

Sue Strater
7/15/15



CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 1000, Portland, Oregon 97204 ■ Nick Fish, Commissioner ■ Michael Jordan, Director

June 9, 2015

Mr. Hugh McGavick
Arnold Creek Neighborhood Association
c/o SW Neighborhoods, Inc.
7688 SW Capital Hwy
Portland, OR 97219

Copy to Council
will also be submitting map
she couldn't bring in chambers. pu

Dear Mr. McGavick:

Thank you for your letter of May 17, 2015, regarding the Arnold Creek Neighborhood Association's concerns about stormwater around the area of SW Stephenson Street and SW 34th Avenue.

Effective and appropriate stormwater management is a priority for the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES). The SW Stephenson Roadside Swales Project will help reduce the amount of stormwater and pollutants entering Tryon Creek from SW Stephenson right-of-way. The project design will result in converting the current ditches to swales. The swales will slow stormwater flow, and reduce the volume and pollutants concentration of the runoff entering Tryon Creek. As part of the project, Portland's Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) will add paved shoulders next to the swales to enhance pedestrian and bike safety.

BES started discussing this project with the ACNA and other neighborhood and stakeholder groups in 2010. As you mention in your letter, BES staff met with Sue Strater, James Bartroff, and Dean Morrison in January 2015 to discuss the Roadside Swales Project and the stormwater runoff issues at SW Stephenson and SW 34th Avenue. We have appreciated the ACNA's and other neighborhood group's interest and involvement in this project.

While most of the unmanaged stormwater runoff from SW 34th Ave. and some of the properties along it flows into the storm system along SW Stephenson, a part of it seems to be settling at the bottom of SW 34th Ave. where it meets SW Stephenson. The project's design was modified to address some of the stormwater flow from SW 34th. But because SW 34th Ave. is an unimproved, privately-maintained street, BES is limited in its ability to manage all of the stormwater flowing from SW 34th onto SW Stephenson. City street and stormwater maintenance policies currently do not allow for stormwater management on non-City maintained streets. PBOT has suggested an LID and until that occurs BES cannot, under current rules and policies, construct and maintain stormwater management facilities on SW 34th.

We recommend that the neighbors - with help from BES and PBOT - monitor this intersection after construction is complete along Stephenson to see if the improvements along SW Stephenson will alleviate the occasional stormwater pooling at this location. If the pooling of water at the intersection of SW 34th and Stephenson continues to be a nuisance, BES and PBOT will work with the ACNA to address the issue in line with applicable City policies and guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Ryan", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Bill Ryan, Chief Engineer

C: Commissioner Nick Fish

Parsons, Susan

From: Council Clerk – Testimony
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 11:55 AM
To: 'sstrater@comcast.net'; Hagerman, James; Devlin, Jennifer; Annett, Joseph; Shaff, David; Blackwood, Jim; Treat, Leah; Shriver, Katie; Ender, Timur; Graff, Gabriel; Commissioner Fish; Fritz, Amanda; Hales, Charlie; Novick, Steve; Saltzman, Dan; Wadsworth, Jasmine; Wiggins, Rachael
Subject: FW: July 15th council meeting request = Arnold Creek NA Communications confirmed
Attachments: ACNA Ltr re SW 34th Hazard 51715.doc

Dear Sue Strater,

Your Communications for Council Meeting July 15th is confirmed. Subject: Stephenson/SW 34th water hazard. I'm forwarding your email to Council and also to the individuals from the Bureaus listed in your letter.

We will see you at 9:30 a.m., Council Chambers on July 15th for your three-minute Communication.

Susan Parsons
Assistant Council Clerk
City of Portland
susan.parsons@portlandoregon.gov
503.823.4085

From: sstrater@comcast.net [mailto:sstrater@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 6:49 PM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Cc: Jennings, Gayla
Subject: July 15th council meeting request

Hi,
Resending this because I wasn't sure if the first email I sent went through.

Attached is a document for the July 15th council meeting on Stephenson/SW 34th water hazard. Gayla was adding me to the agenda for that date.

Sue

Arnold Creek Neighborhood Association

c/o Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.
7688 SW Capitol Hwy.
Portland, OR 97219
503-823-4592
www.ArnoldCreek.org

5/28/2015

Bureau of Environmental Services

1120 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1000, Portland, OR 97204

Commissioner Nick Fish - nick@portlandoregon.gov

Director James Hagerman - James.Hagerman@portlandoregon.gov

Jennifer Devlin, BES Swales Team – jennifer.devlin@portlandoregon.gov

Joe Annett, BES, Information Contact for SW Stephenson Roadside Swales Project

joseph.annett@portlandoregon.gov

Portland Water Bureau

1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 600, Portland, OR 97204

Administrator David Shaff - david.shaff@portlandoregon.gov

Jim Blackwood, Jr., Policy Director, Comm'r Fish's Office, Jim.blackwood@portlandoregon.gov

Asena Lawrence, Constituent Services Specialist, Comm'r Fish's Office,

Asena.lawrence@portlandoregon.gov

Portland Bureau of Transportation

1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 800, Portland, OR 97204

Commissioner Steve Novick - novick@portlandoregon.gov

Director Leah Treat - leah.treat@portlandoregon.gov

Katie Shriver, Policy Director, Commissioner Novick's Office Katie.shriver@portlandoregon.gov

Timur Ender, Policy Analyst, Bureau of Transportation, Timur.ender@portlandoregon.gov

Safe Routes To School

Gabriel Graff, Program Manager, saferoutes@portlandoregon.gov

RE: Storm Water Management, intersection of SW Stephenson St and SW 34th Ave.

Greetings:

Arnold Creek Neighborhood Association is writing to restate neighborhood concern for danger caused by storm water flowing onto SW Stephenson St. from SW 34th Ave., and to seek coordinated city action to resolve the issue. This section of road is on the main route to both PPS Stephenson Elementary and Jackson Middle Schools.

For several years water has been surfacing in the middle of SW 34th near the retired Water Bureau pumping station (Property ID R331361). The storm water flows across Stephenson instead of along side the street. Seasonal sheet ice covers the intersection creating an extreme hazard.

Storm water continues to flow across Stephenson for several days after rains end, and winter ice lingers on Stephenson when pavement is bare on either side of the intersection. There is risk of motorists on

Stephenson being caught by surprise in an area where school children await buses, and the obvious hazard presented by traffic attempting to enter Stephenson from the incline of SW 34th.

The ice hazard is evidence of a head of water beneath SW 34th Ave., which is strong enough to force water through the pavement. To minimize storm water flow across SW Stephenson and SW 34th surfaces we suggest reducing the water table beneath SW 34th.

Other observations about area storm water and a synopsis of meetings with city personnel regarding both street maintenance and storm water management are noted below:

1. Impacted ACNA neighbors have previously had discussions with Portland's Water, Transportation, and Environmental Services bureaus regarding SW 34th maintenance, including current drain ditches. The common response from city personnel has been that if the street were up to current construction standard then respective bureaus would be providing maintenance. We are told SW 34th must either be maintained by the residents or brought to current standard for city to take responsibility. [It should be noted the city (Water Bureau?) has maintained the drainage ditch in the past]. City personnel suggest a local improvement district to bring streets to current construction code; but, as a neighborhood of 55 properties the estimated LID cost is untenable. The BES reiterated that residents are responsible for storm water management, and recommended drainage be improved, at residents expense, via city permitting processes.
2. Construction is scheduled to begin July 2015 on BES water collection swales along Stephenson to improve quality in the Tryon Creek watershed.
 - Construction methods are similar to that needed to lower the water table below 34th.
 - Minimizing flow across Stephenson is consistent with the purpose of the project.
 - Prior to last years paving (contracted by neighborhood) of SW 34th, an axial street depression at the problem site was noted and assumed to be above the sewer pipe. Whether the sewer pipe contributes to water head (via effluent, influent, or adjacent pathway) is not known.
 - We met with the BES swales project team to request their project include a ditch to address water table under SW 34th. Plan revisions were made to better capture surface flows from existing drain ditches along edges of 34th into planned swales, but the changes will not be adequate to lower the water table and stop water flowing from beneath 34th, through the pavement, and across both SW 34th and SW Stephenson roadway surfaces.
3. The Bureau of Transportation is responsible for maintenance of SW Stephenson Street. Liability aside, public safety should be a fundamental concern of this bureau. Less water on Stephenson will lower the risk of ice on the road.
4. The Water Bureau is responsible for the decommissioned pumping station and related property near the problem area.
 - As with the sewer pipe discussion above, whether removal of the old water tower and/or decommission of related in-street piping has any influence on the accumulated water head is unknown.
 - Property situated higher than street at the problem area may contribute to the head of water.
 - A ditch of sufficient depth is required along 34th with perforated pipe, filter cloth, and rubble fill to lower the water table.

In summary, we are requesting respective city bureaus work together with us to prevent the accumulation of water pressure beneath 34th. Ave. The pressure causes water to emerge through the pavement surface at the center of SW 34th, adjacent to City Water Bureau property, from where it flows downhill on the surface and then onto and across SW Stephenson St. This out flow at the center of SW 34th occurs both during and long after heavy rain, and is especially dangerous in freezing conditions. (Please see enclosed photocopies taken through a car windshield on SW 34th approaching Stephenson Street. The photos capture typical sheet ice on Stephenson at the intersection to the drivers left, ahead, and to the right).

The imminent BES swales project presents a timely opportunity, through limited additional ditch construction, to solve this problem and minimize the hazard at this intersection. To do so would be in keeping with intended watershed improvement by helping ensure water that now flows across street surfaces between the planned swales would instead flow into the swales.

- Debating who is responsible for doing what, or initiating a discovery of root causes seems irrelevant to the
- fact that accumulated water pressure at the intersection results in very dangerous road conditions that could be alleviated with minimal incremental work and, arguably, minimal incremental cost given the
- nature of the work, materials, and equipment that will be involved in the pending swales project.

We respectfully request your prompt attention to facilitate a mutually beneficial solution to the problem described herein. In response please contact neighborhood study team members James Bartroff (jnbartroff@gmail.com), or Sue Strater (sstrater@comcast.net).

Thanks for your consideration,

ACNA President Hugh McGavick (acna.hugh@gmail.com), &

SW 34th Ave Street Maintenance Study Team

James Bartroff

Geoffery Bruce

Megan Hessel

Tom McDowell

Dean Morrison P.E.

Sue Strater

cc: *Gayla Jennings*, Community Outreach and Information Assistant | Office of the Ombudsman,

Gayla.Jennings@portlandoregon.gov

(Photocopies enclosed)

**Surface ice, view to driver left from SW 34th Ave
onto SW Stephenson Street.**



Surface ice, view ahead of driver from SW 34th Ave onto SW Stephenson Street.



Surface ice, view to driver right from SW 34th Ave onto SW Stephenson Street.



Request of Sue Strater to address Council regarding Stephenson/SW 34th water hazard (Communication)

JUL 15 2015

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JUL 10 2015

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		