

**From:** [Nancy Morris](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Cameron Reed](#); [Rachael Markle](#); [Catherine Lee](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment to City Council Meeting Agenda Item 8(a) - Resolution 494 Climate Emergency  
**Date:** Monday, August 15, 2022 7:39:36 PM  
**Attachments:** [News Release Tree Pac August 12 2022.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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*Please place this comment in the document library for City Council meeting August 15, 2022*

Attention City Council and colleagues:

Below is the written draft of my verbal comment presented tonight, August 15, 2022 City Council Meeting regarding Resolution 494, Climate Emergency.

References are also attached at the end of this comment.

Regards,  
Nancy Morris

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Good Evening, Nancy Morris , Shoreline, WA

Recently Lake Forest Park City Council commented they are serious about discussing and protecting their tree canopy even after 11 years of continuing discussion. Last week Tree Pac in Seattle was party to opposing a SEPA appeal by the Master Builders to a protective tree code and prevailed in this appeal, which means after 13 years of working at this, the tree code in Seattle will move forward to updating Seattle’s Tree Protection Ordinance. On Friday, August 12, the US government made one of the largest commitments of any country toward resolving the climate crisis.

This evening City Council has the opportunity to approve Resolution 494 Climate Emergency that includes the language “established trees” as a natural asset of Shoreline’s ecosystem. We ask Council to approve this language and continue to recognize the value that Shoreline’s established trees contribute as *one* of the solutions to the climate

emergency. We understand the efforts to reduce Green House Gases and fuel consumption, but we all must acknowledge the work that established trees provide to the environment now, not in 3, or 5 or 10 years, and not as a secondary effort. These trees are removing carbon and cleaning the air of pollutants right now. Thank you to Council and Staff for revising the language and including “established trees” in Resolution 494. So many people in Shoreline have emailed you, the council, requesting this new language. We all commend a yes vote from the council. Thank you.

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**References:**

1. Lake Forest Park City Council Meeting, July 28, 2022: <https://lakeforestpark-wa.municodemeetings.com/bc-citycouncil/page/city-council-regular-meeting-9>

2. **“Good morning. The climate bill will make cleaner energy cheaper for everyone.”** By German Lopez, New York Times August 12, 2022: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/12/briefing/climate-bill-senate-clean-energy.html>

3. **Urban Forest Patches Help Cool Cities: “Natural Turned National Infrastructure: Urban Forest Patches in the 21st Century.”** “The term "urban forest" is often used to describe trees along streets and sidewalks, but communities nationwide contain natural areas such as [forest patches](#). These areas may have more in common with their larger, wild brethren than they do with street trees or a manicured park. Maintaining and restoring urban forest patches can provide life-saving regional cooling, especially in vulnerable communities, during extreme heat. Forest patches can also help improve human health and well-being and climate resilience.” *Cross-Pollinator Issue Summer 2020*. [http://www.fs.fed.us/research/docs/cross-pollinator/Cross-Pollinator\\_issue-1-summer-2020.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/research/docs/cross-pollinator/Cross-Pollinator_issue-1-summer-2020.pdf)

4. **Lower Income Regions Globally Feel the Brunt of Increasing Heat Exposure: “Increasing heat-stress inequality in a warming climate.”** Published 2022. Society will need to adapt to more frequent and intense heatwaves, which can overwhelm power grids and possibly negate electricity-dependent adaptation

efforts. In a global study, a Forest Service scientist and partners [found](#) that heatwave exposure was 40% greater in the past decade in lower income regions compared to higher income regions. In more vulnerable areas, future heatwave exposure may increase up to 5-fold. This work highlights the urgent need for heat-adaptation strategies in lower income regions.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/pubs/63860>

5. **News Release from TreePac** ( attached as a PDF below)

# News Release

Steve Zemke - Chair TreePAC

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206-999-6095

For Immediate release

Friday August 12, 2022

## **Seattle Hearing Examiner Denies Master Builders Appeal, Allows Tree Protection Ordinance Update to Proceed.**

SEATTLE - TreePAC, a citizen's group advocating updating Seattle Tree Protection Ordinance, joined as an Intervenor with the city of Seattle in opposing a Hearing Examiner appeal by the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish County. The decision allows Seattle to now move forward with updating Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance, a process that citizen groups and others have been urging the city to do for 13 years.

In a strongly worded decision, the Seattle Hearing Examiner dismissed an appeal by the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties (MBAKS) from a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) issued by the Seattle Department of Constructions and Inspections (SDCI). The appeal was regarding the potential environmental impacts of a draft update by SDCI of Seattle's Tree Protection Ordinance.

The decision by Seattle Hearing Examiner Ryan Vancil stated, "The Director's decision to issue a Determination of Nonsignificance for the proposed ordinance is not clearly erroneous and is **AFFIRMED** and the Appellants' appeal is **DENIED** ."

The Hearing Examiner did not equivocate but soundly dismissed the MBAKS arguments and witnesses' statements as speculation and not backed up by any actual data.

You can read the [Hearing Examiner's decision and detailed response](#) here.

### **Quotes:**

Steve Zemke, Chair of TreePAC "We appreciate the Hearing Examiner's reasoned and detailed decision. Trees are critical to maintaining the health and vitality of Seattle's communities and its citizens. TreePAC supports the efforts of the city to both increase needed housing and protect our green infrastructure. It is not an either/or situation but a priority of the city to address both as mandated in Seattle's current Comprehensive Plan."

Seattle Hearing Examiner Ryan Vancil in his decision "The record indicates that in developing the proposal, the Department considered the City's goals and policies and developed a set of recommendations that struck a balance between the City's housing goals related to housing and future development patterns and the City's goals to maintain a healthy urban forest that provides sizable tree canopy coverage."

Steve Zemke, Chair TreePAC "Trees are critical to dealing with urban heat island impacts and stormwater runoff as the climate crisis continues. That requires protecting as many existing trees as possible and planting more trees in marginalized areas for tree equity and social justice. The proposed draft ordinance update helps the city to do that."

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