

Testimony received for #38 RES 21-62 “Approving a Lease Agreement and parkland diversion for the City to lease a portion of City-owned property known as Pig’s Eye Regional Park to the Board of Water Commissioners to use for soils recycling and storage”.

From: Melissa Wenzel <melissa.a.wenzel@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, April 4, 2021 9:53 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Pigs Eye "land swap", letter of support

Good morning Councilmember Yang,

I'm a Ward 7 resident and am also a Ramsey County Parks and Rec Commission Member (for county district 6) and am also a city of St Paul Climate Justice Advisory Board member; also formerly a director on the Southeast Community Organization (district council). In this email and on this topic, I am just representing myself, a Ward 7 resident.

I am (mostly) in support of the land use as suggested in this Wednesday's city council hearing and vote. As a public servant for 19 years, I understand that providing government services isn't easy, especially when there is competing need for the same (natural) resources. In this case, we have a need for soil staging for emergency or planned water main replacement activities, and we have a need for storing and recycling downed trees from storms, or that need to be cut down and wood-chipped (for future District Energy burning) because of the emerald ash borer.

Here are some other points of consideration that I've been told are true, though I have not fact-checked these.

- The East Side has more green space than any other part of St. Paul; perhaps in the County
- District 1 of Saint Paul has over 1000 acres of parkland. It is the most of any district in absolute terms, and it is the most amount per capita.
- Parkland in Ward 7 has actually grown over time. Both the City and the County have acquired open space lands in Highwood, and have created larger parks like Henry Park and Highwood Preserve. Source of information: <https://www.tpl.org/city/st-paul-minnesota>.
- This project also supports advancing the [Great River Passage Plan](#). Info about [Pig's Eye work](#).
- From a stormwater perspective, keeping staged soil piles further away from Pigs Eye Lake should be a short-and long-term goal. Having the water main soil piles on the north side of the wood recycling facility allows for more contiguous natural land. The way the activities exist now, is "natural" (not very natural) park land, wood recycling, soil staging, and natural area again. It makes sense to have the natural areas, and a potential future park entrance, all connected together.

For these reasons, I support the land swap activities, and wish to work with city (and county) officials on the formal development of Pigs Eye Regional Park, when that time comes.

Sincerely,

Melissa Wenzel

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