

Representatives of Portland Government:

The Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association wishes to register our rejection of the proposed Pembina propane terminal in North Portland.

We recognize two critical issues. The local impact of the terminal, receiving most of the media attention, and the global issues that ultimately reflect a cynicism transcending any short term benefit.

As chairman of the neighborhood association I've observed the Pembina presentations evolve through a progression of meetings. Each time the proposal has become more meticulous and considered. They have anticipated objections and have designed to counter them. The professionalism is reassuring to the extent Pembina has control. What they can't control are accidents, human error, misjudgement, and sabotage. The catastrophic events we've learned of in the last several years have involved degraded rail beds, equipment failure, drinking, carelessness, and health issues. Pembina maintains that they are not responsible for rail accidents, but the gorge and adjacent population centers would not be vulnerable without the destination Pembina would create. Like Pembina, we as a city have little say in the conduct of railroads. Limited regulation, archaic entitlements, and deliberate misinformation foster an environment of mistrust. The recent example of illegal oil deliveries down-river supports this concern. Shipping additionally involves the shutdown of the river as delivery vessels move in and out. Approval of the propane port surrenders control over the movement of explosive fuels.

Pembina may be correct that the likelihood of catastrophic failure is low. But one occurrence changes everything. Probability is an assessment that if something can happen, it will. The image of a 1/4 mile diameter fireball should weigh heavily on any cost-benefit analysis. The devaluation of life and property implicit in this proposal is unacceptable.

The science of climate change is unrelenting. We read that the full exploitation of the Canadian Tar Sands and the fracking reserves will overwhelm our planet's ability to moderate the impact of greenhouse gases. The corporations that control these resources are clear that realizing profit supersedes common sense. We have limited opportunities to collectively resist them. Longview, Washington unanimously rejected a propane terminal. We should stand with them and do the same.

Respectfully,

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