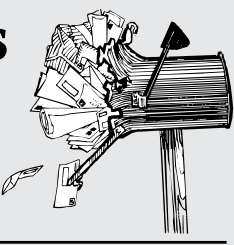


Letters
to the
Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
4207 SE Woodstock Blvd #509
Portland, OR 97206
Fax: (866) 727-5336
email: editor@multnomahpost.com

Multnomah neighbors
oppose sale of Freeman
Water Tank property

We are writing to you as concerned residents in regards to the recent “sale” of the Freeman Water Tank on Southwest 42nd Avenue in Multnomah.

The sale of this property includes, not only the water tank itself, but also the land behind it (a total of .72 acres), which is home to a large number of animals and wildlife, including (but not limited to) woodpeckers, coyotes, raccoons, song birds, humming birds, owls, and deer.

It is also close to Woods Park, which is owned by Portland Parks. Currently, “Friends of Woods Park” (a subcommittee of Crestwood Neighborhood Association) is working on new acquisitions to permit a trail system into the larger portion of Woods Park. It is our hope that the current property in which the water tank is located on could be used for

this endeavor.

Our neighborhood doesn’t believe that this property was sold according to the rules and ordinances for the City of Portland.

Per Ordinance Number 183952 (passed on June 23, 2013), it was determined that “the public interest would be best served by selling each [surplused Water Bureau] property at the fair market value” and directed that these properties “be sold on the open market for the best price, terms and conditions in accordance with City codes”.

This is not the case in this instance. The Water Tank Property on Southwest 42nd Avenue and Freeman Street was sold to a developer – who plans to build three large homes on this property - for a sale price of \$140,000, which is far below what “fair market value” would be for this area.

In addition to this, no notification was provided to the neighborhood, or to the neighbors close by this land that there was an interested party that was looking to purchase and develop this area.

As residents of this area, our family would love for this area to become protected, so that it can be added to the existing Woods Park area and used by others as a connecting area to Woods Park.

This area is one that has so much beauty and nature in it, that we want to protect and share it with others, not have it destroyed by developers for their own financial gain.

To have the ability to have our son (and other children in the neighbor-

hood as well as future generations) be able to grow up with the opportunity to learn about the importance and value of this kind of nature and wildlife that is so close to them is so important to us.

We want to keep public lands public, and not have [this property] exploited by developers for their own financial gains.

We want to thank you for your time in reading this letter and hope that it can be shared with the community of Portland to help build awareness as to the importance of protecting the land and wildlife around us.

As a neighborhood, we will continue to fight to save this land, and truly hope that you can help to support us in this endeavor.

Karen McKibbin, Joshua Dow,
and Tiernan McDow
Multnomah

City ignored spirit of the law
with Freeman Water Tank
property sale

[Portland Water Bureau Commissioner] Nick Fish responded to neighborhood concerns about the sale of the Freeman water tank, saying that he had “followed all relevant policies.” Please forgive me if I am less than impressed with his excuses.

He said that his “top priority” is clean, safe water and stormwater services. True, but insufficient. His

total priorities include acting in the best interest of the citizens of Portland. This he did not do.

It sounds to me like he is nitpicking the letter of the law in order to justify ignoring the spirit of the law.

Public notification and public hearings and public process are not new concepts in Portland. Certainly they predate 2010 by a long shot.

The sale of the Freeman water tank land, better to be known as the Woods Park Expansion, was carried out in an apparently deceitful way, with “notifications” having been made in ways that would almost certainly go unnoticed by the affected neighbors.

He also did not act in the best interest of the citizens of Portland in terms of the sale price he agreed to. \$140,000 is an egregious price for that [0.72 acre] piece of land. In no way did he consider the real market value when approving this sale. Portland deserves better than this.

If he is, as he claims, “keenly aware of the value of green space in creating livable neighborhoods,” he would get busy unwinding this sale and restore the green space to the citizens of Portland.

I urge him to reconsider his position and do what is right in this case: restore this land to public property.

Carol Routh
Cedar Hills

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general email: news@multnomahpost.com
web address: www.swportlandpost.com

Editor & Publisher: Don Snedecor
Reporters/Writers: Rebecca Hart, Melinda Hasting
Erik Vidstrand
Copy Editor: Rich Riegel
Advertising Sales: Don Snedecor, Harry Blythe
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