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590-2021

Communication

Request of Kate Dickson to address Council regarding environmental concerns in the South Park Blocks

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A brief description of Communication:

Environment concerns in the South Park Blocks

Agenda Items

590 Communications in [July 28-29, 2021 Council Agenda](#)

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General information

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July 28, 2021

Mayor Wheeler, Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty, Commissioner Mingus Mapps, Commissioner Carmen Rubio, Commissioner Dan Ryan, cctestimony@portlandoregon.gov

Subject: Testimony July 28, 2021 RE: South Park Blocks Master Plan

Good Morning Mayor Wheeler and City Councilors,

I am Dr. Kate Dickson, a Portland resident, who loves our vibrant city and the South Park Blocks. I want to thank you for your service to this beloved city and the work you are doing to create a thriving, safe, and livable city for ALL Portland residents.

My request to you today, as our City leaders, is to strongly encourage you to take a deeper dive into **the intended and unintended consequences** of the SPB Master Plan before you make any additional decisions about the MP.

With so much debate and misinformation surrounding the MP, we need data and evidence-based answers to some essential questions.

1. What are the true Park boundaries? Who decides?
2. Are trees being removed or not removed? The MP drawings pgs. 50 and 51 say yes! So, let's clarify.
3. What is the heat island impact of the 50,000+ sq.ft. additional concrete walkway down the middle of the cultural blocks?
4. What is the impact on pedestrians, trees, and property—by installing a bike loop for bicycles, e-bikes, e-scooters, skate-boards, hover boards, Segways etc.
5. What is the maintenance plan for the SPB trees?

To answer these essential questions, one of the most responsible steps you can take as city leaders is to request that a neutral party conduct an environmental impact study and clarify the confusing and misinformation in the MP.

Over 90% of the residents testifying at the July 15th hearing voiced serious and informed concerns about the current SPBMP. They can't all be wrong or misguided based on analyzing the SPBMP!

I want to strongly urge you to

1. Acknowledge your commitments in the Central City 2035 plan regarding the South Park Blocks.
2. Clarify the points of misinformation. Clear evidence and factual information is what we are all requesting.

Commission an environmental impact study for the SPBMP before making any additional decisions.

3. Prioritize Morgan Holen's 2019 tree inventory report of the South Park Block neighborhood and dedicate adequate funds in the Parks budget for the recommended pruning and tree maintenance for the health and safety of the SPB trees, and trees throughout Portland.

Commissioner Rubio—You said it! —“we must be aggressive to disrupt climate change.” It is time to maintain and take care of our large mature trees—the science is clear-- mature trees cool and clean the air in our city.

4. Let's find common ground and be true to the vision and goals of our city.

Future SPB decisions need to embrace the indigenous peoples 7 generation principle. The South Park Blocks has been a Peoples park with a tree canopy for the past 7 generations. It is time, let us find common ground and work together to make the best decisions for a next 7 generations 'Peoples' South Park Blocks. It is an ethical commitment to the sacredness of the land Portland is built upon.

Thank you for your considerations, I am happy to take comments and questions.

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