

TESTIMONY ON THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS MASTER PLAN TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSIONERS, CITY OF PORTLAND.

Paddy Tillett is a member of the Parks Board, founding chair of the Urban Design Panel, and adjunct professor emeritus at PSU. The following testimony represents his own views.

The Green Loop: The vehicle-free, strolling environment on Park Avenue West in the University District is used and treasured by many. A purpose of the Green Loop is to extend this benefit to Eastside Portland via the Tilikum Crossing and Broadway Bridge. Implementation will take many years as the will and funding become available for each small segment. Pedestrians and young families with strollers and bicycles will create too many obstacles for fast cyclists to use it. There are alternative, faster routes for them. [South Park Blocks Master Plan, page 105].

Construction of the Green Loop through the South Park Blocks ‘...does not advocate removing any mature trees...’ [ibid. p.47]. As now, bike use on the Green Loop in the SPB will be restricted during special events [ibid. p.69]. Green Loop path and buffer will replace existing parking [ibid. p.80, 83, etc.]. All will be within the existing paved area.

Phased Implementation of the Master Plan: The prime purpose of the master plan is to ensure long-term conservation of the South Park Blocks landscape by planning now for the successive demise of mature trees over many decades into the future by planting young trees to eventually succeed them. The master plan is ‘...a 50-year or longer vision for the Park...’ [ibid p. 123]. Proposed locations and species of young trees reflect the full body of knowledge about urban trees gained since the original planting of the American Elms in 1877, which includes vastly more knowledge about suitable species, spacing, canopy size, health in an urban environment and many more factors.

The concept of a plan that is to be implemented incrementally over many decades is confusing to those accustomed to seeing master plans for immediate construction. This confusion may be compounded by inclusion of an estimate of total cost in the master plan. As you know, there is no funding request associated with this master plan.

Please ignore testimony based on supposed ‘facts’ derived from sources other than the master plan itself. I find the master plan to be competent and thorough in its examination of relevant issues and in the development of recommendations.

Respectfully submitted:

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