



## Parks and Recreation Committee

June 21, 2018

Dear City Council Members,

We have learned that the bill for Fairfax Park will be heard by the Land Use and Transportation Committee on June 26<sup>th</sup> and will go to Council on tentatively on July 16 2018.

In late May we sent a letter to Council requesting a more open and transparent process regarding park policy and decision making when park land use is being decided; specifically in this case Fairfax Park.

In early June we met with CM Herndon and had what we believed to be productive discussion about transparency and the [silo effect](#) that appears to have dominated this and other planning processes.

As we shared with CM Herndon it seemed to us that each three silos, Council, DPR and Developer, HM Capitol, believed that they were communicating to the important fourth silo the Neighbors but were in effect only sharing information between themselves. The nearby neighbors who had spent much time and energy to design and plan what they wanted as a simple neighborhood park were left feeling disrespected, disenfranchised and mistrustful.

Financial transparency in the Fairfax transaction is paramount to the process and one in which taxpayers have a vested interest. Not having detailed numbers but being able to do some extrapolations we are asking if perhaps the City and Parks and Rec aren't being used by the developer.

We understand the City bought the property to be swapped from Xcel for \$50,000 which was an excellent acquisition and truly appreciated when Scott Gilmore shared at a neighborhood meeting a plan to create a park with the land purchased. He talked about a pocket park or possibly a dog park and indicated that funds would not be available to complete the project in the near future. However, a park planner replying to an interested neighbor estimated the full cost for a pocket park in the range of \$80,000 to \$120,000.

You are now being asked to move the community's pocket park across the street to create a plaza park in the development. The City already contracted for three park designs by Stream Associates for \$30,000 which could be used for the Xcel property park. Does the City have an appraisal on the property being swapped taking into account the new development planned? Where are the numbers to look at before taking action and dismissing established community residents? Why is it important that developer can't or won't build the park in his development without the land swap? Who should have a better deal, Denver Citizens or the developer?

We have been repeatedly asked "What is the difference whether a park is in an existing space surrounding by older buildings or it is in a new development surrounded by new apartments"?

We reply, "Who receives the greatest benefit? Is it the developer who will acquire two valuable assets

1) increased value of his residential development/ commercial space with a plaza park and 2) creating off street parking for his residents on the Xcel space? Or, is it the community who expected a green park to gather unencumbered but get the "space/park" that is now a part of a development?"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Johnstone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cindy Johnstone

Maggie Price

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maggie Price". The signature is written in a bold, cursive style.

Co Chairs, INC PARC

cc: Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Rafael Espinosa, Kevin Flynn, Paul D. Lo'pez, Kendra Black, Mary Beth Susman, Paul Kashmann, Jolon Clark, Christopher Herndon, Albus Brooks, Wayne New, Stacie Gilmore, Robin Kniech, Deborah "Debbie" Ortega, Allegra "Happy" Haynes, George Mayl, Tracey MacDermott, Blair Taylor, Timothy O'Brien

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