

Keep Portland Neighborhoodly

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(Logo used with permission)



From the desk of Terry Parker

Subject: Testimony to the Portland City Council regarding the proposed 3.96 Civic Life Code changes, August 21, 2019.

Portland is a city of neighborhoods. With the current commission form of government, Neighborhood Associations and coalitions are the only geographical representation within the civic engagement process. Local residents are the people that have the everyday first hand knowledge of neighborhood livability issues.

The 2016 Auditor's Report supported by the 2008 Community Connect report recommends that Portland's civic engagement framework of Neighborhood Associations needs to be strengthened and expanded. This includes updating the Code and Standards to give formal recognition to other community groups allowing them to receive the benefits and notifications the NAs receive. City Council Resolution 37373 was the vehicle to create a committee to implement those recommendations.

The hand picked Code Change Committee was deficient of both notification to and representation for Portland's nationally renown 90 plus Neighborhood Association system. Along with negligible representation for the over 53 percent* of Portland households that pay property taxes and live in owner-occupied homes, the committee took a totally opposite direction by removing official NA recognition, the organizational standards and their functions.

Moreover, the proposed new language includes references to colonialism, white supremacy, native sovereignty, economic exploitation and the striving for self-determination that can all be interpreted as hate language. Such divisive, hostile and offensive language divides communities rather than bringing them together.

Statements in the City's Code of Ethics include: "Citizens have a fair and equal opportunity to express their views to City officials", "City officials avoid bias or favoritism, and respect cultural differences as part of decision-making" and "Leadership facilitates, rather than blocks, open discussion".

With a hand picked committee lacking balanced representation; and with the director of Civic Life demonizing Neighborhood Associations by calling them devastating to Portland (an obvious detest toward NAs); and with the inclusion of unprofessional proposed language that can be interpreted as hate language; has Civic Life also rewritten an unpublished version of the City's Ethics Code?

Civic engagement must not just come from special interests in closed door back rooms, or become a handpicked administrative task under the control of a czar like bureau director. The all-inclusive leadership role belongs with City Council. Instead of throwing the Neighborhood Associations off the recognition train and eliminating their functions and mandated standards, with an increased budget, any community organization that demonstrates non-discriminatory practices, conducts accessible open meetings and provides transparent minutes should be welcomed aboard and recognized.

In closing, the entire code change process was equity deficient. It needs a complete do over replacing the fantasized language with transparent code updates that are "in detail" aligned with the auditors recommendations.

Keep Portland Neighborly

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Parker
Northeast Portland

*Portland's homeownership rate is approximately 53.6%

The Benefits of Neighborhood Associations to Residents and the City.

Neighborhood Associations represent all the residents who live or operate a business within the neighborhood's formally established borders.

Neighborhood Associations are required by law to comply with Oregon's Open Meeting Law to ensure transparency, inclusion, non-discrimination and accountability.

Neighborhood Associations provide an open neighbor to neighbor forum at open general membership meetings where local issues can be discussed and debated.

Neighborhood Associations provide forums with invited guests at open community meetings for interactions with, among others:

- Candidates for office
- Elected officials
- City, County and METRO bureau and program representatives

Neighborhood Associations (under the current provisions of the City Code) are the official liaison between the City and the neighborhood residents and businesses for both general and specific issues, including particularly:

- Land use and transportation
- Construction
- Zoning
- Emergency preparedness and response (NET Teams)

Neighborhood Associations give residents a safe place to ask questions and raise concerns about issues unique to this neighborhood, such as:

- Criminal and nuisance activities from strangers entering fenced yards and porch areas to steal bikes, bottles, and anything else "not locked down," vehicle abandonment, home invasion/burglaries and car theft, to gunfire, etc.
- Safety and health concerns from crosswalks and signal lights to marijuana dispensaries
- Quality of life and livability concerns, including construction and home density

Neighborhood Associations sponsor community events, such as:

- Neighborhood Clean-Ups
- Picnics, Concerts and/or Movies in the Park
- National Night Out

Neighborhood Associations provide newsletters and/or electronic communications and calendars that keep neighbors informed and updated on local issues

Neighborhood Association budgets come partly from the City and the rest from fundraisers that include paying for, among other things:

- Printing newsletters
- Sponsoring events
- Making financial awards to local school programs
- Funding other worthy causes, such as installing a swing for the mobility impaired in Rose City Park

Without insurance provided by the City through the Neighborhood Coalitions, much of this could not take place. *Keep Portland Neighborly*

From: Terry Parker
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Subject: August 21st city council communications slot
Date: Thursday, July 25, 2019 1:41:11 PM

Hi Karla,

This is to confirm our telephone conversation of this morning that I have been given Mary Ann's slot for council communications on Wednesday August 21st. The subject matter will be the Civic Life Code Changes.

For your records, my address is 1527 NE 65th Avenue Portland,OR 97213

Thank you

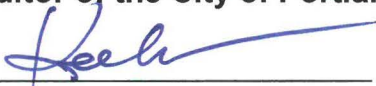
Terry Parker

Request of Terry Parker to address Council regarding the Civic Life Code Changes (Communication)

AUG 21 2019

PLACED ON FILE

Filed AUG 13 2019
MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Hardesty		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		