

MULTNOMAH NOTEBOOK

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The presentation documented historic complaints about seasonal flow onto private property in Basin 3.

“A key point in a Capitol Highway corridor stormwater concepts document was that the city knew about the excessive flooding issues,” Clark said. “No other basins reported similar issues in the referenced document.”

According to Clark’s presentation, there used to be a large wetlands, north of Dolph Court, which helped reduce the flow of large volumes of water. According to Tim Kurtz, a stormwater technical assistance manager, the city does not currently have regulatory authority over wetlands.

“That authority rests with the Department of State Lands and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” he said.

Even though the issue of stormwater was clearly a known issue in this basin, the city has allowed a substantial amount of new development that removed the natural buffers, and caused immeasurable growth in the volumes of water that flows directly upon the downstream neighbors on private property.

The project team is looking at a number of facility alternatives within Basin 3, including maximizing the capacity of the proposed regional facility on Dolph Court, expanding the capacity of other existing storm systems, and diverting some of the flows from Basin 3 into one of the other drainage basins.

“As part of the Capitol Highway project, the bureau is currently in the process of trying to purchase the property at 3972 SW Dolph Court to locate a neighborhood detention facility,” Kurtz said.

Clark noted that west of Capitol Highway, 11 new homes were constructed in the last 10 years

causing water to flow east and downhill onto these properties in Basin 3.

“Ten properties were flooded,” Clark said. “There was not a great response from Kurtz after we presented.”

“They offered two small concessions, but they did not assure us of any reduction of water to return to normal historic rates of stormwater running through our private properties.

“Environmental services restated that it is charged only with not making it worse,” she said.

Clark told *The Post* that although they appreciated the time and effort the bureau took to draft the letter, the Basin 3 group says it feels very much like they side-stepped the central issue.

Kurtz replied three months after their presentation.

“We recognize the importance and value of working with the community,” Kurtz wrote the Basin 3 group. “(This helps) identify ways to improve drainage conditions both along the Capitol Highway corridor and in the surrounding drainage basins.”

Kurtz included input from a variety of staff at the bureau including senior management and the director’s office. According to their watershed manual, new stormwater conveyance infrastructure must carry up to the 10-year storm without surcharge. It must provide means to pass a 25-year storm without damage to property, endangering human life or public health, or significant environmental impact.

Patti Waitman-Ingebretsen, who lives in Basin 4, just north of Basin 3, said that flooding is not just restricted to Basin 3. She spoke up at the neighborhood meeting.

“The city wants to adhere to the stormwater manual and standards,” she said, “but every household has the same story. Basin 3 has a creek;

we have a river!”

“We will continue to be in touch as the design for Capitol Highway progresses,” Kurtz wrote. “We will include updates on the alternative analyses for the Basin 3 stormwater drainage system.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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City of Portland shouldn’t be spraying Glyphosate in Gabriel Park

When I originally heard about plans for the pollinator meadow at Gabriel Park, I was excited.

As a neighbor, a frequent user of the park, and an active member of the nearby community garden, I loved the idea of creating a better environment for bees and hummingbirds and other pollinators.

So I was understandably upset when I learned that Portland Parks and Recreation had sprayed the herbicide Ranger Pro 2 Percent (Glyphosate) on the meadow.

I found it hard to believe they had taken this action, especially since the meadow drains into the riparian area of Vermont Creek and is directly across from the organic community orchard, the organic community garden, and the winter dog park.

What I find even harder to believe is that, despite opposition from many people in the community and

At the end of the neighborhood meeting, a motion was passed by the association to help support the Basin 3 group and draft another letter to the Bureau of Environmental Services including Director Michael Jordan and Commissioner Nick Fish.

a planned meeting with stakeholders (date to be announced), according to Kendra Petersen-Morgan, the park bureau is “committed to completing the spray work that is scheduled in the fall.”

The World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer classified Glyphosate as “probably carcinogenic in humans” in 2015.

Although other organizations like the European Chemical Agency have denied the risk, the Glyphosate controversy rages.

I can’t understand why the city of Portland (which requires organic gardening methods in its community gardens) would want to use a substance that is widely considered to be harmful to aquatic life, animals, and humans in their pursuit of a more environmentally friendly meadow.

I hope this letter alerts concerned neighbors regarding the issue, and that they take action by contacting Kendra Petersen-Morgan (kendra.petersen-morgan@portlandoregon.gov) to ask that our city stop spraying Glyphosate on the Gabriel Park pollinator meadow.

Cindy Brown
Multnomah

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