

**Singletrack Cycling in Forest Park  
City Hall Testimony 1/24/18, 9:30 a.m.  
by Candy Puterbaugh**

It's hard for me to have a one-track mind about singletrack cycling because I come from a family of cyclists, hikers and runners. As a runner, I have no bone to pick with singletrack cyclists, nor does my family, but we just can't see it on the narrow trails in Forest Park.

I don't doubt that singletrack is adventuresome, fun, and exhilarating. There are plenty of places where it would fit. Forest Park is just not one of them. Singletrack poses dangers to hikers and joggers, seniors, kids, dogs, the blind and disabled, and can result in trampled plants, rutted trails in our wet climate, and wildlife fleeing from the whirr of wheels.

Maybe Forest Park is looked at by some as a fuddy duddy--an outdated grande dame in need of a facelift and a whoopee factor. Most of its users don't look at it that way. A recent study showed that 90 percent of users are pedestrians and only 9% are cyclists, with just 6% of respondents wanting more bike trails.

And many users are seniors 65 and older, myself included. Census numbers show our state is aging faster than the nation. PSU's Population Research Center said that age group is just going to keep growing over the next 15 years, and they are heading out onto Oregon's hiking trails in increasing numbers.

If I knew that a bike could at any time come careening around a corner, I wouldn't hike or run that trail and I wouldn't take my grandkids or dog. We simply can't take trails away from walkers or hikers of any age.

According to the International Mountain Biking Association's Rules of the Trail, "Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage than dry ones." That doesn't speak well for Portland trails.

A Singletrack.com article on easing mountain biking's environmental impact stated, "The issue isn't whether or not mountain biking degrades a trail or impacts the environment in some harmful way, but to what extent it does and how much control you have over it."

And a Singletrack.com podcast on bikers' pet peeves noted that riding hard on wet clay is terrible for a trail, and that a single rider and ride can completely destroy a trail.

There are many well-meaning and well-mannered single-track cyclists, but nothing is 100%. Not every car on the road has a good driver. There are accidents. That's why we have police. But Forest Park has only one faux enforcer, meaning that ranger can't even write citations.

Fort Collins in Colorado has 12 rangers for their natural areas. Boulder has 15 park rangers for 150 miles of trails. Forest Park has only one ranger for 80 miles of trails.

It's a hot-button issue that makes tempers flare. In 2013 a psychiatrist was sentenced to 30 days in jail for stringing shoulder-level nylon rope across trails near Ashland to injure mountain bikers, while in Colorado, plywood boards riddled with protruding nails were found.

Once we start down that singletrack trail in Forest Park, there's no turning back. Let's leave its narrow trails untouched by tire tracks for those who search out pristine wilderness in the city. That's what its brilliant founders foresaw in their crystal ball. And make no mistake, this is Portland's crystal, and we must take care of it so that it will remain beautiful and unbroken.

**Parsons, Susan**

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**From:** Candy Puterbaugh <candyputerbaugh@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:49 AM  
**To:** Parsons, Susan  
**Subject:** Jan 24th City Council meeting

Hello, Susan. I am just writing to confirm that I will be talking for three minutes at the January 24, 2018 City Council meeting.

Thank you!  
Candy Puterbaugh

FOREST PARK

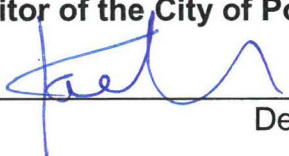
Request of Candy Puterbaugh to address Council regarding Forest Park (Communication)

JAN 24 2018

**PLACED ON FILE**

Filed JAN 16 2018

**MARY HULL CABALLERO**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

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