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From: [Melody Fosmore](#)
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 9:07:52 PM
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Save Shoreline Trees Recap
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Hello City Council,

I understand you are meeting for a retreat this week and trees are on your list to discuss. I want to give you a quick email that reinforces the many messages you have already received from our members and others who are extremely concerned about our disappearing tall conifer tree canopy.

As you know we have been at the City Council meetings for several weeks in a row now. Some of us have spoken more than once. We have even sung to you (!). It's clear our passion is strong and we will not be going away. We strive to be a respectful group. We want to work with the City to make changes. The anger about recent tall tree loss however, is very real and we cannot deny this.

Save Shoreline Trees is growing and we are reaching out to all of Shoreline now. People in our community are shocked and saddened by the rapidly decreasing urban forests that formerly surrounded our neighborhoods. Light Rail decimated 5000+ trees! The proposed loss of 133 trees affected by permit #19-2371 has become a lightning rod of activity and concern from people who live in Seattle and Edmonds and all points in-between because Dayton Ave. N is a well traveled thoroughfare.

Here are the reasons we have become active to speak for our trees:

- Trees - especially our tall conifer trees have been here longer than any of us. They have been proven to be sentient beings which means they can feel and have desires. They have a right to live.
- We know the root systems of trees communicate under the ground, helping each other stay alive.
- Trees filter the air of carbon, keeping us alive.
- Trees produce enough oxygen every day to keep four people a day alive.
- Trees block the noise from cars and filter bright street lights from our homes.
- Trees filter the rainwater in our existing watersheds keeping our sea life healthy.
- Trees hold up steep slopes and keep our land stable.
- Trees provide shade.
- Trees provide windbreaks.
- Trees give us peace - literally.
- Trees have been with mankind from the beginning - they serve us and take care of us every day, 24/7, 365 days a year.
- Trees provide needed shelter and homes for our local wildlife. Didn't we all learn in elementary school that we are all part of a natural ecosystem? What happens when the trees go away? What happens to the birds - how does this affect the insects, and in turn, the plants and other creatures who are dependent on this natural cycle of life.

WHY DO WE ALL TAKE THESE GIFTS FOR GRANTED?

- It appears that people may not even see the trees, or if they do, they are just 'in the way'. We have so many, so it's fine to lose a few, right? And yet, who is paying attention - to the global impact of our tree loss, to holding developers and others accountable for taking down 70 - 150 year old trees with little to no consequences.

The irony abounds...

- Shoreline is a Tree City USA as established in 2012. I have seen many postings in the *Current* exulting this accomplishment. Isn't this an interesting juxtaposition against the lack of oversight on the developers who come in and clear cut lots with impunity? The right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing is clearly evident here.
- Is there a tall conifer tree survey done throughout the city that tells us how many we still have and how many have been lost? Is this available for us to review? Or, are we convincing ourselves that the tree canopy is 'growing' because we count the Japanese vine maples and rhodies and the existing trees that continue to grow?
- Meanwhile we keep adding people and cars and businesses, and eliminate this very real asset we have to help us all STAY ALIVE?
- How much are these trees worth? \$2,000 each as a fine? \$10,000 each for a tree cutter to sell for wood? I would suggest Priceless!
- Your code requires a developer to plant 2-3 times the trees they cut down, correct? But deciduous trees are replacement trees, and they are sticks when they are planted. And after the mandatory 2-3 years required to keep them alive, they die. We have seen this happen over and over.

- The developers come in from out of town, scrape the land and squeeze in ugly homes to make their money and they move on. Those of us who have lived here for 10, 20, 30 years and more and invested in this community, have to live with the results.
- And finally, the WSDOT project feeds the Boeing Creek Watershed. Our Mayor is all about Salmon and Orca preservation. Shoreline is the only city in Washington that is a Salmon Safe City. Taking down the Dayton Ave N, N 160th and N 155th trees are going to affect, in a big way, how the storm waters emptying into Boeing Creek Watershed operates and in turn affects the Salmon and Orcas. In all the literature I have read about how 'green' Shoreline is, there is NOTHING about tall conifer tree preservation.
- I have heard more than one comment that soon the only trees we will have left are the trees on our city logo. Are you content with your legacy?

WSDOT:

- This renovation is a LEED certified project which means it's all about being 'green'.
- The Dept. of Ecology is leasing premises in the building.
- WSDOT has told us they don't want to cut the trees for a sidewalk but this City is holding the permits hostage so the Washington State taxpayer will pay for the sidewalk.
- So the true 'green' issue here is money. Trees don't matter and the neighbors don't matter.
- The code requiring 8-foot sidewalks are the only thing that matters.
- We have written over a 100 letters to Governor Inslee about this situation.
- There are alternate sidewalk options that can be implemented which will save the trees and fulfill the letter of the code and be safe sidewalks for all people to use - regardless of mobility.
- In the June 5, 2017 City "Sidewalk Prioritization Project Orientation" info sheet about primary goals assigned to the Sidewalk Advisory Committee, it is stated: "...look at how to prioritize and fund new sidewalks and repair and maintenance of existing sidewalks and ramps as well as consider alternative sidewalk treatments. What are the "alternative sidewalk treatments" that the Sidewalk Advisory Committee proposed to City Council in 2017?"

What we need and want from our City Council

- We are asking for a variance from the existing code to be placed on the ROW permit #19-2371 to allow the existing trees to remain. NO sidewalk is needed on N. 155th. Most of the trees on N 160th can remain as well. A sidewalk like the one recently installed on the Ronald Bog project that is ADA approved would be appropriate for Dayton Ave N.
- A local and noted arborist told the City representatives and the WSDOT representatives at our Jan. 28 Community Meeting that the trees on Dayton have made peace with the existing street and structures. If a concrete sidewalk is installed, no matter what the design is, the remaining trees will succumb.
- We are asking to see the full city tree survey, noting any significant trees of 8" dbh or larger. Is this available for our review?
- We are asking for the City code to be changed -- not allowing developers to do what they want on lots 7000sf or larger with no thought for the trees.
- We are asking the City to implement a moratorium on all new developments until our existing tall conifer tree canopy is evaluated or is this evaluation available now?
- We are asking the City to put a huge fine on those who choose to ignore the laws - \$50,000 per tree would make a developer think twice.
- We are asking the City to enforce these fines and hold people accountable.
- We are asking the City to include our tall conifer tree canopy into their Green lexicon.
- We are asking the City to be creative and energetic towards mindful solutions with sidewalks. We can do better!
- **We look to YOU, our leaders, to care for our community and tall conifer trees first, and the needs and desires of the developers last.**

PLEASE, City Council members, get on the same team with this issue. We all need these tall conifer trees. We do, our children do, and the generations to come will as well. Make this a part of your legacy to Shoreline. Otherwise your legacy will be the ones who chose to put up their hands and do nothing while our beautiful, stately and life-giving trees disappear. One at a time.

ONCE THESE TREES ARE GONE, THEY ARE GONE FOREVER.

Thank you for your time.

We look forward to meeting with each of you and learn more about how we can help make changes to the tree policy in Shoreline.

Respectfully,

Melody Fosmore, Chair
Save Shoreline Trees