

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

Leif Fixen, Chair • Tom Early, Vice-Chair

Gordon Bradley • Donna Kostka • Richard Martin • Joanna Nelson de Flores • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Steve Zemke

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

April 8, 2015

Meeting Notes

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 2750 (27th floor)
700 5th Avenue, Seattle

Attending

Commissioners

Leif Fixen - chair
Tom Early – vice chair
Gordon Bradley
Donna Kostka
Richard Martin
Jeff Reibman
Steve Zemke
Erik Rundell
Steve Zemke

Staff

Sandra Pinto de Bader - OSE
Pam Emerson - SPU
Darren Morgan - SDOT
Peg Staeheli – SvR Design (consultant)
Amalia Leighton – SvR Design (consultant)
Amanda Bailey – SvR Design (consultant)
Jill Simmons - OSE

Guests

Mayor Edward B. Murray

Absent- Excused

Joanna Nelson de Flores

Public

Linda Murtfeldt
Patricia Naumann
Sarah Welch
Ruth Williams

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Call to order

Leif called the meeting to order.

Chair report

Leif went through the agenda for the Mayor's visit.

Leif went to a community meeting and heard about Neighborhood Conservation Districts supported by CM Rasmussen. Could that initiative be used to protect trees? He sent a request for additional information to CM Rasmussen's office. Will report when he hears back.

Street Trees and Bio-retention briefing – Pam Emerson (SPU), Darren Morgan (SDOT)

Pam Emerson and Darren Morgan presented. Seattle City Council unanimously passed a Resolution in July of 2013, establishing green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) as a critical aspect of a sustainable drainage system and challenging Seattle to rely on GSI to manage stormwater runoff whenever possible. The GSI Resolution and related Executive Order adopted a new implementation target for Seattle to manage 700 million gallons of stormwater runoff annual with GSI by 2025.

In the Strategy GSI is defined as a set of distributed stormwater best management practices that use or mimic natural processes to slow, infiltrate, evapotranspire, and/or harvest and reuse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces, on or near the site where it is generated.

Street trees and trees in parks that act like street trees (are adjacent to impervious surfaces and help minimize runoff from those impervious surfaces) were counted and will be tracked as part of the baseline and will be tracked/counted moving forward.

SDOT/SPU coordination on capital projects in the right-of-way (ROW) to optimize trees and bioretention. Designers working to implement GSI in the ROW use an iterative design approach to ensure the best possible combination of stormwater performance and tree canopy improvement in the streetscape. This iterative approach includes the following steps:

- Existing conditions assessment
- 30%, 60%, and 90% design
- Construction/planting and long-term maintenance

The public has been very involved in these projects. These projects also apply the Two-for-One tree replacement policy. Over the past year an inter-departmental team work group with SPU and SDOT have developed a design manual that they apply to their work. There is a section on how trees and bio-retention can be optimized. Projects also work on improving canopy cover recovery and using GSI to shorten pedestrian crossings.

UFC question: what does WTD stand for?

Answer: Waste Water Treatment Division of King County. SPU and King County manage parts of the sewer system and are now following the same design guidelines.

UFC question: How are projects funded?

Answer: Utility capital project funding, Utility drainage rates, rebates, grants, other capital departments, Department of Ecology, foundations, and developer funded via the stormwater code.

UFC question: How does the overall policy framework factors in the decision making in SPU and SDOT?

Answer: GSI is considered as an option in capital projects. On the SDOT side they use the Complete Streets check list. All mayor capital projects go through the checklist and see if GSI would make sense.

UFC question: Does the resolution has a requirement for monitoring and tracking progress?

Answer: there is monitoring for performance. The strategy is recommending tracking progress on a bi-annual basis. This will provide an opportunity to adjust recommendations on how to accomplish goals.

UFC question: How well projects will be applied and prioritized by land use type?

Answer: the strategy is not organized by land use type. The bulk of funding is coming from drainage rates and through 2020 there are specific prioritized areas based on the most pressing stormwater goals such as protecting creeks and preventing combined sewer overflows.

UFC question: How the design guideline gets applied?

Answer: The interdepartmental team (SPU, SDOT, King County) is imposing guidelines in internal projects.

UFC question: to what degree is this work being incorporated in ROW Improvement Manual (ROWIM) update?

Answer: there are recommendations that are being brought forward to the ROWIM update process. Details that were working well will not change. The guidelines exceed what will be included in the ROWIM.

UFC question: Can we assume that one of the metrics will be tree canopy addition and impacts to tree canopy?

Answer: don't have targets for each type of best management practice (BMP) (bioretention, street trees, green roofs, etc.). They provide a set of tools to designers to meet target and they get to use those that make more sense.

UFC question: will you be tracking to know what the impact has been on tree canopy?

Answer: SDOT and Parks are tracking their trees. The team will be doing a data pull this year from 2013-2015 which will be stratified by BMP type. That data set will be used to make projections moving forward. They would like to automate this function so the stratification of BMPs will be able to be queried automatically.

UFC question: What's the relation between this and Green Factor?

Answer: GSI counts towards meeting Green Factor requirements. A developer can meet both stormwater code requirement and landscape requirements using GSI.

UFC comment: would be great if industrial areas were part of the focus.

The team will be bringing the strategy to the Commission again during public comment in order to get input.

UFSP Monitoring Framework – SvR Design

Amalia Leighton from SvR presented the Monitoring Framework for the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan (UFSP).

When City Council adopted the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan in 2013, it tasked departments with creating a monitoring framework and set of indicators to track progress toward the Plan's goals. This framework was based on the Clark and Kenney model.

The Monitoring Framework is meant to be a living document and it includes a section for each of the four UFSP goals. It also links the framework criteria to key objectives, the UFSP strategies and actions.

Sandra will send the link to Clark and Kenney papers to the Commission.

Amalia walked through the criteria and recorded input provided by the Commission.

Draft Cheasty Hydrology Concerns letter – discussion and possible vote

Richard walked through the draft letter. Parks has done a pretty good job with the due diligence you'd expect on a project like this. They have looked at wetlands and the geotech work mostly focuses on slides and doesn't focus on how the project would impact the wetlands on site.

Slide issues and wetland impacts need to be addressed. He tried to be generic and not to direct what they should be doing. Commission discussed the letter and provided input. Richard will work on a second draft for Commission discussion.

Mayor Edward B. Murray visit

Commissioners introduced themselves. Leif talked about the items the Commission is focusing on this year:

- Supporting implementation of the Urban Forest Stewardship Plan and its goals.
- They would very much like to see a canopy cover assessment this year.
- Green Seattle Partnership has been doing a great job restoring forested parklands.
- They were very supported of the Metropolitan Parks District and look forward to seeing improvements in Parks with this funding.
- The Two for one tree replacement policy is also an important element and they provided input on it last year.
- The DPD ordinance for trees on private property is something close to the Commission's heart. They have been working with DPD on this and would love to see DPD push forward this piece of legislation.

Mayor remarks:

- Very committed to the 30% canopy cover goal.
- 2x1tree replacement policy is very important.
- Wants to work with the Commission on DPD issues.
- A lot of the questions that have come up dealt with funding. Parks District was a significant measure to stabilize funding for our parks.
- As we move forward the City is how to integrate the approach so as not to do things in silos.
- Have a lot of work to re-tree Seattle – would like to create a portal for a single place to go to for information.

Q&A:

UFC comment/question: have eight City departments overseeing trees and make decisions of what's best for their department. Some commissioners have been advocating for the position that DPD has a conflict of interest in producing the tree protection ordinance because they are in charge of development which creates a conflicting mission. SDOT is already doing tree removal permit. UFC has worked with DPD and the product has not been satisfactory.

UFC comment/question: the Commission's mission is to advise the Mayor and City Council. What's the best mechanism for doing that?

MAYOR: Has served in a commission. The City currently has 78 commissions. It's tough to get around to all commissions in a term. The Office of Policy of Innovation in the Mayor's Office is the best way to connect

with the Mayor. He will assign people to this issue this year. The Commission can also reach the Mayor through Pedro Gomez.

UFC comment/question: would like to talk about DPD's work on the tree ordinance.

MAYOR: this is an issue of interest to him. Departments need to hear from the Mayor's Office. This is something that he will want to move forward on. He will give DPD direction to move forward on this issue this coming year.

UFC comment/question: reiterate the importance of monitoring. It's important to find sustainable funding for ongoing canopy cover assessments and maintenance. Find consistent funding for urban forestry work.

MAYOR: the assessment is going to be very important. In downturn maintenance is the first thing to go. That's one of the challenges with such a volatile tax base.

Public comment

Ruth Williams: Sounds like Parks is working on including pedestrian and bike trails in all natural areas.

Adjourn

Public input:

From: Sandy Motzer [mailto:sandymotzer@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 6:33 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Cc: patnaumann@msn.com
Subject: Fwd: LCNA Urges Passive Recreational Use Only in Seattle's Natural Areas and Greenbelts

Hello,

Pat Naumann suggested that the Urban Forestry Commission might be interested in the letter that the Lake City Neighborhood Alliance wrote about maintaining the current passive recreation uses in natural areas and greenbelts. It's attached. Contact me if you have questions.

Sandy Motzer
Chair, LCNA
sandymotzer@aol.com
206.819.8056

-----Original Message-----

From: Sandy Motzer <sandymotzer@aol.com>
To: sally.bagshaw <sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov>; tim.burgess <tim.burgess@seattle.gov>; sally.clark <sally.clark@seattle.gov>; jean.godden <jean.godden@seattle.gov>; bruce.harrell <bruce.harrell@seattle.gov>; nick.licata <nick.licata@seattle.gov>; mike.obrien <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>; tom.rasmussen <tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov>; kshama.sawant <kshama.sawant@seattle.gov>; christopher.williams <christopher.williams@seattle.gov>; Jes??s.Aguirre <Jes??s.Aguirre@seattle.gov>; rachel.acosta <rachel.acosta@seattle.gov>; hyeok.kim <hyeok.kim@seattle.gov>
Sent: Wed, Apr 8, 2015 1:58 pm
Subject: LCNA Urges Passive Recreational Use Only in Seattle's Natural Areas and Greenbelts

Dear Mr. Mayor, City Council Members, Superintendents, and Park Commissioners:

The Lake City Neighborhood Alliance (LCNA), representing 24 member groups, strongly believes that proposed â supplemental these fragile areas. We urge you to maintain passive recreational uses; reject any supplemental, active recreational uses; base policies on science; and require transparent vetting of any proposed changes. Please see our attached letter.

Deputy Mayor Kim, would you please ask your staff to provide our letter to Mayor Murray? Ms. Acosta, would you please provide copies of this letter to all the Park Board members? Thank you!

Sandy Motzer
Chair, LCNA
sandymotzer@aol.com
206.819.8056



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April 8, 2014

The Honorable Ed Murray, Mayor of Seattle
 Honorable Seattle City Council Members
 Acting Parks Superintendent Christopher Williams
 Incoming Parks Superintendent Jesús Aguirre
 Honorable Board of Park Commissioners

Dear Mr. Mayor, City Council Members, Superintendents, and Park Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Lake City Neighborhood Alliance (LCNA), an alliance of 24 member groups representing neighborhood, business, faith, school, special-issue, and service-provider groups throughout Lake City. Although our mission is to protect and enhance the quality of life in the greater Lake City area, LCNA is engaged in City-wide issues as well. The threat to natural areas and greenbelts by supplemental active recreational uses is one of those issues. The Lake City area is home to a number of City-classified natural areas/greenbelts on Thornton Creek: Licorice Fern, Homewood Park, Thornton Creek North Branch, Beaver Pond, Victory Creek, Kingfisher, LaVilla Meadows, Thornton Creek at Sand Point; plus University Lake Shore Place, and nearby Jackson Park Golf Course and Matthews Beach Park. Thornton Creek Alliance is a member of LCNA. Lake City has a strong, local, vested interest in natural areas and greenbelts.

LCNA urges you to:

1. Maintain passive recreational uses (such as, hiking, wildlife viewing, stewardship, environmental education, environmental research) per current Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation 2005 Best Management Practices: Natural Areas (BMP);
2. Reject any supplemental, active recreational uses in any City-classified natural area and/or greenbelt;
3. Base policies on science as opposed to values;
4. Require wider and more transparent vetting of any proposed change in natural area and greenbelt use guidelines or policy in Seattle.

LCNA strongly believes that "supplemental" uses will adversely affect any and all Seattle natural areas and greenbelts. Instituting even the least impactful active recreational supplemental uses in these areas will be a slippery slope.

To be clear, LCNA's immediate concern is about Cheasty Greenspace, the "skunk on the table", as Acting Superintendent Christopher Williams called it at the Natural Area and Greenbelt Supplemental Use Guidelines Mini-Summit on April 4. Cheasty Greenspace first came to our attention as a major concern last summer when the Department of Neighborhoods expedited approval of the Cheasty Greenspace Trails and Bike Pilot Project. We were particularly concerned about this action foreshadowing a change in policy for natural area/greenbelt designations. LCNA wrote a letter (7/14/14) to Mayor Murray and Council Members Godden, Bagshaw, and Harrell urging their recognition that any change in policy that reduces the protection afforded natural areas requires vetting throughout the community.

We were grateful to City Council for recognizing that mountain bike (or BMX, bicycle motocross) trails through Cheasty Greenspace were too extreme, approving instead the 3-year pilot perimeter mountain bike trail. Yet, now Parks is proposing supplemental uses before any data are available from this pilot project. Further, Parks will apparently not consider the still-to-be-drafted Supplemental Use Guidelines an actual change to the policies in the BMP, but rather as addenda applied at the Superintendent's discretion.

The BMP Goal Statement, as quoted below, illustrates the significance of any proposed supplemental, active recreational uses on BMP's mission:

Our goal is to develop a sustainable resource that protects, optimizes, enhances, and increases our natural environments. These environments will provide opportunities for observing and enjoying urban wildlife, engaging in environmental education, and participating in restoration activities.

Our maintenance programs will incorporate staff expertise and adaptive management strategies based on the best available science of the Pacific Northwest ecosystem, wildlife, and vegetation management. We will create Vegetation Management Plans (VMPs) for individual forested areas and parks, in order to standardize our planning, design, and maintenance activities. We will strive to enhance public safety, optimize tree canopy, improve our trail system and ecosystem health, and manage green infrastructure assets effectively in all natural areas.

MAINTAIN PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USES

Natural areas serve as wildlife habitats and urban respites where users can enjoy passive recreational activities. According to Parks' own survey, 78 percent of all park users are there to walk. Of critical importance, any activity allowed in natural areas and greenbelts must be compatible with the protection of natural resources. Preserving natural areas in our increasingly dense, urbanized city should be of paramount concern to all Seattleites, and to elected and appointed stewards of our parks and environment. Seattle now has over 400 parks and green areas covering more than 6,200 acres. Surely active recreational uses can be added to existing parks not classified as natural areas and greenbelts.

REJECT SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVE USES

Active recreational uses are incompatible with people out to enjoy a quiet nature walk. Allowing bicycles of any kind into natural areas will neither foster social equity nor open areas to underserved groups. Mountain bikes will not increase access for people who use mobility aids. Adding mountain bike trails simply allows a particular group that already has access elsewhere to enjoy the use of areas that are particularly conducive to quiet, passive use, with potentially significant impact on those qualities. These truly are special areas, and their integrity must be protected.

We might take a lesson from our neighbor to the south. Portland's River View Natural Area was for decades used by mountain bikers prior to its recent acquisition as a park. Assuming that continued use would be approved, the Northwest Trail Alliance submitted an ambitious plan for the area that included six new mountain bike trails. That group volunteered many hours of cleaning up the area and restoring and maintaining existing trails to help make their case to the City—similar to the work that the Friends of Cheasty Greenspace at Mountain View have done. Yet the City of Portland recently set a policy prohibiting mountain biking in River View Natural Area due to concerns regarding impacts on the watershed and the need to protect sensitive and threatened wildlife and habitat. Portland Parks chose to exercise an abundance of caution to protect this high-value resource.

USE SCIENCE-BASED NOT VALUES-BASED POLICY

What is "values-based" policy? And how do personal values trump science as the guide to policy development for the stewardship of natural areas and greenbelts? That is of course a divisive argument in national politics, but it seems very far out of character for Seattle. BMP's goal statement rightly is science based. Natural areas serve important eco-functions by renewing our air supply, cleaning the air

of airborne particles, absorbing ground-level greenhouse gases, and absorbing and filtering water. Creating mountain bike trails will require that plants and natural vegetation be removed, soil be re-graded, and drainage engineered to prevent erosion—which will be difficult to prevent on wet, fragile, steep slopes. Science tells us that trails result in compressed, dead soil in which nothing will grow. Further, any off-trail uses—observations suggest fencing is required to keep BMX riders on trails—act as seed vectors bringing in invasive plants. Stewardship in most natural areas includes the removal of invasive plant species. More trails and more intensive use equal less nature.

We are well aware that the population of Seattle is expected to soar by 120,000 residents by 2035. We appreciate the values associated with active recreation. But we also feel strongly that as Seattle continues to grow in population and become even more urbanized, the special qualities of natural areas and greenbelts will only be that much more critical to our well-being.

CONDUCT WIDE, INCLUSIVE, TRANSPARENT VETTING

Parks outreach on this issue has been conducted through an online "Mindmixer" survey, three focus groups, and a Mini-Summit. Many of us in LCNA attempted to respond to the values-based Mindmixer survey. There were several major issues with it—inappropriate personal information required; bias; and level of difficulty.

The focus group I attended included about 13 people, with all but two or three strongly in favor of preserving natural areas and restricting uses. However, the summation made clear that supplemental use guidelines for natural areas were moving forward regardless.

The Mini-Summit was attended by perhaps 60 people. We were not a racially diverse group. The expert panelists were never asked nor did they state their opinion about maintaining passive-uses vs. adding supplemental active uses. No questions were accepted from the floor but were submitted in writing. It was not clear how the questions that were asked had been selected. And again, at the end we were told that supplemental use guidelines are moving forward. The process appeared to be completely unresponsive to the concerns of many in the audience. There was no information about how exactly the supplemental uses would be selected. Should work on supplemental use guidelines move forward despite these many objections, we hope to be given the opportunity to review the draft when it is available.

Vetting should start with making the raw data—counts, comments—available for review. Was the decision to develop supplement use guidelines, or to suspend consideration of supplement use guidelines, credible? Is that decision supported by science?

In any case, it is certain that there must be wider outreach before any changes are adopted.

LCNA believes changes in our natural areas/greenbelts through active recreational uses would be irrevocable. Given that, decisions regarding their use merit a deliberate, transparent, inclusive process, rather than the pre-ordained path Parks has taken.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Very sincerely,



Sandra Adams Motzer
Chair
sandy.motzer@aol.com
206.819.8056

From: sorayas09@gmail.com [mailto:sorayas09@gmail.com] **On Behalf Of** Soraya Shehata
Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 3:26 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Hoffman, Ray; Sugimura, Diane
Subject: Exceptional Tree Grove in Danger at 4106 Linden Ave

It has recently come to my attention that the owner of 4106 Linden Ave has attempted to illegally remove an 'Exceptional' Monkey Puzzle tree, part of an 'Exceptional Grove' (as defined by Seattle Tree Ordinance SMC 25.11). A few points of concern:

1. The Monkey Puzzle tree and another large tree were not included on the DPD Submittal Survey of the lot (MUP no. 3020290), despite the presence of several smaller street trees. The intent of the developer and surveyor seems to have been the speedy removal of the "Exceptional Tree", which would disrupt the continuous canopy and disqualify the entire grove from protection.

It should be noted that another 'Exceptional Tree' - a large Atlas Cedar - was also excluded from the survey, even though all other significant trees on this and the adjoining property were drawn. He did include an 'Exceptional' Holly - a tree that is not necessary for the continuous canopy.

2. Despite the goal in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan of increasing tree canopy cover by 35% in the next 30 years, and the requirement that each removed tree is replaced with two, the replacement trees can't approach the environmental and storm water services of these very old and grand conifers, not to mention their natural habitat for living creatures.

3. Much of the surrounding area, including the BF Day playfield, is comprised of deciduous trees. After leaves have dropped in the fall, birds have no place to nest. Retaining the small grove of conifers would do much to preserve the local bird population.

I live just down the street from this grove and work at the Allen Institute, only blocks away. The Fremont community has been by entry point to general Seattle culture and its environs. I love the neighborhood feel of this community and hope to stay here for a long while! It saddens me to see the city so blatantly ignore its own regulations (notably, SMC 25.11) if it should proceed in the removal of such a beautiful, truly rare, and 'Exceptional' grove. Thus I'm heartened by the way the community and FNC have pulled together to see that the DPD, SPU, and city do save it.

I hope that the Mayor's office, SPU, Urban Forestry Commission, and DPD act to a) preserve the grove of trees deemed "Exceptional" by SMC 25.11 and b) ensure that the surveyor with the erroneous plan cannot continue to omit exceptional trees for the sake of development. It seems that a resubmittal of a corrected plan for the DPD website is immediately called for.

Thank you for your time,

Soraya Shehata

From: Genevieve Vayda [mailto:genevieve@civicshed.org]

Sent: Monday, April 06, 2015 1:38 PM

To: Sugimura, Diane; Licata, Nick; O'Brien, Mike; Burgess, Tim; Rasmussen, Tom; Clark, Sally; Bagshaw, Sally; Sawant, Kshama; Godden, Jean; Harrell, Bruce; Hoffman, Ray

Cc: Heather McAuliffe; Genevieve Vayda; Michael Oxman; Erik Pihl; Sally Deneen; Shawn Mulanix; Marc Nelson; Geov Parrish; Bradburd, Bill; 'Revel Smith'; Heidi Siegelbaum; dwestneat@seattletimes.com; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; stevezemke@msn.com; alj@consultant.com

Subject: Re: 4106 Linden - Standing Tree Grove & Monkey Puzzle Tree Re: Request that you prevent a violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance

Am adding in Ray Hoffman @ SPU, as he/they also have in place newer rulings that directly affect individual parcel development, and relate to the amazing environmental services of our tree canopies.

Thus, should upholding our current Tree Ordinances not be enough to save these trees, perhaps the safety nets and efficiencies created via Green Storm water Infrastructure "to the MAXIMUM EXTENT FEASIBLE for . . . Parcel-Based Projects" might provide the necessary rulings for a moratorium on developer MRN Homes, Michael R. Nelson, that he cease and desist further cutting of our Exceptional Tree Grove, which now stands at his recently purchased 4106 Linden Ave North, MUP #3020290.

Seattle Public Utilities and DPD are publishing two joint rules:

SPU 201.1 / DPD 15-2012, Requirements for Green Stormwater Infrastructure to the Maximum Extent Feasible for Single-Family Residential and Parcel-Based Projects

SPU 201.2 / DPD16-2012, Requirements for Green Stormwater Infrastructure to the Maximum Extent Feasible for Roadway, Trail, and Sidewalk Projects

- See more at: <http://buildingconnections.seattle.gov/2012/11/30/new-draft-green-stormwater-directors-rule/#sthash.bhx3Ue10.dpuf>

*In the case of individual parcels, " if there is to be 'over 2000 sf additional impervious surface', the first line of defense listed in their chart is: **RETAIN EXISTING TREES**".*

Thank you for your continued attention on this matter.

Sincerely,

Genevieve Vayda

From: Genevieve Vayda <genevieve@civicshed.org>
Date: Mon, 06 Apr 2015 12:40:49 -0700
To: <Diane.Sugimura@seattle.gov>, Nick Licata <Nick.Licata@Seattle.Gov>, <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>, Tim Burgess <tim.burgess@seattle.gov>, Tom Rasmussen <tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov>, "Clark, Sally" <Sally.Clark@seattle.gov>, <sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov>, <kshama.sawant@seattle.gov>, Jean Godden <jean.godden@seattle.gov>, <bruce.harrell@seattle.gov>
Cc: Heather McAuliffe <heathertenfour@gmail.com>, Genevieve Vayda <gv@civicshed.org>, Michael Oxman <michaeloxman@comcast.net>, Erik Pihl <epihl@hotmail.com>, Sally Deneen <sdeneen@aol.com>, Shawn Mulanix <smulanix@gmail.com>, Marc Nelson <marcnelson223@outlook.com>, Geov Parrish <geovlp@earthlink.net>, Bill Bradburd <bill@grandscheme.com>, 'Revel Smith' <revelnt@gmail.com>, Heidi Siegelbaum <Heidi@calyxsite.com>, <dwestneat@seattletimes.com>, <Sandra.Pinto_de_Bader@seattle.gov>, <stevezemke@msn.com>, <alj@consultant.com>
Subject: 4106 Linden - Standing Tree Grove & Monkey Puzzle Tree Re: Request that you prevent a violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance

[ERRATA:

Additionally, as you must know, The Seattle Comprehensive Plan addresses tree canopy issue head on:

[Seattle Comprehensive Plan](#)

- *No net loss of urban tree canopy Increase canopy to 40% cover by 2035*
- *Update tree canopy inventory in Urban Forest Management Plan every 10 years*
- *Citywide tree replacement policy 2:1*
- *The Urban Forestry Commission advises the City Council and the Mayor on policies and regulations governing Seattle's urban forest*

[The Future](#)

- *To achieve 40% citywide tree cover by 2035 will require a net gain of between 680,000 and 1.25 million more trees to be planted.*

There currently is no tree canopy cover metric for urban villages, but our SSNAP research reveals averaging around 18.5% cover.

(For clarification, my interpretation of the Zoning Overlay map: 4106 & 4110 Linden Ave North sit OUTSIDE of both Wallingford and Fremont's Urb Villages, in an L-2 Zone in upper Fremont, and 1/2 block from Aurora Ave North. (A nature desert - which highway challenges EW wildlife migrations & its very sustenance in myriad ways ...))

-gv.]

Dear Councilman Mike O'Brien, and any truly concerned elected officials:

Please see two limited responses from the City, thus far (attached), in response to our extensive neighborhood's letters supporting evidence of violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance. (To my knowledge only my letters have elicited any feedback - Diane Sugimura, I hereby request your identifying which DPD staff you have handling these complaints, as we need a direct communications line with them for providing further evidence, thank you.)

Councilman O'Brien, what is your proposal to see that this particular 'slash & burn' developer focus his sites another of his many ongoing developments and RE managerial tasks in town - and see that the City of Seattle serve it's citizens to protect and preserve our Tree Canopy, particularly this Exceptional Grove of Trees in upper Fremont - which faced illegal cutting just this past week? (Said developer having also submitted to DPD a fraudulent survey last week, which omitted the one tree the developer was hoping would already have been 'disappeared' (had hired arborist to cut down prior to permit submission), by the time of its submittal and posting at DPD website April 2nd, 2015.)

Please advise us how you can pressure the City DPD to enforce our Tree Ordinance.

Or at least please inform each of us as to the best times to show up to voice our concerns in two minute slots to your committees, to see that the City Tree Ordinance is upheld by the very body which created it.

My personal feeling is that the DPD appears much more concerned with preserving developers plump pocket books than salvaging buildings, trees, or cohesive neighborhoods. Or even creating density (this developer's track record would indicate that his plans would be for two expensive SF homes on this site - not exactly dense.

In this case we have the migrating, and over-wintering bird population, among other wildlife, housed in this very rare, Continuous Canopy of Conifers - 'The Monkey Tree Grove' at 4102 & 4106 Linden Avenue North whose habitat lies in the balance. I will say there are many advantages to the citizens of the city, and to our hydrologic infrastructure, by maintaining the environmental services of these Natural structures, some of which required over 50 years to obtain this level of City service!

I look forward to hearing a thoughtful, helpful, and environmentally concerned reply. I do hope concern includes upholding the Tree Ordinance - beginning with getting a neutral party Certified Arborist out to authoritatively identify these species and canopy. And creating a moratorium on providing any permits whatsoever until such time as they have been properly identified, and a more scrupulous surveyor than Chadwick & Winters (whose firm has been reported to the State Licensing Board) to describe them.

I would recommend your office might want to find an DPD 'oversight' expert, as well. As it is DPD who received and reviewed the incoming Survey, posting it online as Exhibit 1 (of one) of MRN Homes (Michael R Nelson's business) plan submittal for a lot subdivision of 4106 Linden.

Meanwhile, we are also turning to the press to apply pressure . . . though I (and I suspect all of us) would prefer to see our elected officials undertaking their work per Seattle own laws and ordinances.

Thanks very much!

Genevieve Vayda

From: Genevieve Vayda <genevieve@civicshed.org>

Date: Fri, 03 Apr 2015 10:20:30 -0700

To: fremont <fremont@louplop.net>, <Diane.Sugimura@seattle.gov>, Nick Licata <Nick.Licata@Seattle.Gov>, <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>, Tim Burgess <tim.burgess@seattle.gov>, Tom Rasmussen <tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov>, "Clark, Sally" <Sally.Clark@seattle.gov>, <sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov>, <kshama.sawant@seattle.gov>, Jean Godden <jean.godden@seattle.gov>, <bruce.harrell@seattle.gov>

Cc: Heather McAuliffe <heathertenfour@gmail.com>, Genevieve Vayda <gv@civicshed.org>, Michael Oxman <michaeloxman@comcast.net>, Erik Pihl <epihl@hotmail.com>, Sally Deneen <sdeneen@aol.com>, Shawn Mulanix <smulanix@gmail.com>, Marc Nelson <marcnelson223@outlook.com>, Geov Parrish <geovlp@earthlink.net>, Bill Bradburd <bill@grandscheme.com>, 'Revel Smith' <revelnt@gmail.com>, <fnc-board@yahoo.com>

Conversation: Photos & Additional Tree Detail: 4106 Linden - Standing Tree Grove & Monkey Puzzle Tree Re: Request that you prevent a violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance

Subject: Photos & Additional Tree Detail: 4106 Linden - Standing Tree Grove & Monkey Puzzle Tree Re: Request that you prevent a violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance

I am writing as the citizen who was fortunate to convince three tree men to cease and desist the cutting down of an Exceptional Tree on March 31st, 2015. I would like to add a few more pertinent facts to assure those addressed that we have a Tree Grove, by city regulation. The site plans submitted do not yet quite demonstrate the totality - as the edited submittal is just 'front of lot'.

I would also like to provide some photographs for your greater understanding of the Tree Grove at stake, and the harm done to the Monkey Puzzle Tree.

Please read below, and print out the photos for your records and for sharing. Time is of the essence to save this Tree Grove. -Thank you, gv.

Toby Thaler's letter and edited plan submitted are well done, however, the important mid-lot inaccuracies of representation, for purposes of Exceptional Tree (as defined by Tree Grove), must be explained.

To enlighten: the **drip lines/canopies are shown undersized, for the three conifers in an E-W row, mid-South prop, (a Hemlock and two Western Reds)** - each standing ~60 feet tall, and est. at 25 to 30 foot diameter crowns (by arborist M. Oxman, and GV) - and which grouping DOES also connect with the largest Western Red Cedar (shown on survey submitted as 30" at South Fence). From there, again, ALL of the large trees are connected in a standing Grove Canopy.

Simply put, these two neighboring props (4106 (subject prop) and 4102 Linden Ave N) harbor a contiguous/overlapping GROVE of trees - all at 12" diameter plus - per DPD Director's Rule 16-2008. All are healthy specimens. The attempted removal of the very special Monkey Puzzle Tree (which DR 16-2008 requires be no more than 22" diameter to qualify as Exceptional) was stopped prior to undermining its full health, thankfully.

Note on the plan, again, that they show fewer trees than required for a grove (by not including the Monkey Tree, and - perhaps naively - not including the 53 foot diameter Atlas Cedar which sits to South end of the grove, and has a diameter of 23.5". (The updated plan minimizes the full size of the canopy of the Atlas, which extends from ROW curb South, to ROW curb West, again, approx 53 ft.)

Altogether there are no fewer than NINE (9) healthy trees standing as a continuous canopy grouping, to qualify this healthy, sizeable, stand as a TREE GROVE - at least as I type, today.

Please prevent any damage to these species by requiring an arborist certified by the City of Seattle to Survey the Site, and STAMP, DATE, and SIGN his tree survey, which I firmly believe will serve to document that which is written above.

Very Sincerely,

Genevieve Vayda

From: fremont <fremont@louplop.net>

Date: Thu, 02 Apr 2015 23:48:32 -0700

To: <Diane.Sugimura@seattle.gov>, Nick Licata <Nick.Licata@Seattle.Gov>, <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>, Tim Burgess <tim.burgess@seattle.gov>, <tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov>, "Clark, Sally" <Sally.Clark@seattle.gov>, <sally.bagshaw@seattle.gov>, <kshama.sawant@seattle.gov>, <jean.godden@seattle.gov>, <bruce.harrell@seattle.gov>

Cc: Heather McAuliffe <heathertenfour@gmail.com>, Genevieve Vayda <gv@civicshed.org>, Michael Oxman <michaeloxman@comcast.net>, Erik Pihl <epihl@hotmail.com>, Sally Deneen <sdeneen@aol.com>, Shawn Mulanix <smulanix@gmail.com>, Marc Nelson <marcnelson223@outlook.com>, Geov Parrish <geovlp@earthlink.net>, Bill Bradburd <bill@grandscheme.com>, 'Revel Smith' <revelnt@gmail.com>, <fnc-board@yahoogroups.com>

Subject: Request that you prevent a violation of Seattle Tree Ordinance

I am writing to request that you take all actions within your power to ensure that the owner of 4106 Linden Ave N does not violate Seattle's Tree Ordinance (SMC 25.11). Prior to any permit or other application for activity on the site (that I can find), an attempt was made to remove a truly "exceptional tree" from the property. It was only due to the lucky presence of a knowledgeable neighbor who pointed out that the tree was covered by the tree ordinance that prevented its total removal. As it is, and number of its main lower branches were removed before the arborist measured the tree and left (Tuesday, March 31).

Today, a site plan was filed and given MUP no. 3020290. It is attached. A remarkable point is that the survey document filed to obtain the MUP number fails to include the exceptional tree that was almost illegally removed on Tuesday. A second attachment is included that is a portion of the survey drawing with two additional large trees put in (location approximate) that the survey drawing fails to include. The significance of this "oversight" is great; without the two additional trees, the status of the grove of trees as an exceptional "group of trees" under the Tree Ordinance is lost.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

--

Toby Thaler

Fremont Neighborhood Council

<http://fremontneighborhoodcouncil.org/>

Chair, Land Use and Transportation Committee
4212 Baker Ave. NW
Seattle, WA 98107
206 697-4043

From: Genevieve Vayda [mailto:genevieve@civicshed.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 12:56 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject: 4106 Linden - Exceptional Tree Grove in DANGER!, new owner/developer . . .

Hi,

We are busy writing letters from different community members, There is much info that needs to be explained.

I HOPE I can make the meeting

But what we are doing is trying to write that letter you requested, such that someone at UFC can read to mayor/or ask the question why this grove SHOULD be saved, and why he SHOULD contact SPU and DPD to be sure they follow their own rulings.

Thanks very much.

Genevieve

From: Soraya Shehata <shehata.soraya@gmail.com>
Date: April 8, 2015 at 11:05:07 AM PDT
To: Genevieve Vayda <genevieve@civicshed.org>
Subject: Exceptional Tree Grove in Danger at 4106 Linden Ave

It has recently(out) come to my attention that the owner of 4106 Linden Ave last week attempted to illegally remove the 'Exceptional' Monkey Puzzle tree, as part of an Exceptional Grove (as defined by Seattle Tree Ordinance SMC 25.11), from this parcel - which he acquired only last week.

A few points of concern:

1. The Monkey Puzzle tree was somehow not included on the DPD Submittal Survey of the lot (MUP no. 3020290), despite the drawing of several smaller street trees, which sit in the ROW, and the specific drawing of ALL other Grove trees on his parcel. The intent of the developer, and surveyor, seems to have been the speedy removal of the "Exceptional Tree", which would disrupt the continuous canopy and attempt to disqualify the entire grove from protection.

It should be noted that at least one large significant tree within the Exceptional Grove sits on the property to the South - an large Atlas Cedar (also not included on Survey). This is interesting, as the surveyor included all other significant trees on his and adjoining property - except for Monkey Puzzle and this large Atlas Cedar. He did include a significant Holly on the survey - but that tree is not necessary, the Exceptional Tree Canopy is continuous,

even in its absence.

Also of note: the diameters drawn (of the trees' Canopies) on the Survey - fail to accurately show their true diameters, and thus the Continuous Canopy these 9 Exceptional Trees (DR16-2008) represent. This Continuous Canopy is well documented in citizen photos, which I will supply soon.

2. Despite the goal in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan of increasing tree canopy cover by 35% in the next 30 years, and the requirement that each removed tree is replaced with two, replacement trees could hardly approach the environmental and storm water services of these very old and grand conifers, not to mention their extensive natural habitat.

3. Much of the surrounding area, including the nearby BF Day playfield, is comprised of deciduous trees, so that after leaves have dropped in the Fall, birds have no place to nest. Retaining the small grove of conifers would do much to preserve the local bird population.

I live just down the street from this grove and work at the Allen Institute, only blocks away.

The Fremont community has served as my entry point to Seattle culture and its environs - I love the neighborhood feel of this community, and hope to stay here for a long while! It saddens me to see the City so blatantly ignore its own regulations (QUOTE REGS HERE) if it should proceed to allow the removal of such a beautiful, truly rare (and 'Exceptional!') Grove. I'm thus heartened to see many community members and FNC pulling together to see that the DPD & SPU and City save it, via their many Codes and Ordinances.

I hope that the Mayor's Office, SPU, the Urban Forestry Commission, and DPD act to a) preserve the Grove of Trees deemed "Exceptional" by SMC 25.11 and b) ensure that the surveyor with the erroneous plan cannot continue to omit exceptional trees for the sake of development. Thus it seems a re-submittal of a corrected plan for the DPD website is immediately called for.

Thank you for your time,

Soraya Shehata

--

From: Genevieve Vayda [mailto:genevieve@civicshed.org]

Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 2:36 PM

To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra

Cc: Toby Thaler; Erik Pihl; sorayas09@gmail.com; Dan Stiefel; 'Heather McAuliffe'; Heidi Siegelbaum; Steve Zemke; Arthur Lee Jacobson; Murray, Edward; Sugimura, Diane; Hoffman, Ray

Subject: Exceptional Grove - as seen from Alley (4106 Exceptional Tree Grove in Danger)

Dear Sandra,

If it is at all possible, it would be important for the Urban Forestry Commission to see that the 'small' trees/incorrectly drawn canopies of the three Conifers along the South Property line at 4106 Linden Ave N (attached here with, and seen to LEFT side of the photos - see undersized canopy circles in Chadwick & Winters DPD Submittal Survey) are of similar height to the obviously large Western Red Cedar in front yard,

along North Prop Line (seen on Right, in these views from the alley).

One can see the dark, obvious Monkey Puzzle tree canopy, which sits significantly below the massive height of these other 60 - 70 foot (approx) conifers. One Hemlock, and a total of 6 Western Red Cedars (one of which has 30" Exceptional Tree diameter per Chadwick & Winters' Survey at DPD, and one Monkey Puzzle tree.

I send these to point out the CONTINUOUS CANOPY on site, as well as over into property known as 4102 Linden Ave North (which canopy is not visible in these alley shots).

Thank you for sharing!

Sincerely,

Genevieve Vayda

Genevieve Vayda
land: 206.633.2009
cell: 206.633.5009
genevieve@civicshed.org

From: Dan <stiefeld@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, 08 Apr 2015 16:07:07 -0700

To: <ray.hoffman@seattle.gov>, <ed.murray@seattle.gov>, <Diane.Sugimura@seattle.gov>

Cc: <toby@louplop.net>, <cassturnbull@comcast.net>, <susann@seattleaudubon.org>, <stevezemke@msn.com>, <mike.obrien@seattle.gov>, <nick.licata@seattle.gov>

Subject: Complaint re: Exceptional Tree Grove in Danger at 4106 Linden Ave (DPD Project / MUP # 3020290)

To all Seattle City government parties which the following may concern,

My name is Daniel Stiefel and I have lived for 14 years at 700 1/2 N. 41st St, Seattle WA 98103.

My residence is on the adjoining block / around the corner from the "Exceptional Tree Grove in Danger at 4106 Linden Ave" (DPD Project / MUP # 3020290) referenced above.

On April 2, 2015, Chadwick and Winters, licensed Seattle surveyors (Robert H. Winters' Washington licensee), submitted a Proposed Parcel Layout site plan for 41 04 Linden Ave N in Seattle to the City of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for the purpose of obtaining a land use permit re: DPD Project / MUP # 3020290.

It has come to our neighborhood's attention however, that Chadwick and Winters left two large trees classified as "Exceptional" (either by size or by continuous canopy or by both) completely off the surveyor's submission for land use permit ... and then on March 31st the developer attempted to illegally cut down and remove one of the two trees (the on site Monkey Tree) immediately prior to site plan submission and site inspection.

The two trees Chadwick and Winters surveyor's omitted from site plan submitted to City for land use permit

are:

- On site Monkey tree, 55ft tall with a drip line ~35 ft and a trunk diameter of 24" whose removal was attempted without permit by developer's contractor but prevented by neighbors.
- Neighboring Atlas Cedar (on adjacent prop to South) , 40 ft tall with adjoining 50' canopy and a trunk diameter of 23.5"

It seems clear to me that in the case of the above, the developer and surveyor have colluded in attempting to deceive the governing authority and develop the property in violation of Seattle's governing statutes and to the express detriment for the future of the Seattle community and specifically for the citizens and wildlife who make our home in this neighborhood.

While I am strongly in favor of anyone right's to develop property, I protest when anyone attempts to ignore or break the rules of government that expressly apply to such development and have been put there expressly for the protection and betterment of the community as a whole.

I believe the statutes they have violated are contained in:

DPD Director's Rule DR16-2008 (SMC 25.11 and SMC 25.05.675N)

DPD Director's Rule 15-2012

SPU Director's Rule DWW 201.1

I am writing to request that the Mayor's Office, Council members, SPU, the Urban Forestry Commission, and DPD act to:

- a) preserve the Grove of Trees deemed "Exceptional" by SMC 25.11, and
- b) ensure that the surveyor with the erroneous plan cannot continue to omit exceptional trees for the sake of development.

I ask that a re-submittal of a corrected plan for the DPD website be immediately called for and penalties be accessed if statutes have been broken by the developer and / or licensed professionals in making false and misleading filings to the City.

I also ask that I receive a notification of City's findings and due diligence resulting in this matter.

I have attached:

- a photo of the site with labeled trees
- a pdf copy of Chadwick & Winters submitted survey omitting two trees
- an unofficial photo of two missing trees superimposed on Chadwick & Winters site plan submission
- a pdf copy of the related complaint filed with the City by Toby Thaler of the Fremont Neighborhood Association

Where will we all be if we can't live by and uphold the laws and statutes that we have chosen to protect us?

I look forward to hearing from you.

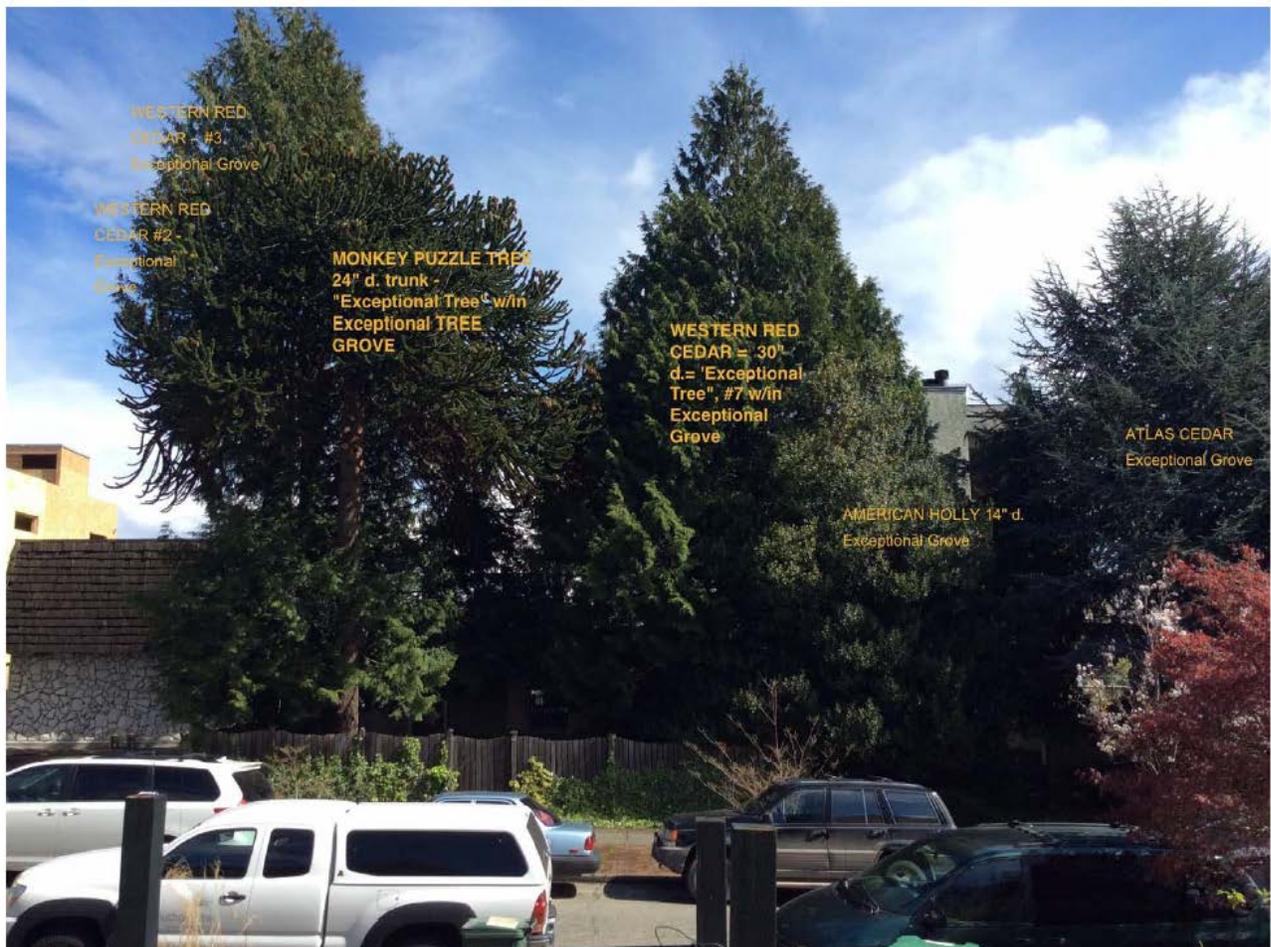
Feel free to contact me with questions or requests or if I should better submit my complaint & request via another means.

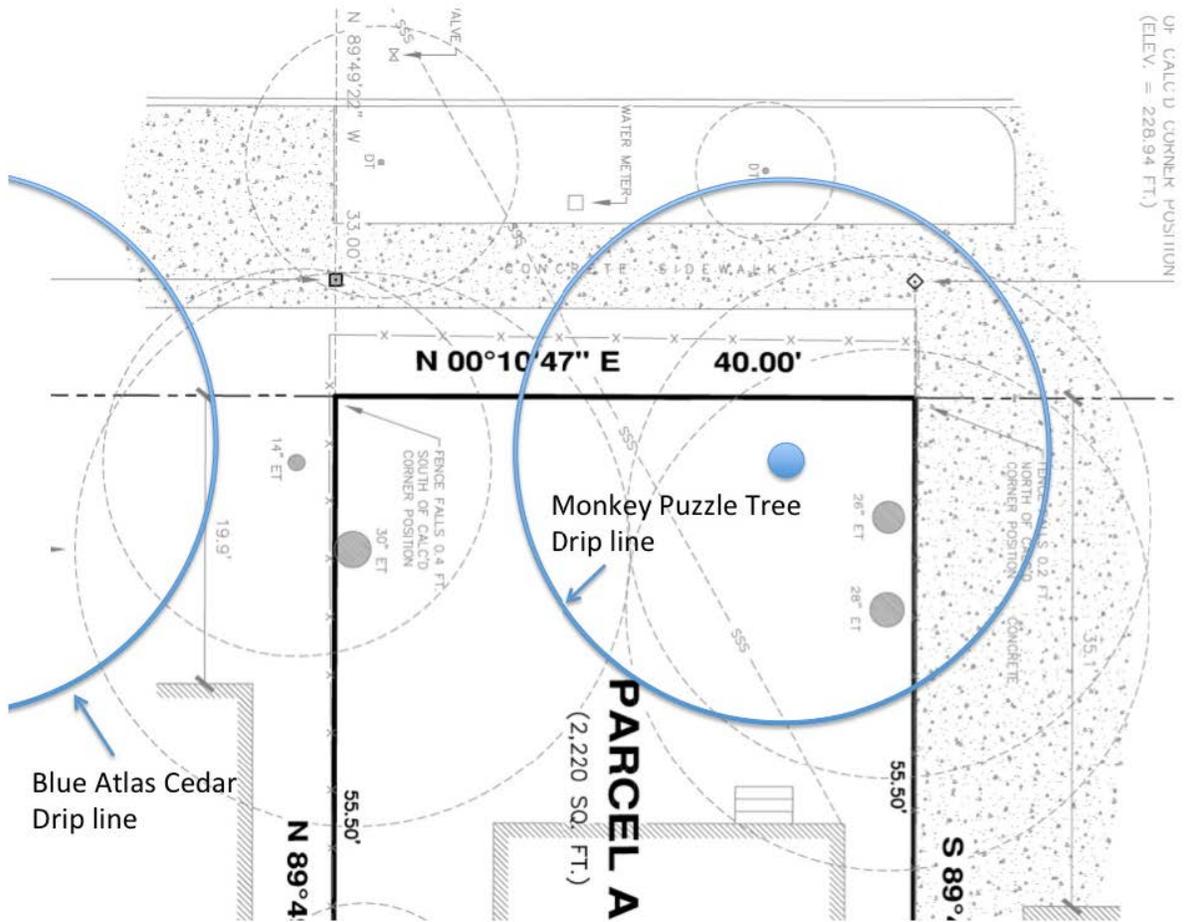
Thank you for your time,

Daniel Stiefel

dbotas@gmail.com

700 1/2 N. 41st St
Seattle, WA 98103







From: Patricia Naumann [mailto:patnaumann@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2015 11:39 AM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject:

Sandra Pinto de Bader
Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

Sandra,

Please share the attached with UFC Commissioner Martin, and of course all the others. It is an expanded version of what I previously sent which was only the text. This full version has the technical information that Mr. Martin will be able to understand. I hope it is useful in grasping what is going on underneath the surface at Cheasty and what may lie ahead.

The slope failure (landslide) believed to be 20' deep does not appear on Seattle's ECA maps, or Shannon and Wilson's. Also, DPD suspects more than one slide plane in the current slide adjacent to Cheasty on the north side where a home has been abandoned for more than a year. The City is looking for deeper slide planes there, up to 30' or more. As the Stantec geotech report said, the slope is largely a landslide hazard area and erosion hazard area and mapped those areas along with the steep slope areas.

I can send the Final EIS for New Rainier Vista -- which has a bit about the wetlands that extend into Parks property, if that would be useful.

I want to apologize for my phone going off when the Mayor was speaking. At the outset of the UFC meeting, I had turned the volume completely down. I don't know what happened.

Patricia Naumann
patnaumann@msn.com

From: Patricia Naumann [mailto:patnaumann@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 07, 2015 4:17 PM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject: Doc: Cheasty Slope Stability

Sandra Pinto de Bader,

Attached is a document for distribution to the UFC before it meets tomorrow. It regards slope stability in Cheasty Greenspace.

Patricia Naumann

From: Ruth Alice Williams [mailto:ruthalice@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2015 1:50 PM
To: Acosta, Rachel
Cc: Williams, Christopher; Godden, Jean; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Subject: Thornton Creek Alliance: Letter Re Cheasty Greenspace

[Letter Attached and Below]

Hello Rachel,
Will you please forward this to the commissioners, hopefully ahead of tonight's meeting?
Thank you!
Ruth

**Thornton Creek Alliance
Post Office Box 25690
Seattle, Washington 98165-1190**

Board of Park Commissioners
100 Dexter Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98109

Dear Commissioners:

Our city will continue to grow, and pressures on all our parks will increase. Seattle Parks' policies will have to keep bending and changing to accommodate this. We do need to provide park opportunities for all ages and all people, but in the interest of equity and serving the greatest number of people, park uses need to be kept more general than specialized.

Seattle's natural area/greenbelt space is already very limited for a place that bills itself as the 'Emerald City'. These lands are already serving a host of social and eco functions. They are not empty space waiting to be put to use, and they must not be sliced up to accommodate the interests of immediate neighbors. Our parks are public land and belong to EVERYONE in the city.

Access: SE Seattle has a generous share of city park lands. Active recreational activities must be made available in groomed parks, community centers, and additional land if need be. Right activity, right place must be the rule. As we've said before: you don't play Frisbee in the library, and you don't fragment the fragile habitat in our miniscule remaining forests for specialty sports. We must keep our natural areas true to their existing functions, so that all people can enjoy nature and the emotional benefits of time in the forest, without having to use a vehicle to get out of town.

Sustainability: Trading our natural areas to groups willing to volunteer in exchange for our giving the area over to their specialized recreation is not sustainable. Show-casing our natural areas and bringing more people in to enjoy nature, join their neighbors in restoration projects, or study the terrain and biota: those are sustainable activities.

Opportunity: We already have opportunities for equitable access, sustainable uses, and the excitement of being in the wealth of the forest inside the city. Installation of good foot trails and ADA trails leaves out no one. We just need to show-case what we have, and build on it by developing children's programs and day camps, nature walks and tree walks for various community groups, and bringing in schools and universities.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you.

Sincerely,
Ruth Williams, President
Thornton Creek Alliance

THORNTON CREEK ALLIANCE (TCA), founded in 1993, is an all-volunteer grassroots, nonprofit organization of 100 members dedicated to preserving and restoring an ecological balance throughout the Thornton Creek watershed. Our goal is to benefit the watershed by encouraging individuals, neighborhoods, schools, groups, businesses, agencies, and

government to work together in addressing the environmental restoration of the creek system including: water quality, stabilization of water flow, flood prevention, and habitat improvement through education, collaboration, and community involvement.



www.thornton-creek-alliance.org

www.facebook.com/Thornton.Creek.Alliance

**Thornton Creek Alliance
Post Office Box 25690
Seattle, Washington 98165-1190**

April 9, 2015

Board of Park Commissioners
100 Dexter Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98109

Dear Commissioners:

Our city will continue to grow, and pressures on all our parks will increase. Seattle Parks' policies will have to keep bending and changing to accommodate this. We do need to provide park opportunities for all ages and all people, but in the interest of equity and serving the greatest number of people, park uses need to be kept more general than specialized.

Seattle's natural area/greenbelt space is already very limited for a place that bills itself as the 'Emerald City'. These lands are already serving a host of social and eco functions. They are not empty space waiting to be put to use, and they must not be sliced up to accommodate the interests of immediate neighbors. Our parks are public land and belong to EVERYONE in the city.

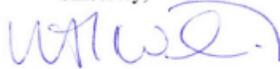
Access: SE Seattle has a generous share of city park lands. Active recreational activities must be made available in groomed parks, community centers, and additional land if need be. Right activity, right place must be the rule. As we've said before: you don't play Frisbee in the library, and you don't fragment the fragile habitat in our miniscule remaining forests for specialty sports. We must keep our natural areas true to their existing functions, so that all people can enjoy nature and the emotional benefits of time in the forest, without having to use a vehicle to get out of town.

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Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you.

Sincerely,



Ruth Williams, President

Thornton Creek Alliance

THORNTON CREEK ALLIANCE (TCA), founded in 1993, is an all-volunteer grassroots, nonprofit organization of 100 members dedicated to preserving and restoring an ecological balance throughout the Thornton Creek watershed. Our goal is to benefit the watershed by encouraging individuals, neighborhoods, schools, groups, businesses, agencies, and government to work together in addressing the environmental restoration of the creek system including: water quality, stabilization of water flow, flood prevention, and habitat improvement through education, collaboration, and community involvement.



From: Mark Holland [mailto:solarhound@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2015 1:52 PM

To: Acosta, Rachel; LEG_CouncilMembers; Murray, Edward

Cc: Williams, Christopher; Shiosaki, Michael; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Hoff, Paula; Rasmussen, Tom;

Godden, Jean; Mira Latoszek; Kathy Colombo; Sarah Welch; Juli Sipe; J vA;

George.Robertson@consultgra.com; Pence, Roger; Ruth Williams; John Barber; Robert Hinrix;

mail@drruhland.com; jenstewfam@comcast.net; Graves, David; Critchfield, Doug; PatMorton (;

cjustam@gmail.com; David and Connie Bown(; Derryl Durden; Darrell Howe; Rosie Selle; Johnson, Dan;

Jainga, Jon; Jim Anderson; Jennifer Ott; friends@seattleolmsted.org; Merrell, Frederica M; Ed Newbold

Subject: SEATTLE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS: CANCEL THE CHEASTY GREEN SPACE MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK PROPOSAL

Dear Seattle Board of Park Commissioners, City Council Members, and Mayor
Murray,

Thursday, April 9, 2015

PLEASE CANCEL THE CHEASTY GREEN SPACE MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK PROPOSAL

Do not approve the Parks Department's proposal for a mountain bike park in Cheasty Green Space.

I oppose the Parks Departments' proposal for a mountain bike park in Cheasty Greenspace, or any other park or natural area in Seattle.

The Cheasty PAT never discussed alternative locations for a mountain bike park in Seattle, as the Parks Department wrote the City Council they would.

The Board of Park Commissioners also never discussed alternative locations for a mountain bike park, as Christopher Williams promised at the end of the November 14, 2013, Board of Park Commissioners meeting.

The agenda for the January 9, 2014 meeting also indicates the board was scheduled to discuss alternative locations, but the Parks department only showed a single plan for Cheasty Green Space; the now defunct "Beacon Bike Park". <http://www.beaconbikepark.com/>

Density is not a legitimate reason to intensify active uses in our dwindling urban forest wildlife habitat.

Portland just put a moratorium on mountain biking in parks and natural areas until a proper study can be done to find appropriate locations for mountain biking, and 70% of Portland's parks are natural areas. Seattle should follow Portland's example.

Instead, here in Seattle we are at a paltry 14% natural areas, and we are discussing which parts will be protected and which will be sacrificed and changed to active uses like mountain bike parks.

To solve this problem, I propose the following actions:

- 1. Cancel the Cheasty Green Space mountain bike park proposal.**
- 2. A moratorium should be drafted and passed banning mountain bike tracks or parks in all 830+ acres of forested urban wildlife habitat in Seattle, to protect these precious lands for future generations, and ours.**
- 3. A policy should be drafted by the parks department and adopted by the city council committing to expansion of natural areas and wild life habitat through the purchase of adjacent properties, forested or not.**

BICYCLE USE POLICY and WILDLIFE

Have you read the Seattle Parks and Recreations' (SPR) existing Bicycle use policy?

We keep hearing over and over how mountain bike tracks in the Cheasty forest will not damage the natural environment or scare off wild life.

Yet the existing Bicycle use policy states that mountain bikes have already damaged the environment in many precious Parks and natural areas throughout Seattle.

Quote from SPR Bicycle Use Policy:

"This policy has been developed because bicycling on park roads, trails, and within park areas has become an extremely popular recreational activity. The increasing use of mountain bicycles has created a need to develop management policies to reduce conflicts between other park users, and reduce negative impacts on Parks' resources. Sensitive Natural areas such as: Ravenna, Carkeek, Woodland Park, Seward, Schmitz, Washington Park Arboretum, Water Front Trail, Camp Long, Discovery Park and Interlaken **have been damaged by excessive bicycle use and must be protected.**"

So damage to the natural environment from mountain bikes is the reason for the formation of a Bicycle Use Policy.

Well it looks like the policy worked. Seattle's last 14% of forested park land is not full of mountain bikes tracks, jumps, and ramps thanks to the Bicycle use policy.

Instead we have relatively undisturbed urban forest that prioritizes important habitat for a wide variety of animals.

What kind of animals?

The Cheasty Greens Space has a pair of Cooper's Hawks that were actively raising fledglings last year and will likely do so again this year. There are reportedly less than 25 Coopers hawks known to be nesting in Seattle borders. The Parks Department is aware of the Cooper's Hawks in Cheasty Green Space. In fact, SPR told the designer to move one of the entrances to the bike park when someone pointed out the current design placed the entrance too close to the nest.

What if the Cooper's Hawks like to build new nests in Cheasty? Will the Parks department keep moving the trails every time a hawk builds a nest too near a trail? Or will the Coopers Hawks build nests away from the trails? Or will the Coopers Hawks just leave Cheasty Green Space and try to find a forest that is not a mountain bike park? Maybe a forest that is not in Seattle.

Without the Bicycle Use Policy, Cheasty Green Space might have been turned into a mountain bike park years ago.

Would Cooper's Hawks nesting in Cheasty today, had that been the case?

The Parks Departments' Bicycle Use Policy, protecting Seattle parks and natural areas from mountain bikes since 1995: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/cheasty/files/BicycleUsePolicy.pdf>

The Bicycle Use Policy works for Nature, and proves once and for all that mountain bikes destroy nature, from the Parks Departments' own policy language.

Now is the time to reinforce the bicycle use policy, not to water it down.

SOCIAL JUSTICE and BICYCLE USE POLICY

The Parks Board should discuss social justice in relation to the Bicycle use policy. More to the point, the board should examine the thinking that went into the "updated" policy, and ask yourselves if the result is social justice.

Specifically, in the rewritten draft of the Bicycle use policy, not yet adopted, the language is almost identical to the paragraph quoted above, except they took out these seven words: "**have been damaged by excessive bicycle use.**"

So that this sentence:

Sensitive Natural areas such as: Ravenna, Carkeek, Woodland Park, Seward, Schmitz, Washington Park Arboretum, Water Front Trail, Camp Long, Discovery Park and Interlaken **have been damaged by excessive bicycle use and must be protected.**"

Now looks like this:

Sensitive Natural areas such as: Ravenna, Carkeek, Woodland Park, Seward, Schmitz, Washington Park Arboretum, Water Front Trail, Camp Long, Discovery Park and Interlaken **must be protected.**"

A PDR I received included a bicycle policy update team workshop email with a line through the offending words "**have been damaged by excessive bicycle use.**" So this is the thinking that went into the year long process to "update" the bicycle use policy. Just erase the words you do not like.

Whereas the existing bicycle use policy is equitable in protecting all sensitive parks and natural areas in Seattle, the bicycle use policy "update", written by the "mountain bike task force" and the bicycle advisory team, singles out only certain parks and natural areas, leaving those unlisted places, like Cheasty Greenspace, unprotected.

As expected, the parks and natural areas listed for protection are in wealthier, less diverse communities. The parks and natural areas left unprotected happen to be in lower income and diverse communities, like South East Seattle and West Duwamish.

So let us be clear about what happened in the bicycle use policy "update" process.

Throughout much of 2013, a small group of bicyclists, under the guise of the Parks Department's Mountain Bike Task Force and the Bicycle Advisory Team, looked at a map of Seattle and decided all the Neighborhoods that will best be able to defend their parks and natural areas, will remain protected by the bicycle use policy, but every thing else, like in South East Seattle and West Duwamish, is up for grabs.

The Parks Department plans to use the "updated" bicycle use policy to target low income diverse communities' urban forest assets for sports facility development, while continuing to protect select other communities from similar development.

No one has the right to decide which communities will no longer have the protection of the bicycle use policy for their parks and natural areas. The protections must be applied equally, not selectively.

Social Justice is equity. To remove bicycle use policy protections from selective communities while retaining the same protections in others is the OPPOSITE of social justice.

Cancel the Cheasty Green Space mountain bike park proposal now. We need to discuss realistic alternative locations for mountain biking. As long as this awful proposal looms over us, we will never have that conversation.

Sincerely,

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