been in Fairbanks for twenty years in all and I was born and raised in Nenana, as you know Mr. Coghill. I have no problem with naming roads after people. That does not bother me at all. I like the idea of the South Expressway, I think that it is long overdo, I think that it is something that we really needed. But my problem, Jack, is that when I first heard the name I said 'who is Robert Mitchell?' So far I heard...I don't even know if he is dead or alive...with no disrespect, I have no idea of his contributions have been. I am assuming that he is someone who is a good guy. My idea is a little bit different. I would think that...Natives make a population of 10-15% of the statewide population now and there is really nothing named after Native people in the interior...

What I would like to see is that the expressway be named after our champion dog racer. George Attla, seven time winner of the North American, eleven time winner of the Rondevue in Anchorage. He is a Huslia Hustler, he lives in North Pole, he will be using that road. That would be something that would be current, that is well known; when you ask who George Attla is, nobody is going to say 'who is George Attla?' they are going to know who he is. It would be something that I would be extremely proud of and that other people could be extremely proud of too. I just heard about this early this week but I have been able to get these names of people. This is strictly grass roots, not going anywhere other than FNA and Tanana Chiefs. Those are over a hundred names of people that feel the same way that I do about this expressway. (Ms. Demientieff brought a petition to the table and presented it to Senator Coghill) That (the petition) is in support of the name "George Attla Expressway."

Pete Eagan
P.O. Box 1170
Fairbanks, AK 99701
456-4793

"My name is Pete Eagan, I was born and raised here in Fairbanks and I have known Bob Mitchell since I was a child. He was a real good friend of my family's. Later on I had the honor to have worked for Bob when I was in high school and college. I learned a great deal from Bob. He was a very fine man, well liked by everyone in town. He had a terrific sense of humor, and he was definitely from the old school, where your word was your bond. If Bob told you he would do something, he would do it. He was very involved in the whole development of the South Fairbanks, Industrial area and I think that this would be a very fitting tribute to Bob to name this new expressway after him. Thank you."

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1986
Page 5

Harold R. Herning
Box 1792
Fairbanks, AK 99701
488-2291

"I knew Bob for 43 years up until the time of his death. I think Bob, of all the people in Fairbanks, probably is one our truest Alaskans we have ever had. He was truly Alaskan in every sense and the naming in appropriate. This is his home ground. That is his life, to develop that area and I think that it is no more than appropriate that a man of his caliber be recognized. There is nothing that can be said about Bob that is wrong. The only thing that can be said is praise as far as Bob is concerned. I thank you."

Jim Desmond
No Address Given

"I would certainly like to testify for the bills to name the Expressway the Robert J. Mitchell. I knew Bob for years and years. A wonderful man, and inspiration to all the people that were my age when I was a teenager when we interacted with Bobby a lot. And I certainly feel that he is worthy of the honor."

Terry P. McLean
1907 Capital
Fairbanks, AK 99709

"Yes, Jack, I would like to testify in favor of the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway. I personally owe a great deal to Robert Mitchell and his partners in Ghemm Company. I was able to complete my education at the University of Alaska due to their summer and winter employment. Bobby Mitchell was always a friend as well as the boss. Although when he made up his mind to do something it was often difficult to get him to change his mind, he would always hear you out or listen to your suggestions and ideas. Although Air North is no longer flying it provided jobs for many many people and pilots that are today flying jets all over the United States and the World. Bobby Mitchell worked thousands of hours to building the runway at Metro Field and was always able to help people, no matter what the situation. Thousands of people have enjoyed stock car racing because Bobby Mitchell and Ghemm company allowed GFRA to build the race way across from the float pond at Metro Field. Many of the roads that were built that will intertie with the Expressway were built by Bobby Mitchell or people that he helped provide employment for. I feel that it really makes sense to honor those that have helped build the community and the character of the people living in the Fairbanks area."

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1986
Page 6

Mark Ringstad
502 Monroe Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701
456-5734

"I knew Bob Mitchell all my life, was raised with him here in Fairbanks. Bob was in the construction industry and trucking industry all of his adult life. He was one of the prime movers for the railroad to go to the South Fairbanks area. He was one of the major developers of the entire Van Horn Road area. I think that it is most fitting and most appropriate to name that expressway after him."

Gary Wilken
2600 Riverview Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I carry with me some written testimony, Senator, from Bill Gordon and a letter from Pete Eagan Sr. and Dan Eagan, they are out of town and wanted to be sure that they heard today. Just a couple of things...it is difficult for me to talk about Bob Mitchell, he was such a big part of my life, Bob, as far as the South Fairbanks area, we all know, was one of the leaders in developing that area. I went to work with Bob in the early sixties when there was nothing but a dirt road and he lead us off into the muskeg and said 'this shall be a airport.' So, we know that he was one of the people that was instrumental. To name that highway after him is very fitting. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and look forward to bills passing. Thanks, appreciate the opportunity."

Nancy Lee Baker
49 Timberland Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I would like to comment, and I am going to comment before I read the bill, my idea is that the road should be called the Parks Highway Extension, because that is what it logically is. That is what people will call it naturally. One reason that I am a little concerned is that I happen to make a small map myself (in the record). To put another name on it, for map makers and for tourists it seems to me that it would be utter confusion. Logically it is the Parks Highway extension. I have a lot of respect for the person named here, but that is beside the point. I don't think that we have a right to go around confusing the public."

Testimony from Public Testimony
March 27, 1986
Page 7

Walley Burnett
1901 Crosson
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"Senator Coghill, it is nice to be here. Yesterday I talked to a couple of people and they mentioned that there was a possibility that they would be naming the South Fairbanks Expressway. Bob Mitchell was a long time Fairbanksan from a long time Fairbanks family. He was very instrumental in developing the Van Horn and Peger Road, in which this road will be passing through. If you will recall in the early days of the pipe line, Bob Mitchell was one of the main people involved in the development of the Railroad that went into the South Fairbanks area. He moved lots of gravel and made lots of roads, often with out pay. I feel that when we drive back and forth on Airport Road, Van Horn and Peger, and we do go through the expressway, we do think of our good friend Bob Mitchell. I whole heartedly would like to give my approval of putting his name into naming it the Mitchell Expressway."

Harvey Marlin
665 10th Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701

"I have lived in Fairbanks since 1929 and have know Bob Mitchell from that day forward. Not only as a classmate, but as a good and personal friend. When it came to my attention that this expressway was to be named, perhaps anyway, in memory of Bob Mitchell, I was very definitely impressed and I still am. I think that it is a very wise move. Bob was a gentleman that promoted for the City of Fairbanks all of his working years. As a matter of fact, he began his working career with the Alaska Road Commission. Both he and his partner began a trucking operation from Valdez to Fairbanks with the assistance of the veterans aid. There again they continued on in to the highway program, Clyde previous to that was a master mechanic to the road commission. Bob Mitchell has always been associated with the road system and has always done a great amount over and above walking the extra mile to make the roads within our community better, not always for pay, by the way. I think that this is a very wise choice and I am one thousand percent in favor of it."

Testimony from Public Hearing
March 27, 1986
Page 8

Con Frank
200 Gold Dust Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99707
479-2828

"Well, I would like to say that I would endorse the naming of this section of highway for Robert Mitchell. I have known him almost forty years since I came to Alaska. He was one of the first people that I met when I came here. I have been a partner with him and closely associated with him for twenty years. He was a very positive person and dedicated a lot of his efforts to the development of Fairbanks, and especially the South Fairbanks area. He started out on South Cushman, he and his partner, started in there in 1948-49 and then gradually moved further south there to the Van Horn Road area. I would just like to say that I would endorse this naming."

Senator Coghill

"Thank you very much Mr. Frank, is there anyone else that would like to make a statement? If not, then our public hearing is closed. This will be transcribed and will be put into the record. It will be used in the deliberation of both the House and Senate. They may want to have more hearings. If that is the case, then this will be part of that record."

Let's call the extension the Parks Highway

By NANCY LEE BAKER

Guest Opinion

The four-mile extension of the George Parks Highway will end by joining the Richardson Highway near the old 30th Street exit. The work is scheduled for completion in September 1988.

A move to call this four-mile section the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway began in February 1986, when Sen. Jack Coghill and Rep. Steve Frank initiated Senate Bill 461 and an identical House bill. They got through most committees but not to both floors due to pressures of the closing days.

The same legislators are in the process of introducing the bills again this year. Since there was some opposition from individuals two years ago (which did not keep them from trying to hustle the bills through in 1986), the approach this year appears to be to go directly to large bodies such as the city council, borough assembly, Chamber of Commerce and its transportation committee for their public endorsement. These endorsements are intended to convey the broad approval of Fairbanksans for this move.

In "talking around," however, I find almost no individual support for the resolutions these bodies endorsed, except from some personal friends of the late Robert Mitchell. The consensus was to maintain the same name.

It is understandable that at "first thought" it might seem like a good idea to name a new piece of road after a friend, but the result of suddenly changing the name of a highway that thousands of people will have been traveling on for 358 miles

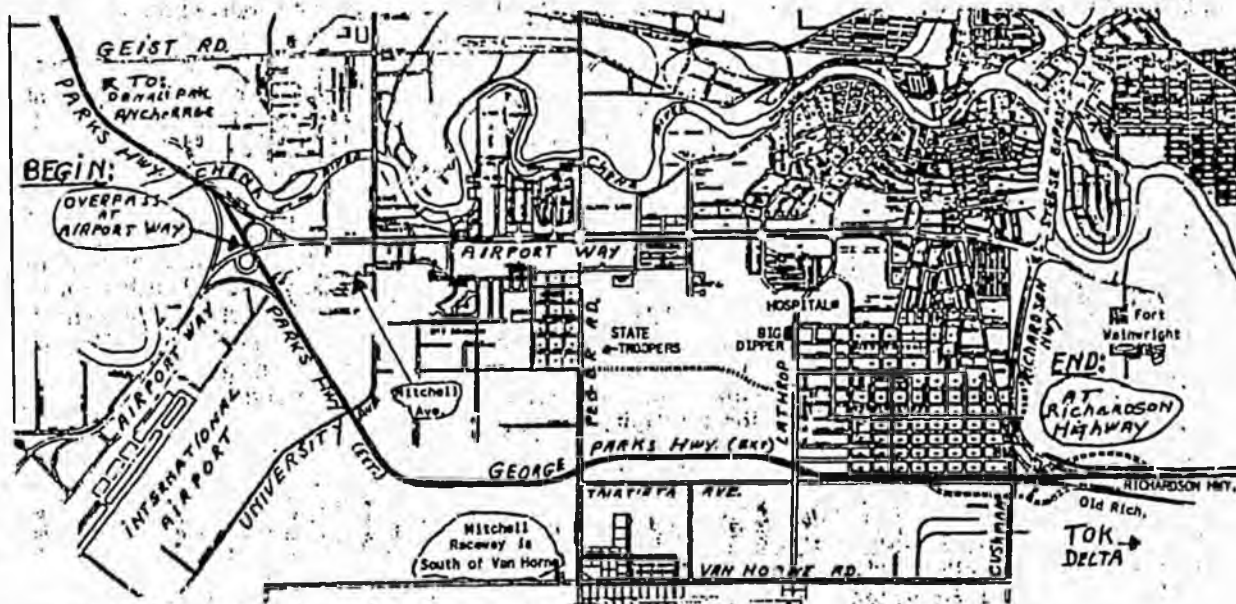
at speeds in excess of 50 mph is not an inconsequential thing to be taken lightly. It deserves serious "second thoughts." Some of them follow:

Confusion: The bottom line is, calling the last four miles anything but the Parks Highway would be confusing. It is one continuous highway, doesn't turn, get wider, narrower, or change in any way. A sign proclaiming you are all of a sudden on a different highway spells instant confusion to a visitor to our area. This could precipitate slowing down, changing lanes, conversations with the "co-pilot" about how we got "off course." Any one of these reactions are a basis for possible accidents.

We are a tourist dependent economy. We spend hundreds of thousands of dollars attracting visitors. Shouldn't we be more considerate of them? Many of them are older citizens, with slower reactions in some cases, and driving less maneuverable vehicles with the poor visibility that RV's often offer.

A different name could offer problems and expense to mapmakers, as well as map readers who see a different name (if there is room to print it) or what appears to be obviously the same highway.

Where would the highway signs be placed to tell drivers they are now on a different highway? Driving to the airport from town, a



Map shows the route of the Parks Highway extension through South Fairbanks.

Map courtesy of Nancy Lee Baker

motorists would see a sign announcing the exit to "Highway 3, Parks Highway." A few hundred feet later on a sign would say "Highway 3," with a different name.

Think seriously (until it becomes funny and you start laughing) of various possible confusions in giving directions about how to get "from here to there" when it requires getting on or off the new portion of road should it have a different name.

It is worth noting that the engineer who designed the highway is also "seriously concerned about the confusion that would result: if the name of the new portion were to be anything other than the Parks Highway."

Cost: It will cost at least \$10,000 to

remove the dozen or more signs that are already up at University, Peger, and Lathrop intersections and replace them with another name. If the new name has many more letters they will have to be made smaller in order to fit the signs. The \$10,000 could probably be better used for maintenance! Signs at University Avenue have been there for two years. It would be nice if they had squatter's rights!

In answer to my "confusion concerns," some legislators said the public would get used to it. The visitors will not get used to it, and why should the local people have to go through the process? There are better ways to commemorate people than to confuse the public.

Another consideration, in view of the recent attempt to avoid duplicate street names in town. There is a Mitchell Avenue, named after the same Mitchell. It runs off University Avenue, next to Erickson Avenue, also named after a partner in the Ghemm Co. of which Mitchell was a partner.

The new portion of the highway can only be named by legislative action. This has not happened yet but it is in the brewing stage. Let's hope some legislator, with grass roots encouragement, will speak up and propose a bill to name it the Parks Highway.

Nancy Lee Baker is a 37-year resident with an interest in mapmaking.



488-6676

THE GRANGE

AMERICA'S FAMILY COMMUNITY FRATERNITY

Two Rivers Grange No. 3

February 2, 1988
6128 Chena Hot Springs Road
Fairbanks, Ak., 99712

Representative Steve Frank
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska, 99811

Dear Representative Frank:

Members of the Two Rivers Grange #3 urge you to reconsider your plans to introduce legislation to name the Parks Highway extension the "Robert Mitchell Highway". Our objection is to the confusion this will create especially for tourists. Many of us have traveled into cities where streets on one side of the road are one name and a different name on the other side. Fairbanks doesn't need that sort of confusion. We urge you to propose a bill to name the extension the "Parks Highway".

Yours truly,

Two Rivers Grange #3

Alice H. McKee, Sec.

488-2629

Evolyn Melville
2526 Outside Blvd.
North Pole, Alaska 99705

February 1, 1988

Senator John (Jack) Coghill,
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Jack,

At our Chamber lunch meeting last week, we were given some information regarding a bill you are co-sponsoring--to rename a portion of the George C. Parks Memorial Highway, for Robert Mitchell.

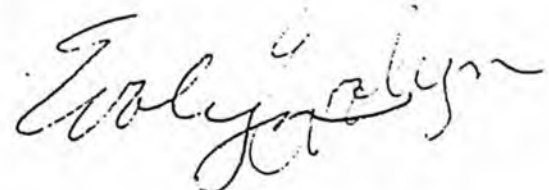
Now you know as well as I, that highways, roads, streets and by-ways in Alaska are not all that easy to follow because of lack of signing or poor signing. (the Lower '48 is not much better in many places). Why further confuse our dear folks, visitors and residents alike, by changing the name of a highway right in the middle of things.

I have no quarrel with naming something after Bobby Mitchell. He was a GOOD ball player, worked hard at his chosen profession, and I have known him ever since I can remember. However, there are a couple of memorials to him already: a street named Mitchell Place, and the Mitchell Raceway off Van Horn Road.

We want to encourage visitors and Alaskans to visit us in the Interior, and not drive them crazy with highways that have no name continuity.

Surely you and Steve can think of something else much less disconcerting if you wish to further memorialize Bobby Mitchell. Please reconsider and withdraw this bill.

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter.



cc. Steve Frank



Interior
Business Products, Inc.

3180 Peger Road
P.O. Box 74690, Fairbanks, AK 99707
907 456-1104

March 25, 1986.

To Whom It May Concern:

As a property owner and life-long resident of Alaska, I wholeheartedly support the naming of the "30th Avenue Bypass", the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

Bob Mitchell has made a lasting impact on the development of our community. More specifically, Bob contributed to much of the growth in South Fairbanks and the area south of Van Horn Road. His very business located along Cushman Street, along with his development of Metro Industrial Airport, inspired many others to follow. Without his dedication and early belief in Fairbanks' future the need for this bypass would probably be many years yet in the future.

It would be most fitting to name this highway in honor of one of Alaska's pioneers who gave so much of his time to his community. Please designate the "30th Avenue Bypass" the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

Sincerely,

Bill Gordon
Vice President

lr/BG

March 26, 1986

Senator Jack Coghill
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Coghill:

It has come to my attention that there is a bill or resolution before the legislature regarding the naming of the new South Fairbanks Expressway. As proposed, this expressway between the Airport Road overpass and the proposed Richardson Highway overpass would be named the "Bob Mitchell Memorial Expressway."

I knew Bob since I was a child, and later on had the great fortune of working for him during my high school and college years. I learned a great deal about life and the value of good hard work during this time. Bob was a very fine man, and was heavily involved in the development of this South Fairbanks industrial area, rail spur, and road system.

I think that the naming of this expressway after Bob would be a very fitting tribute to a fine, highly-regarded individual. I would welcome and appreciate your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

PETE EAGAN

Pete Eagan
Box 1170
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

March 25, 1986

Senator Jack CoPhill
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

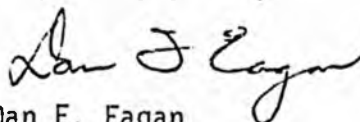
Dear Senator CoPhill:

I respectfully request your consideration in naming that section of the South Fairbanks Expressway, between the Airport Road overpass and the proposed Richardson Highway overpass, the "Bob Mitchell Memorial Expressway".

Mr. Mitchell was a very fine individual and very instrumental in the development of the South Fairbanks Industrial area and its road system.

Thank you for your consideration on this request.

Very truly yours,



Dan F. Eagan
Box 1170
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Mar 26, 1986

To Whom It May Concern:

As a life-long Alaskan, I strongly recommend that the 30th Ave By-Pass be named ~~the~~ in honor of, and in memory of, Robert J. Mitchell. Bobby Mitchell was also a life-long Alaskan. Even more importantly, he was truly a pioneer in the development of transportation, in particular, the highway system in and around Fairbanks. I knew him personally since 1937. He was a life-long resident of Fairbanks. After WWII, he used his GI loan to buy a caterpillar. Before the war (WWII) he worked ~~with~~ the Alaska Highway Commission. He developed a trucking operation with Clyde Geraghty that serviced Valdez and Fairbanks. He was one of the founding partners in GHEMM Construction Co. and built many roads and bridges throughout Alaska. Bobby Mitchell devoted all 63 years of his life and his boundless energy and optimism to ~~the~~ his ~~unshakable~~ belief in the future of Fairbanks. He deserves to be remembered.

Bruce F. Staser
BRUCE F. STASER

1351 Hillcrest Dr.
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701

Introduced by: Mayor and Council
Date: December 21, 1987

RESOLUTION NO. 2918

A RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE AND NAME THE
ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY.

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell, a life-long Alaskan and resident of the interior, was in early adulthood an employee of the Alaska Road Commission and a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early interior Alaska transportation company; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc., an important Alaska construction firm, and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area; and

WHEREAS, through Mitchell's efforts a rail spur was constructed from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the international airport; and

WHEREAS, the new South Fairbanks Expressway is immediately adjacent to the area developed by Mitchell and with which he was deeply involved before passing away on February 23, 1980; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell left behind a legacy of the strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought and undaunted faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fairbanks wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area.

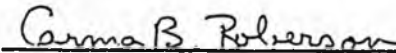
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

PASSED and APPROVED this 21st day of December, 1987.



BILL WALLEY, Mayor

ATTEST:



CARMA B. ROBERSON, City Clerk

0090Z
pb: bj



Greater Fairbanks

Chamber

of Commerce

First National Center

P.O. Box 74446

100 Cushman Street

(907) 452-1105

Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

RESOLUTION 1 - 1287

A RESOLUTION NAMING THE ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell was a life-long Alaskan and a life-long resident of the interior, born on November 2, 1918 and;

WHEREAS, Mr. Mitchell was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission during early adulthood and, was a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor an early Interior Alaska transportation company and,

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc., and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area and;

WHEREAS, Through Robert J. Mitchell's efforts, a major rail spur from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the international Airport was constructed and;

WHEREAS, The new South Fairbanks Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area that Robert J. Mitchell was so deeply involved with before passing away on February 23, 1980 and;

WHEREAS, Robert J. Mitchell left behind a legacy of strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought, and undaunting faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska and;

WHEREAS, The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area,

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

DATED THIS 21st DAY OF December 1987.

BY Mike Kelly
Mike Kelly, Chairman

BY W.R. Cox
W.R. Cox, President & C.E.O.

SOUTH FAIRBANKS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 60389
Fairbanks, Alaska 99706
(907) 456-7986

A RESOLUTION NAMING THE ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY

WHEREAS: Robert J. Mitchell was a life-long resident of the interior, born on November 2, 1918 and,

WHEREAS: Mr. Mitchell was an employee of the Alaska Road Commission during early adulthood, and was a founder of Mitchell Truck and Tractor, an early Interior Alaska transportation company.

WHEREAS: Robert J. Mitchell was one of the founders of GHEMM, Inc. an important Alaska construction firm and was one of the first persons to develop the potential of the current South Fairbanks industrial area and,

WHEREAS: Through Robert J. Mitchell's efforts, a major rail spur from Fairbanks through the South Fairbanks industrial area to the east side of the International Airport was constructed and,

WHEREAS: The new South Fairbanks Expressway is routed immediately adjacent to the area that Robert J. Mitchell was so deeply involved with before passing away on February 23, 1980 and,

WHEREAS: Robert J. Mitchell left behind a legacy of strong family unit, friendship to all, knowledge of the value of positive thought, and undaunting faith in the future of Fairbanks and Alaska and,

WHEREAS: The South Fairbanks Business Association wishes to remember Robert J. Mitchell's positive contribution to the people of the Interior and to the development of the South Fairbanks industrial area,

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: that the section of the Alaska Highway System from the new Airport Road Interchange to the Richardson Highway is to be named the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway.

This resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the South Fairbanks Business Association December 18, 1987.



Charles P. Rees, 1st Vice President

CPR: cab: SFBA2: form: P3

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date referred: 2/8/88

FURTHER REFERRALS:

DATE: February 17, 1988

The Transportation Committee has considered HB 437

"An Act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway."

RECOMMENDS:

- replace with _____ the same title
- attached amendment(s) a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- fiscal impact same as previous fiscal note published _____
- zero fiscal note same as previous zero fiscal note published _____
- zero with analysis

SIGNING DO PASS:

Mike Mills

Steve Pearce

Thomas Springer

Bill Hulse

Butte Cats

P.O. A. Ponder

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Butte Cats

Chairman's signature



Official Business

COMMITTEE:

House Transportation Committee

DATE: February 17, 1988

SIGN-IN

Subject of meeting:

- * HB 437: "An Act relating to naming the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway."
- * HJR 52: Opposing reductions in the budget of the United States Coast Guard.
- * SJR 54: Expressing support for the Alaska Airlines application for approval to fly to

NAME <small>Please include title</small>	ADDRESS <small>Please use full address. Please include zip.</small>	PHONE	REPRESENTING <small>Siberia.</small>	DO YOU WANT TO TESTIFY? <small>on what?</small>
Rep Steve Frank	The Alaska State Legislature Juneau	465-3709	Juneau Fairbanks AK	HB 437
Rep Cliff Davidson	" " "	465-2487		HJR 52
Chief of operations for the 17 th Coast Guard District Capt. Wade Moncrief	Box 3-5000 Juneau, AK. 99802	586-7354	Coast Guard	"
Sen. Thomas Sturgeon	Alaska State Legislature Juneau	465-4984		SJR 54

* indicates first public hearing

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* DELIVER TO: LHSCTRA
*
* ORIGINAL
* SENT: 02/17/88 TIME: 15:18
* FROM: LIOCFBX
* SUBJECT: HTRA,FS,MITCHELL EXPY-2-17-88
* PRINT DATE: 02/17/88 TIME: 16:26
*
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FINAL STATS

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DATE: FEBRUARY 17, 1988-----
SITE: FAIRBANKS-----
SPONSOR: HOUSE TRANSPORTATION-----
SUBJECT: HB 437: ROBERT J. MITCHELL EXPRESSWAY-----
MODERATOR: BARB-----

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TESTIFY:

NAME\REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE #
1.) ROGER BURNS,	2557 DALE ROAD, FAIRBANKS 99709	479-2724
2.) GARY WILKEN,	2600 RIVERVIEW DR., FAIRBANKS 99709	474-0341
3.) CELIA M. HUNTER,	1819 MUSKOX TR., FAIRBANKS 99709	479-2754
4.) GINNY HILL WOOD,	1819 MUSKOX TR., FAIRBANKS 99709	479-2754
5.) ALASKA LINCK,	666 TENTH AVE., FAIRBANKS 99701	456-5107
6.) NANCY BAKER,	49 TIMBERLAND, FAIRBANKS 99701	452-2624
7.) JOE TREMARELLO,	BOX 80574, COLLEGE 99708	476-6051
8.) EVOLYN MELVILLE,	2526 OUTSIDE BLVD., N POLE 99705	488-2679
9.) PETE EAGAN,	BOX 1170 FAIRBANKS 99707	456-4793
10.) ANGIE KRUCKENBERG,	BOX 10449, FAIRBANKS 99710	457-6270
11.) MARK RINGSTAD,	502 MONROE ST., FAIRBANKS 99701	456-5734
12.) GEORGIANNE FRANK,	BOX 81109 FAIRBANKS 99708	479-4394
13.) HAROLD HERNING,	BOX 1797, FAIRBANKS 99707	488-2291

OBSERVE:

NAME\REPRESENTING	ADDRESS	PHONE #
1.) JAN WEAVER,	304 EIGHTEENTH AVE., FAIRBANKS 99701	456-4866
2.) JO SWARNER,	SEN. FAHRENKAMP'S OFFICE	

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*****
TESTIFY:  __13__
OBSERVE:  __ 2__
TOTAL:    __15__

START TIME: 1:30 P.M.
END TIME: 2:30 P.M.

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JOSTENS

BILL GORDON
(907) 474-9262

FEB 12 1988



Scholastic Division
P.O. Box 47
Fairbanks, AK 99701

February 8, 1988

The Honorable Betty Cato
Chairperson, Transportation Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Cato:

This letter is written to strongly support the naming of the new 30th Avenue by-pass in Fairbanks after Robert J. Mitchell.

As a property owner in South Fairbanks which is the area served by this road and as a 2nd generation Alaskan, I can think of no more appropriate person to remember by this road. Bob Mitchell devoted much of his adult life to pioneering the development of Fairbanks - especially the area in south Fairbanks which is crossed by this expressway.

I believe it is necessary to provide a descriptive name to the couplet which joins the Parks Highway to the Richardson Highway. It is most appropriate to give this roadway the name of the Mitchell Expressway in honor of this great Alaskan. I hope your committee will act favorably on this resolution.

Sincerely,

Bill Gordon

cc: Gary Wilken

15 Feb 1988

FEB 18 1988

Ms Betty Cato, Chairperson, House Transportation Committee

Pouch V

Juneau, Alaska 99811

I am taking this opportunity to endorse the naming of what is now referred to as the 30th Avenue by-pass in Fairbanks to be permanently named the Mitchell Expressway.

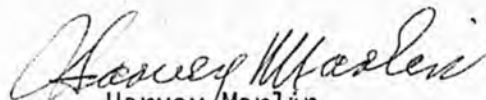
My first point is that Bob Mitchell represents history in Fairbanks. Bobs father, Charlie came to Fairbanks in 1906, was married to Liza Hatch in 1914, and Bob was born, raised and died a resident of Fairbanks. Bob married and raised a family after World War II, and their three children all married and are living here together with their children also. This family does represent considerable history in the city of Fairbanks.

Bob Mitchell always referred to Fairbanks with pride. Any of us that knew him heard many times the expressions of satisfaction and pride when "Mitch" would refer to a project that was completed, be it road, bridge, or building, and he would say " isn't it great to know you had a part in building or doing that." Oftentimes while driving from one place to another "Mitch" would remark out of a clear sky " isn't this a great place to live in." Bob truly loved his Fairbanks.

My main point is that "Mitch" made things happen. He was not afraid to risk his assets, starting first with a GI loan after World War II. He, and lifelong friend and partner Clyde Geraghty, developed Mitchell Truck & Tractor Service doing land clearing, digging basements, moving houses, freighting from Valdez to all road points North, and you name it. From that organization numerous other activities were developed in South Fairbanks, and the "Mitchell Expressway", if you will, cuts right through the middle of much that "Mitch" worked so hard for.

What better name could there be for an Expressway than to remember one so dedicated to his community.

Thank you very much for your consideration,



Harvey Marlin
665 10th
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Michael V. McGee

2438 Mission Road

Box 58116

North Pole, Alaska 99705

February 21, 1988

FEB 25 1988

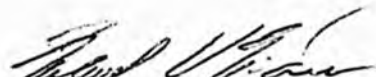
Mrs. Betty Cato, Chairman
House Transportation Committee
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Mrs. Cato,

The suggestion has been made to rename that part of the new Parks highway extension inside the Fairbanks city limits for Bob Mitchell. This is a well-intentioned but very silly idea. We do not need more streets that change their names as they wander about Fairbanks. In fact, an excellent suggestion would be a bill requiring that cities and boroughs refrain from this idiocy in the future and that they must coordinate names where they cross city limit lines so they do not change at these locations.

I am sure we can find a whole street to name for Bob Mitchell. He deserves better than a chunk of street and the cuss words of confused tourists, new residents and out-of-town visitors.

Sincerely,


Michael V McGee

FEB 19 1988

P. O. Box 81109
Fairbanks, AK 99708
February 15, 1988

Honorable Bette Cato
Chairperson, House Transportation Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Cato:

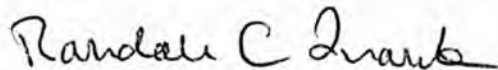
I am very much in favor of renaming the portion of the Parks Highway between Airport Road and the Richardson Highway for Robert Mitchell.

This man was like a second father to me. He was a visionary teacher, and his dreams for the South Fairbanks area are coming true.

Robert Mitchell will long be remembered as an ardent promoter of the potential of the South Fairbanks area, even without a highway named after him. However, I think he should be properly honored for his efforts to make Fairbanks a better place to live.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Randall C. Frank

FEB 19 1988

PO Box 83750
Fairbanks, AK 99708
February 15, 1988

Ms. Betty Cato, Chair
House Transportation Committee
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Cato,

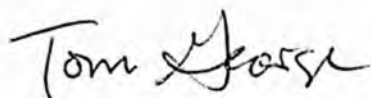
I wish to comment on the proposal to name the extension of the Parks Highway through Fairbanks in honor of Robert J. Mitchell. While I support the idea that Mr. Mitchell's efforts in behalf of Fairbanks are worthy of recognition, I feel that naming this section of highway after him will do more harm than good.

Names of objects such as highways are used by many people every day to assist in orientation. We use these terms to communicate how and where to find different places. Building confusion into the system, by taking one highway and changing its name in mid-stream (in this case at as it crosses Airport Road) is a disservice to the community which Mr. Mitchell helped to build.

Fairbanks is heavily dependent on the tourism industry, which brings thousands of visitors to the area each year. We need to make it as simple and straight forward as possible for these people to find their way around our city. Emergency vehicles attempting to respond to fires, accidents and other catastrophes are often hampered by vague and ambiguous directions. We shouldn't make their job even tougher by building confusion into the system from the start.

I am all in favor of honoring Mr. Mitchell, but let's find some complete entity that can bear his name without needlessly adding confusion to the map of our city.

Sincerely,



Tom George

Fairbanks, Alaska

February 16, 1988

FEB 19 1988

Mrs. Betty Cato- Chair person
House Transportation Committee

Dear Lady Cato;

Your invitation for contributors to mr. Robert Mitchell's life history of his outstanding achievements during his too short life was too much for me to resist paying him the respects he so richly deserves in naming The Richardson Inter change in his honor.

He began his adult life while still young in years in a sincere effort to assist his widowed mother with her various problems. Naturally this required money, which was his cue for going to work at the initial construction of nearby Ladd Air Force Base as a Bulldozer operator, while previously I had served as a supervisor of Maintenance and repair crews, which brought Bobby and I into close relationship. Bobby soon became a perfectionist in his frequent requests for maintenance service which in many cases were trivial and not affecting the normal operation of his bulldozer, much to the annoyance of my busy mechanics. In preparing for war misunderstanding among workers simply could not be tolerated! So, in the interest of re-establishing peace between Bobby and my mechanics I decided to ask Bobby he was pursuing this highly questionable practice?

His reactions and his reply will never be forgotten. He stood facing away from me seemingly dazed at my question, then turning slowly and in a strong well articulated voice said "Dick, please allow me to explain! If for any reason I might be fired from my present job, it would be impossible for me to contribute to my dear Mother's financial problems., and this would be impossible for me to accept.

With tears rolling down his pale cheeks he continued, "When my dear Mother gave me life she also gave me a part of herself, just like all mothers do. Now can you understand why insist on having my bulldozer in top condition?" Yes- I understood, because I felt the same responsibility towards my dear Mother! Now I enjoyed a new relationship with Bobby, and so did my mechanics when the Bobby's story *was heard*

Through a series of bizarre war time events I was re-assigned to the sagebrush and rattle snake voids of eastern Washington to supervise the construction of a "top Secret" Air Base, where Japanese balloons were dropping fire bombs on our forest and our sage brush setting them aflame, while hundreds of construction men and women were working around the clock building the longest and widest runways in the world, Yes- they even poured concrete runways in the dead of winter when heating it was necessary. Indeed a giant project being accomplished by Americans from all walks of life., requiring four years to complete.

During those four years I maintained contact with happenings in Fairbanks, about six month before the end of World War Two, word was received of Bobby's venture into Construction of his own. Its history of success is common knowledge.

In closing this narrative of Bobby, let us not forget true innovators are seldom recognized as such, until after they have fulfilled their destinies. Please let us pay bobby the honors he so richly deserves by naming the newly constructed Richardson Interchange Highway "The Robert Mitchell Highway, with an everlasting plaque identifying it as such in a conspicuous location for all motorists to enjoy.

BestWishes to you and yours

Richard E. Denver
2763 Phillips Field Rd.

Fairbanks, Alaska

February 8, 1988

To- The Editor- What? Again!

Ever since the disappearance of wooden sidewalks in our Core area, over forty years ago, (Experts from outside of Alaska's boundaries) have been hired at sizeable fees to wave their magic flags which they have claimed will transform our Frontier style core area into one of shopping splendor, while others have volunteered their services free of charge, in spite of the too narrow streets which prevents two dog teams to use them simultaneously without a canine confrontation.

Now it appears we have two groups of experts planning improvement for our "once upon a time Frontier gold mining town" one planning transform our core area into one of shopping splendor.

Let's call the extension the Parks Highway

By NANCY LEE BAKER

The four-mile extension of the George Parks Highway will end by joining the Richardson Highway near the old 30th Street exit. The work is scheduled for completion in September 1988.

A move to call this four-mile section the Robert J. Mitchell Expressway began in February 1986, when Sen. Jack Coghill and Rep. Steve Frank initiated Senate Bill 461 and an identical House bill. They got through most committees but not to both floors due to pressures of the closing days.

The same legislators are in the process of introducing the bills again this year. Since there was some opposition from individuals two years ago (which did not keep them from trying to hustle the bills through in 1986), the approach this year appears to be to go directly to large bodies such as the city council, borough assembly, Chamber of Commerce and its transportation committee for their public endorsement. These endorsements are intended to convey the broad approval of Fairbanksans for this move.

In "talking around," however, I find almost no individual support for the resolutions these bodies endorsed, except from some personal friends of the late Robert Mitchell. The consensus was to maintain the same name.

It is understandable that at "first thought" it might seem like a good idea to name a new piece of road after a friend, but the result of suddenly changing the name of a highway that thousands of people will have been traveling on for 358 miles

Guest Opinion

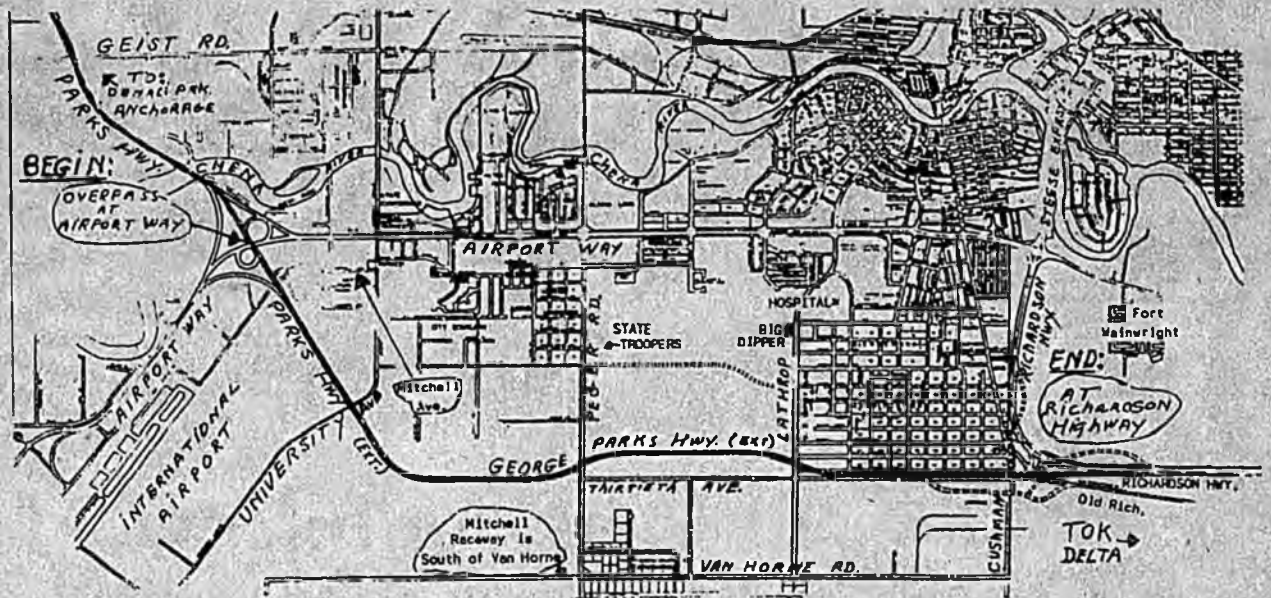
at speeds in excess of 50 mph is not an inconsequential thing to be taken lightly. It deserves serious "second thoughts." Some of them follow:

Confusion: The bottom line is, calling the last four miles anything but the Parks Highway would be confusing. It is one continuous highway, doesn't turn, get wider, narrower, or change in any way. A sign proclaiming you are all of a sudden on a different highway spells instant confusion to a visitor to our area. This could precipitate slowing down, changing lanes, conversations with the "co-pilot" about how we got "off course." Any one of these reactions are a basis for possible accidents.

We are a tourist dependent economy. We spend hundreds of thousands of dollars attracting visitors. Shouldn't we be more considerate of them? Many of them are older citizens, with slower reactions in some cases, and driving less maneuverable vehicles with the poor visibility that RV's often offer.

A different name could offer problems and expense to mapmakers, as well as map readers who see a different name (if there is room to print it) on what appears to be obviously the same highway.

Where would the highway signs be placed to tell drivers they are now on a different highway? Driving to the airport from town a



Map shows the route of the Parks Highway extension through South Fairbanks.

Map courtesy of Nancy Lee Baker

motorists would see a sign announcing the exit to "Highway 3, Parks Highway." A few hundred feet later on a sign would say "Highway 3," with a different name.

Think seriously (until it becomes funny and you start laughing) of various possible confusions in giving directions about how to get "from here to there" when it requires getting on or off the new portion of road should it have a different name.

It is worth noting that the engineer who designed the highway is also "seriously concerned about the confusion that would result if the name of the new portion were to be anything other than the Parks Highway."

Cost: It will cost at least \$10,000 to

remove the dozen or more signs that are already up at University, Peger, and Lathrop intersections and replace them with another name. If the new name has many more letters they will have to be made small in order to fit the signs. The \$10,000 could probably be better used for maintenance! Signs at University Avenue have been there for two years. It would be nice if they had squatter's rights!

In answer to my "confusion concerns," some legislators said the public would get used to it. The visitors will not get used to it, and why should the local people have to go through the process? There are better ways to commemorate people than to confuse the public.

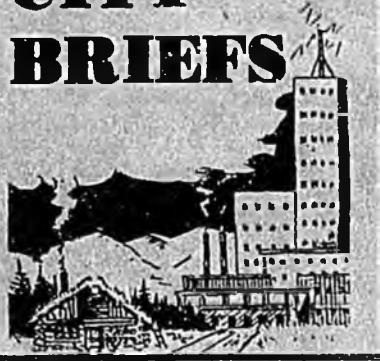
Another consideration, in view of the recent attempt to avoid duplicate street names in town. There is a Mitchell Avenue, named after the same Mitchell. It runs off University Avenue, next to Erickson Avenue, also named after a partner in the Ghemm Co. of which Mitchell was a partner.

The new portion of the highway can only be named by legislative action. This has not happened yet, but it is in the brewing stage. Let's hope some legislator, with grassroots encouragement, will speak up and propose a bill to name it the Parks Highway.

Nancy Lee Baker is a 37-year resident with an interest in mapmaking.

Fairbanks

CITY BRIEFS



TODAY

5:30 p.m.—1988 Arctic Winter Games decorations committee meeting, 507 Gaffney Road. Information: 451-0880.

7 p.m.—1988 Arctic Winter Games volleyball committee meeting, 507 Gaffney Road. Information: 451-0880.

7 p.m.—West Valley High School PTSA meeting, West Valley High School library. Subject: School activities. Information: 479-3961.

7 p.m.—Alaska Independence Party meeting, Jeffrey's Restaurant. Public is invited to attend. Information: 457-1884.

7 p.m.—Right to Life of the Interior meeting, Bible Baptist Church, 913 College Road. Information: 456-3419.

7:30 p.m.—Pioneers of Alaska Igloo No. 4 and Auxiliary No. 8 meeting, Pioneer Hall, Alaskaland.

TUESDAY

8:30 a.m.—House HESS legislative hearing, 119 North Cushman St. Subjects: Prescription drugs, public assistance, and coronor's inquests. Information: 452-4448.

8:30 a.m.—House Resources legislative hearing, 119 North Cush-

U of A faces two significant bud

When the price of oil dropped in 1986, the University of Alaska was told to cut its statewide budget by \$5.9 million. At the time, university officials called the cuts the largest any major university in the country has had to face in a single year since the 1940s or 1950s.

Though the restructuring is mostly complete, the budget cuts have hit the university with a double whammy: many senior level instructors—anticipating budget and salary cuts—quit or retired from the university last year.

And, university officials say, the reduced budget has left the school unable to compete with salaries offered by Lower 48 institutions, making it difficult to replace the top-level professors and instructors who left with people of equal caliber.

Gov. Steve Cowper alluded to this problem in his Jan. 25 State of the State message, and pushed for the creation of a science and technology foundation to help make sure Alaska doesn't get left behind in the areas of physical science and technology.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks' more technical departments—such as the schools of management, engineering and biochemistry—are among those hardest hit, according to Karen Cedzo, UAF's public information officer.

"The school of mechanical engineering lost two of its senior people and, so far, has only been able to replace one of them," Cedzo said. "We made an offer to a highly qualified woman in Texas but she turned it down, primarily because of the salary," Cedzo said.

Four senior positions were lost in civil engineering, she said, and replacement has been found for only one of those. The four positions make up 40 percent of the top civil engineering slots at UAF. Like mechanical engineering, an offer was made to a highly-qualified person in North Carolina. She, too, turned it down, claiming the salary wasn't competitive with offers she had received from universities in the Lower 48.

Electrical engineering also lost four senior people, and only one ha

Stevens confident '91 bill will become law

News-Miner Bureau
WASHINGTON—Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, said today he is confident a key bill sought by Alaska Natives will become law this year, even if Congress has to override a presidential veto.

The measure, passed by Congress last December, outlines a series of options to Alaska Natives for dealing with their stock after 1991, when it becomes publicly available.

President Reagan has until midnight Tuesday to decide whether to sign or veto the bill. If he neither signs nor vetoes it, it becomes law without his signature.

Stevens said he has talked briefly

with White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker, a former senator, about the issue. The measure is a top priority of the all-Republican Alaska delegation and the Alaska Federation of Natives.

"He (Baker) knows he has to talk to me before he makes a recommendation of a veto to the president," said Stevens. "I fully expect the recommendation to be on Baker's desk today."

Interior Secretary Donald P.

Hodel, the lead administration official on the issue, has recommended a veto. He argues that the bill is unconstitutional and could set a precedent for the treatment of Indian tribes in the Lower 48.

"I disagree with that," said Stevens of Hodel's objections. "We have a unique situation. There is no other Indian corporation created by an act of Congress. There is no precedent."

Stevens said, "It is an Alaska issue, not a federal issue, and it ought to become law. I think it will."

The bill cleared the House last December by 379-9, a margin more than sufficient to override a veto. It then passed the Senate by voice vote.

If necessary, the delegation will ask for a meeting with President Reagan to discuss the bill.

Election to fill vacant committee posts

Public elections next Monday will fill seven positions for the Johnson O'Malley Parent Advisory Committee—a committee that has been inactive for three years.

The election is scheduled Feb. 8 from 7-9 p.m. in the Noel Wien Lib-

The program is aimed for preschool and kindergarten children of Native Indian descent who are academically deficient and need remedial training.

"This is a supplemental education program in academic tradi-

O'Malley program is funded through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"We're going back to the basics," Guinn said. "For the last three years, we have not had an active committee."

Obituary

Francis J. Jackson
(concerned citizen)

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will see it this way too.

The Committee's thinking they
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to favor this opinion of Jim
Many people I have spoken
Mark Highway Extension.

shown on the morning of the
Included in a very informal
Dear Mrs. Cole;

Feb. 17, 1988

FEB 23 1988

FRANCES ERICKSON
1205 10TH AVE.
FAIRBANKS, ALSK.
99701



amr

*Ms. Betty Cato, Chairperson
House Transportation Committee
Juneau, Ak. 99801*