

April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

City Engineering Department  
6101 SE Johnson Creek Blvd  
Milwaukie, OR 97206

Attn: Jennifer Garbely & Dalton Vodden

Thank you for allowing time for the Ardenwald/Johnson Creek neighborhood district association (AJC NDA) to make comments on the removal of 14 trees for the South Meek Pipe Project. Five days was just not enough time for review of the plan, drafting of a letter, sending the letter out for review, receiving feedback from the board, and finalizing the letter. We really appreciate your flexibility.

We have been told by Jennifer that our comments will not affect the outcome of this \$2 million dollar project, however we are welcome to submit them for the record. We understand that this project will affect not only the storm water drainage for the McFarland and the Murphy sites, but also the Hillside Park redevelopment. This project will also tie into the North Meek Pipe Project which is projected to run through Hillside Park, up 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and filter into Roswell Pond at the end of Roswell Street. Running the pipe up 29th will save the city \$1.8 million as they will not have to work with the railroad rights-of-way. This future project could have issues such as more mature tree removals and the disruption of the natural springs that flow under the Ardenwald/Johnson Creek neighborhood. The neighborhood asks, "Is this removal of these 14 trees just be the beginning of future tree removal in our neighborhood for projects like this one?"

The neighborhood feels that cutting down trees during the nesting life cycle for birds should not be allowed. We are very anthropocentric in most all our city building projects. Only because salmon are now endangered do we have regulations that require times where in-water work is not allowed. The same should be true for our bird population which has decreased dramatically over the last 10 years. We need to allow bird species to survive and thrive by specifying times when the cutting down of trees or large shrubs is not allowed. The neighborhood asks, "Why a project of this importance could not have been planned and carried out at any other time than nesting season?"

This plan relies on the fact that new trees can survive and thrive when we plant them. We have entered a time where there are no guarantees that carbon sequestering trees cut down now will be able to be replaced with immature trees that thrive due to climate change. Part of the reason that the City Council declared a climate emergency is because we need to start saving our tree canopy. The neighborhood asks, "If every project that the city works on cuts down mature trees, how are we ever going to achieve 40% tree canopy, a stated council goal?" The fact that to build a neighborhood park three large, healthy, mature trees had to be cut down should be a wake-up call to everyone that something is not right with how we plan things.

The trees proposed in the new plan will not have the protection that natural groves of trees do. The tree's placement on the site currently protect each other from wind and sun. The new plan spacing shows the immature, 6', trees in a very large circle where no protection or shading will occur for 20 - 30 years if they survive that long. The neighborhood asks, "How does the city propose to replace these trees as many succumb to the environment?"

The neighborhood understands the need for this project from the city's perspective but asks that you try to understand it from a neighborhood perspective: transparency, improvements to the neighborhood that benefit everyone (not just developers), and reasonable planning.

Thank you again for providing time to submit these comments. Please reach out to us if you have any questions about this input.

Sincerely,

Matthew Rinker – AJC NDA Chair