

UO HAYWARD PLAN CALLS FOR RAPID TREE REMOVAL

Trees along the track's East Grandstand and Agate Street to be cut down

As the area around Hayward Field bustles with preparations for the weekend's Prefontaine Classic track meet, the leafy trees along Agate Street sport new tags.

Trees from 15th to 18th avenues are taped with green fliers explaining that the trees will be cut down as part of the Hayward Field Renovation Project.

Maryanne Francis, who lives not far from the track, says the removal will "destroy the ambiance of the neighborhood" — and that's not even "the horrible edifice they are going to build there."

The "horrible edifice" of which she speaks is the planned Phil Knight-funded massive new Hayward Field, which calls for the teardown of the historic East Grandstand where coach Bill Bowerman once watched Steve Prefontaine run past.

Those calling for the grandstand's removal have tried to call attention to its supposed disrepair. That's not stopping the University of Oregon, though, from packing it with track fans for the May 25-26 meet.

Francis says of the tree removal, and rush to build a new Hayward, that it's "not the right thing do and especially in the way they are doing it."

She also objects to the short period of time the public is given to comment before the trees are removed — only 15 days, and over a holiday weekend.

Scott Altenhoff, an urban forester with the city of Eugene, expands on some of the details mentioned on the green fliers.

He says the city doesn't have the legal authority under city code to deny the permit if all the criteria are met. But he says when it comes to how the trees are replaced the city does have the legal authority to add conditions to the tree removal permit.

Altenhoff says the conditions will ensure there is not a monoculture but instead a diversity of trees.

He says that the trees that are removed will not only be replaced with 33 new trees, but the soil itself will be enhanced. There will be root zone and soil improvements to help the trees live a long time because, he says, poor soil

is one of the greatest challenges for urban forestry.

Altenhoff says his default position as a forester is to preserve personal connections — he's run the Eugene marathon past that alley of trees and memories are preserved by them. But, he says, "if I can't change the trajectory, I'd like to focus on the future."

Also, Altenhoff says, even when construction companies follow the law, trees close to the development can be damaged by construction impacts and wind up having to be removed later anyway and the public covers the cost instead of the developer.

"I do know trees are an essential part of what Eugene is all about and what the world needs," he says. "While historically development and caring for the environment were opposed, I want to start a having a conversation." ■

Those wishing to comment on the tree removal have until May 30. Send written comments to pos@ci.eugene.or.us or to the Urban Forestry Office, Eugene Parks and Open Space, 1820 Roosevelt Boulevard, Eugene, OR 97402. Those concerned that the East Grandstand be preserved as Hayward is renovated can attend a public meeting organized by the East Grandstand Supporters 7 pm Thursday, May 24, at Agate Hall on the UO campus.

SLANT

• **If you're a fan of the soccer scene**, Eugene has two quality teams playing this summer. The next home match for Lane United FC, the men's team, is 7 pm Friday, June 1, against the Portland Timbers U23 in Les Schwab sports park in the Willamalane complex on the edge of Springfield. Eugene Timbers FC Azul of the Women's Premier Soccer League plays at home next 5 pm June 3, against Western Timbers at the South Eugene High School field. It's a great

way to sit in the sun and watch two hours of the beautiful game that's booming in Oregon. We hear that 30,000 fans are lined up for season tickets to the Portland Timbers.

• Overall the mainstream media has gotten it right when it comes to the May 19 cougar attack in Washington state that killed one cyclist and injured another: **Cougar attacks are rare**. Don't freak out when a cougar is spotted near Lane Community College or in south Eugene. The Washington cougar had "something wrong with it," as the King County Sheriff's Office told the *Associated*

Press, and was emaciated. While the mountain bikers originally did the right thing — stood still and made loud noises — sadly, the cyclist who was killed later did what you should not do by running away and triggering the cat's predatory drive. Let's hope this unusual attack doesn't stir up those who want to trophy hunt or just wipe out our big cats.

• After the shooting that killed 10 and injured at least 10 more at Houston's Santa Fe High School, Texas state Rep. Gene Wu tweeted, "**Y'all been sending thoughts and prayers for two freaking decades now**. Time to try

something new." And as we look at the anniversary of the Thurston High Shooting, two decades ago May 21, we agree.

• "**Medicare for all? How does the U.S. get to universal health-care?**" was the familiar question asked at the May 18 City Club of Eugene by two terrific speakers: Theodore Marmor, emeritus professor of public policy at Yale, and Kieke Okma, visiting professor at McGill University in Canada. After they laid out the need and the dismal comparisons of the U.S. with the rest of the Western world, the obvious answers emerged. We need continued collective action

from the grassroots so elected leaders will fight for universal health care. Sounds tough in this political climate, but it was clear from the meeting that local activists are not giving up the fight.

• Lane Arts Council's First Friday Artwalk on June 1 will be hosted by **Oregon Bach Festival Executive Director Janelle McCoy**, promoting the summer fest that runs June 29 through July 14. McCoy hasn't been seen a lot in public since last August's firing she helped orchestrate of popular OBF Artistic Director Matthew Halls. Music fans may want to turn out for First Friday and enjoy the art.

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In Memoriam

Beginning in June, Eugene Weekly will publish memorials and obituaries for deceased family and friends written by you, our readers. Editing and writing services are available. The cost varies, with multiple options available, including a website version for longer remembrances.

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