

**TRANSCRIPTION
OF
INTERVIEW
05_18_27_Y**

Interviewer

So just to start, can you tell me how long you've lived here in Unalakleet?

Interviewee

Most of my life, but I moved away 20 years ago in 1990, then moved back [de-identified] four and a half years ago.

Interviewer

Okay, and why did you leave Unalakleet?

Interviewee

Just personal problems and marriage broke up.

Interviewer

Gotcha, and then why did you come back here?

Interviewee

Cuz I got a few phone calls from family members that my mom's boyfriend, whom was living in her house after she passed was running it into the ground. So I came back to take care of him and the house, and he died a year ago.

Interviewer

I'm sorry, that was really good of you to come back and take care of it all.

Interviewee

Nobody else did.

Interviewer

Yeah. Yeah, and so do you live in that house currently?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

Okay. Do you know when that house was built?

Interviewee

Oh, I'm 60. I just turned 60. I want to say we moved in there right about when I was 15.

Interviewer

Okay.

Interviewee

I can't remember but that's about how I remember it.

Interviewer

Yeah. So maybe in the 60s no in the 80s.

Interviewee

80s. 15, 45 years ago and then it's been remodeled a few times. So it's nice in there.

Interviewer

Good, and did your mom build it or?

Interviewee

No, Bering Straits housing or whatever was here then.

Interviewer

And they built, was that one where they built multiple ones?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

Okay, and then how many people do you live with now?

Interviewee

I live alone.

Interviewer

And how many bedrooms is it?

Interviewee

Three. Well, two and a half, the other one was transformed into a laundry room it's so small.

Interviewer

Do you know when it was remodeled?

Interviewee

My mother died about eight years ago. I want to say it was remodeled right before she died about eight years ago but it was kept in good condition.

Interviewer

And when they did the remodel was that through a specific program?

Interviewee

Yes. Rural cap.

Interviewer

Okay, and do you remember some of the things that they did on the house?

Interviewee

I know that you change the flooring, wiring. I want to say new windows and they put in new stove pipes for the wood stove. So those are still basically just brand new because you know even though I make fire I maintain the stove pipes.

Interviewer

Okay and with the flooring, do you know if they put in put in,

Interviewee

They put in linoleum.

Interviewer

Did they put in any more insulation in any part of the house?

Interviewee

I'm not aware of that. I don't know.

Interviewer

Okay. With the windows, do you think they replaced them with new ones?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

And do you know if they did any weather stripping or stuffing around the doors to keep the drops out?

Interviewee

No, I do that.

Interviewer

You do that?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

Okay, awesome.

Interviewee

I learned how to do things myself. I'm one of the type that either learn or hire somebody and I don't like asking for help. So I basically learn.

Interviewer

Okay, you take care of all of it yourself?

Interviewee

I try.

Interviewer

Cool. So, what kinds of things do you normally do to your house to maintain it or to weatherize it?

Interviewee

When I'm getting ready for winter, I pile a whole bunch of wood for heat. It's a pretty warm house I mean. Just do the stripping around the doors.

Interviewer

And you'll just make sure that's tight for the winter?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

I like that, and then do you ever notice, like, shifting with the house where there'd be some, like, cracks around the windows and things?

Interviewee

Yes, I mean, I noticed because maybe it's my table. I don't know, but when I put something on my table, it'll roll one way.

Interviewer

Okay.

Interviewee

Because the table is old, I'm getting a new one soon.

Interviewer

Yeah. Do you think it might be from the floors sort of shifting, or it's the table?

Interviewee

It don't seem like the floor is shifting.

Interviewer

Okay. Well, that's good. Some signs

...

Interviewee

You're gonna have problems with the electricity here Unalakleet. So I went and bought power surges or the power surge plugins and plugged everything of mine that's electronic into those.

Interviewer

That's awesome. Okay, so it protected all of your devices?

Interviewee

Huh?

Interviewer

Did it protect all of your devices?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

And you did that before this winter?

Interviewee

After we had our first major outage.

Interviewer

Okay, and then when the power went out for a longer amount of time, like when you guys had that longer one, that was like almost a day, were you warm enough with just your woodstove?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

Okay, and then imagine that you were building a new home here in Unalakleet, what are some design considerations or construction considerations you would make?

Interviewee

I would put solar panels.

Interviewer

And why would you put in solar panels?

Interviewee

To save on electricity cuz it's expensive winter time. Because you have the heat, a lot of people use heaters here and then the electric bill from what I seen one of my friends with a with a monitor and an electric heater, her bill is about \$800 a month. So that's one part that I'm like, yeah.

Interviewer

Do you know how much electricity you go through in the winter? Like roughly what your bill is?

Interviewee

Mine? I live alone and I lived alone and took over the bills after my stepdad died but mine is only like about \$100.

Interviewer

Okay, and what about your oil?

Interviewee

My oil? I buy 30 gallons every two weeks, and that's over \$100 every two weeks.

Interviewer

Okay, and then in the summertime and does your electricity bill change much?

Interviewee

It goes way down.

Interviewer

Oh yeah? Do you mind sharing what normally is in the summer?

Interviewee

We've had NSEDC pay for our stuff so I didn't really pay attention. I know it's way, way less than winter time.

Interviewer

The \$100 a month for the electricity, is that after the assistant payments from NSEDC?

Interviewee

No. That's for when it runs out. They just started again, but I had like a \$200 bill because I quit my job for a little bit and missed a payment and they offered my job back and I'm finally getting back on track.

Interviewer

Awesome.

Interviewee

Yes, but the highest bill I've had was \$200.

Interviewer

That was because of back pain?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

Okay. Good, and then in addition to solar panels, are there other design considerations you'd make for a house?

Interviewee

Oh my god solar panels. Man just insulated, fully just insulated flooring, insulated walls, insulated ceiling, proper running water pipes. Proper electricity.

Interviewer

Do you have any concerns with your current water pipes?

Interviewee

They froze once or twice this winter, but they got them thawed out really quick and that's when my bill tends to go up because I have this little heater when it gets cold, my boiler room is in my ports with the heater and the hot water heater in there. So when it gets cold, I put my little heater in there to keep the water pipes from freezing. I need to find somebody to put heating tape before this winter around those pipes.

Interviewer

Okay, so you would want someone to?

Interviewee

Put heating tape on my pipes.

Interviewer

Okay, are there any barriers to you being able to have the heating tape put in?

Interviewee

No, I mean, I have plenty of family members that do stuff but like I said, I don't like to ask and I try to figure it out by myself until I get stuck. Yeah.

Interviewer

They come over everything's up and done.

Interviewee

Yeah and they'd be like, what you doing? Are you goggling again? I'm like that's my best friend.

Interviewer

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. I mean, you can find almost anything on there. Do you use YouTube videos normally or?

Interviewee

Yes, yeah and Google, I use Google Assistant a lot.

Interviewer

Okay, and then what about your electrical lines? Are there any concerns with your lighting or wiring or electricity in the house?

Interviewee

No, because I have lighting like that in the living room. There's two of them in the living room, one in the kitchen and I have just regular light bulbs in all the other rooms and the bathroom.

Interviewer

Okay, and then do you have any concerns with your sewer system?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

And what about your insulation in any part of your house? Do you have any concerns with how it's insulated? Or areas where there may be less insulation or something like that?

Interviewee

No, I'm gonna have to ask my uncle cuz I didn't really know but I'm kind of thinking they changed the insulation. Because when I grew up in that house, the walling was a different color. The walls was a different color and now they are lighter. Lighter like this.

Interviewer

Oh, interesting.

Interviewee

So I'm like maybe they did do the insulation and put in new walls.

Interviewer

Okay, but you say that in the winter, like you don't feel the cold coming through the walls or it doesn't feel drafty?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

Yeah, that's a good sign. Okay, and then what about with the roof? Are there any concerns?

Interviewee

The roof looks pretty good. Since I think they change that roof too because it still looks new.

Interviewer

Okay, do you notice any watermarks anywhere on the walls or ceiling? Maybe even in the floor corner?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

So there's no indication that they've ever been some leakage or anything?

Interviewee

Yeah, because I'm forever looking for some reason. But no, I don't have any, no.

Interviewer

And in your bathroom, has there ever been any watermarks?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

Okay, and then what about signs of mold? Do you ever get it anywhere?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

That's awesome. Okay, and on your windows I know sometimes people get that frost layer right? Because of the condensation, does that ever form like a little bit of mold on there, or is it were you can wipe up the water and it's good?

Interviewee

I always wipe stuff up especially the wetness and everything, I wipe it up and yeah, I don't leave it there or anywhere.

Interviewer

Do you have any concerns around the outside of your house? Like with erosion or flooding or kind of like uneven ground?

Interviewee

No. If they want to come and cover the mud puddles that always form every summer, they're most welcome to come and put gravel outside.

Interviewer

Do you get those puddles right around the edge of your house? Is there skirting on the house?

Interviewee

There's skirting around the house.

Interviewer

Yeah. So do you notice anywhere like where the water would sort of drain?

Interviewee

No, it's about five feet away from my house like most of it.

Interviewer

Yeah. Okay. That's great, and then the ground that your house is on, does it seem like it's flat or slanted in one way?

Interviewee

No, I never really noticed but it seemed like it's leveled or my house still seems.

Interviewer

Good. Yeah, like I come over it's completely slanted and I'm like yeah, things just roll off my table.

Interviewee

I know, I'm like when did this become that way. Now I'm really looking.

Interviewer

I'm gonna make you paranoid about your house.

Interviewee

I know, I'm like, I'll probably go home and look. Call you up, it is crooked.

Interviewer

And then do you have concerns with holes on the outside of your skirting or cracks on the side?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

And do you know the last time the outside of your house was painted?

Interviewee

When it got remodeled. So I want to say about eight years ago, but you know, the paint is still good on there, and then me and my kids thought about repainting it this summer, but everybody's working somewhere. So we'll try but.

Interviewer

Do you know what kind of foundation you have underneath the house? Or like, maybe how tall your skirting is to give me an idea?

Interviewee

It's probably like about that much, maybe.

Interviewer

Have you ever looked down under there?

Interviewee

No, because there was all this skirting and I wouldn't [inaudible 13:49]

Interviewer

Yeah, dark, and then do you have an attic or crawlspace?

Interviewee

They closed it off when they remodeled it which is fine by me. Cuz growing up, my mother had parakeets and I used to have to be the one to climb up there and forever chase those darn birds. I was happy when they close that attic off.

Interviewer

Yeah, that's so funny. So you would let them loose in the house and they would fly up there? Yeah. Sweet. Okay, so do you know what kind of insulation is above there from the attic with the ceiling? Like, if you're in the attic could you see the insulation?

Interviewee

Yeah, my mom always let them loose. I mean, they would come and eat with us or peck at our plates. So they would be on the table with us. I did when I used to crawl up there, it used to be about that kind of.

Interviewer

Is it pink stuff? Like the classic kind of insulation or is it? Sometimes they have like white foam.

Interviewee

No it was the insulation the itchy kind of pink stuff.

Interviewer

The itchy kind?

Interviewee

Yeah. I used to get itchy up there.

Interviewer

The parakeets too are probably like, oh my god. Do you have any concerns with how much electricity or oil that you use in the wintertime?

Interviewee

No. I mean, it's pretty understandable because of the weather, the temperature. But for me, because I use wood, that saves a lot on my burning oil at the same time.

Interviewer

It does yeah. Okay. And what about any concerns with your bathroom?

Interviewee

My bathroom is good.

Interviewer

And what about your kitchen?

Interviewee

My kitchen is good. I love my kitchen.

Interviewer

And then you said that one room was converted to a laundry room? Do you have a washer and dryer in there?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

How often do you use them?

Interviewee

If there was just me about maybe once a week.

Interviewer

And do you use your dryer throughout the summer or do you line dry?

Interviewee

I use my dryer cuz I can't put a clothesline. I live right over here at this corner. By the stop sign so no clothesline there. So I have to

Interviewer

Yeah you would just have to throw them back in the washer.

Interviewee

Yeah. I don't know if I'd do all that. But my relatives live right behind me and we were thinking about putting a clothesline real soon. We're gonna build a smoke house and a fish rack.

Interviewer

Oh awesome. That's so great. How nice that they live right behind you so you can share that. And then how many times is the cooking stove used per week? Or per day? Say per day?

Interviewee

At least three times a day.

Interviewer

And how many times do you burn something? No I'm just kidding.

Interviewee

Every day. Why do you think I'm so skinny? No I'm kidding.

Interviewer

And then do you have concerns with air quality inside your home at any time of year?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

Do you think the utility infrastructure in Unalakleet like water lines or electrical lines need to be updated?

Interviewee

Yes. water line, electricity line. All of it. major, major water lines. They're so old. They're old as this village. I'm exaggerating of course.

Interviewer

But I understand cuz I think they're 60 years old or something. Yeah, and do you do anything with your water normally when you use it out of the tap

Interviewee

I don't drink it I get fresh water and if I run out of fresh water, I have a Brita pitcher that I drink out of.

Interviewer

Do you go collect the water in like drums?

Interviewee

Five gallon buckets.

Interviewer

Oh, and then do you know how big your water heater is?

Interviewee

It's one of them really small ones, that one stands i wanna say about that big in my boiler room.

Interviewer

Okay, and do you have any concerns with it?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

And then can you tell me what you think about the wind turbines up on the hill?

Interviewee

The what?

Interviewer

The wind turbines?

Interviewee

The wind turbines, I think they're pretty useful. I mean, you know, those wind thingies?

Interviewer

Yep.

Interviewee

Oh. Well, I don't know much about those. I just know they are there.

Interviewer

Yeah, were you here when they put them in?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

You came back after?

Interviewee

Yeah. I came back after and I was like, wow, see? They modernized a little bit.

Interviewer

Yeah. Yeah. Do you think it would be helpful like, do you have an opinion on if they should put in more wind turbines or expand with solar?

Interviewee

Expand with solar.

Interviewer

Yeah?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

Like if the city had a program where they subsidized or partially paid for solar panels on people's homes, or something like that, like, does that sound like something that you think would be positive?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

And then I just have some questions on climate change. So have you seen any signs of climate change impacts in Unalakleet?

Interviewee

Well, the winters are different every year. It's colder, or it's more snow, or it's less colder and less snow. I've seen that. This winter was brutal. So I believe in climate change.

Interviewer

Yeah, and some people I mean, some people look at it as not necessarily climate change, but like, you know, weather changes or fluctuations that would be weird, and so, you know, there's multiple ways to phrase it. But if there's some sort of shift, like what you're talking about where it's inconsistent, and so some winters are shorter, and some are longer and things like that.

Interviewee

Yeah,

Interviewer

So with any of these changes, do you notice them impacting your daily life or other people's lives?

Interviewee

No, not that I'm aware of, no.

Interviewer

And then do you notice any climate change impacts or weather changes that affect housing?

Interviewee

That affects housing? No, just that, or sort of them.

Interviewer

Yeah, I know, that's the biggest, everyone, that's the first thing that they say. Okay, and then in this hypothetical of with climate change impacts, examples would be if there was severe flooding, or erosion or bigger storm surges, where it's more intense. If that were to happen in the future, and it affected housing down here, and things had to be changed to address it, who do you think should be involved?

Interviewee

Most definitely the city.

Interviewer

And why would you say the city?

Interviewee

Aren't they responsible for the city?

Interviewer

I mean, you're not wrong.

Interviewee

I'm drawing blame.

Interviewer

And then what about the involvement of other entities? Like, the role of NBU or the corporation?

Interviewee

The corporations, NBU, I think all these people should come together and try and decide or come together in a mutual agreement how to rebuild our town back to where it was, and maybe even better.

Interviewer

What about state and federal agencies? You see them having a role?

Interviewee

Oh, I would see that happening. Because we would need the outside help, like with funding and stuff.

Interviewer

Okay, and what do you think about as people build out on the hills? Do you have any opinions on people building out there more so than in town or that sort of shift?

Interviewee

No, I mean, I want to live up there but I'm like, good luck coming down wintertime. Be careful.

Interviewer

Yeah, that's a big one. That's a big limitation to being out there.

Interviewee

I want to live up there. I'm like, but nah, advantages and disadvantages I more lean to the disadvantage of winter time and it's, you know, no, no.

Interviewer

What are some advantages that you see to being out there?

Interviewee

Oh, quietness, less people. Where I work you want to stay away from people. But it's just beautiful, quiet, I love the country. You know, I could just see me up there all by myself.

Interviewer

Yeah, just enjoying?

Interviewee

Yeah.

Interviewer

[de-identified] has taken me up on his four wheeler out, and it's just so stunning. You get the views of the ocean along and yeah, amazing.

Interviewee

Yes. Beautiful scenery.

Interviewer

So if it weren't for the commute into town with the winters would that?

Interviewee

I would definitely live up there.

Interviewer

And then as the city or NBU develop more housing, like they're working on like a tiny house project right now and some others. How do you think community members should be involved in that process of developing new housing?

Interviewee

Developing new housing, you mean like building them or making choices?

Interviewer

Yeah, so it could be the design choices? Like what do they look like?

Interviewee

I think everybody should be involved.

Interviewer

Yeah?

Interviewee

Yes.

Interviewer

How do you see that working? Like, what would be the best ways to get people involved?

Interviewee

Advertise new houses you know what i mean? Applications for new houses you know? You'll wake up people.

Interviewer

Do you think surveys, where they hand out surveys to people to get their perspective or like community meetings or like other things like that would be helpful?

Interviewee

Community meetings mostly, yes. cuz a lot of people here, I don't think we really pay attention to flyers, because there's not that many that goes and lands on our doorsteps.

Interviewer

That was my plan. Before they announced it on the radio, I was gonna be door to door. But it worked out for me so. Okay, so community meetings and then and do you see that being for the initial design decisions like what the houses look like, where to put them and or also the construction part, like, what materials to use and things like that, like, how much involvement are you seeing?

Interviewee

I'm seeing a lot. I mean, if you want to build a good house, to last these seasons here in Unalakleet, then it would take you know this whole village to look into something like that. It would, honestly, it would.

Interviewer

Do you know if in previous housing projects like the project that was done to build your home or other houses, if community members were really involved in those projects?

Interviewee

Yeah. Because they got paid doing it.

Interviewer

Oh, yeah?

Interviewee

I mean well, they were busy back then. Being a teenager, I remember we moved into our house and our house was not finished. But we finished it, or my parents did, they finished it, did whatever, you know, to it, and finished it, which wasn't much. I can't remember what but I know my bedroom was finished. My brother's wasn't and something else, I can't remember.

Interviewer

Yeah. Okay. So it wasn't completely done and then your parents worked on it. Do you know if community members were involved in that initial part of it?

Interviewee

Yes, I wish they would finish what they started, you know, they need to finish what they start.

Interviewer

Yeah. Okay, I think that's everything that I have. Do you have any other things you want to share?

Interviewee

No.

Interviewer

Okay. Good.