

To: Ian Johnson, Land Use Chair, NESCA

From: Carol Snyder, 1342 Fir Street S., Salem, OR 97302

December 5, 2021

Dear Ian,

I recently visited Salem's newest park, currently designated as D Street Park, and I want to express my appreciation for all the effort that you and the Board of NESCA put into securing that property as a city park.

I first became aware of your efforts when I was a member of SPRAB and several NESCA Board members came to a SPRAB meeting and advocated that we ask the City Council to explore the possibility of making the northwest corner of the State Hospital North Campus into a park.

As the Chair of NESCA, you began including the issue of North Campus in every NESCA meeting, involving neighbors, State representatives, DAS, local businesses, various groups who had been using the D Street playing field, and City Council members. When I offered to start a "Friends of D Street" group, NESCA was enthusiastically supportive and added our group to the list of those to be informed and alerted as the situation around North Campus fluctuated.

You carefully shepherded the process and rallied support to communicate to the City Council and our State Representatives that the open field at the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> and D Streets should remain available for recreation for all of Salem. It was a true grass roots effort, but it was expertly guided by NESCA, and it was successful.

D Street Park is already a wonderful green space, thanks to the long hours and hard work given by you and the entire NESCA Board. I have no doubt that NESCA will continue to take good care of the property you secured for all of us, and that you will continue to involve the neighborhood in making decisions regarding any future development of D Street Park.

As a park-loving citizen of Salem, I thank you.  
Carol Snyder

930 Garnet ST. NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
February 18, 2022

Dear Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP *Deputy Community Development Director*, City Councilors and Mayor Chuck Bennett

I urge you to place the D Street Park in the boundary of NEN and straighten of the East border for this association. Why?

NEN is an extremely densely populated area. There are 9,740 (2020 census) people who reside in 1.18 square acres of land. There are only 2 parks which comprise 9.23 acres in total (Englewood 6.96 & McRae 2.27 acres). NEN has been losing its recreational spaces – Olinger swimming pool, the park near the pool, the state fair park and Barrick Field are the ones my family has lost. Our board member Ken Simila reports the loss of the space where Washington Elementary used to be. As infill becomes the norm, there are less vacant lots for children to convert for play. We recently lost the vacant lot across from Parrish Middle School which was the football and dog running area for most of the residents.

For 2020, NESCA has 6,374 people in 1.08 square acres. They currently enjoy 49.48 acres of land in 3 parks. The largest of these is Geer Park (44.38 acres) has many facilities available for enjoyment. Harry and Grace Thorp have 0.99 of an acre and Hoover has 4.11 acres. NEN has almost 35% more people living within its boundaries than does NESCA. With the current land prices, the development of a close park is not possible.

NEN first learned about the support for this field from the North Campus meeting in 2014 during the development of the SESNA-NEN neighborhood plan. NESCA members were invited. The rugby players were active in advocating for the preservation of this space. There were a number of NEN members who helped discuss this project with the mayor so the existence of the park should not be a NESCA victory only. If not for the neighborhood plan, there would not have been this discovery. On the corollary, NEN members were never invited to the North Campus discussions in their planning process.

NESCA has not been cooperative in working with NEN. I was asked to leave a NESCA meeting because I was a nonboard member and excluded from any NESCA park discussions. Councilor Chris Hoy was asked to stay. At another meeting the board discussed changing their bylaws so they could make people leave ASAP. NESCA has refused to work with NEN even though NEN participated in the Jory Apt development with Neighborly Venture in saving the D and Park St. trees. The argument for placement is not logical as the park is directly on the border of the neighborhood associations. NEN has 2 parks vs. NESCA's current 3 parks. Why should one group get 4 parks while the other group gets 2?

The city's recommendation is unjust and unfair.

Best,

Leslie Polson  
503-581-7944  
930 Garnet St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

February 18, 2022

Dear Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP *Deputy Community Development Director*  
City Councilors and Honourable Chuck Bennett:

With a sense of extreme disappointment I read of the Planning Department's decision to grant NESCA the D Street park. This decision makes no sense. To make a defacto award of the park to NESCA, NEN's neighborhood boundaries have had to be redrawn. This is to geographically rationalize the decision.

Why???

NEN is an extremely densely populated area. There are 9,740 (2020 census) people who reside in 1.18 square acres of land. There are only 2 parks which comprise 9.23 acres in total (Englewood 6.96 & McRae 2.27 acres). For 2020, NESCA has 6,374 people in 1.08 square acres. They currently enjoy 49.48 acres of land in 3 parks. The largest of these is Geer Park (44.38 acres), a magnificent area, well used and loved and has many facilities available for enjoyment. More are being developed. Harry and Grace Thorp have 0.99 of an acre and Hoover has 4.11 acres.

NEN has almost 35% more people living within its boundaries than does NESCA. That's an extremely dense amount of people with an extremely limited amount of available park space.

While NEN's 2 parks are extremely modest in comparison, they are very well loved, used and tended. Advocates for both parks have worked with the City and the Parks Department to raise monies for improvements, have done thousands of hours of manual labour in the parks, have celebrated Englewood Park (1926) with an annual Art Festival, which educates neighbors in environmental and safety issues (CERT), connects neighbors with City of Salem information, provides freelance artists a venue for sales and exposure and gives neighbors a safe and free celebration of the park. Englewood Park even has its own Neighborhood Watch group, who actively patrol the park and its perimeters daily. NEN has also worked with the City and Salem Police department to get better lighting and cameras in the park for enhanced safety.

McRae Park (1956) is extremely loved by young families and youths and now enjoys a newly redone basketball court area, thanks to our most recent City/ Parks Department SPIF grant and monies from Salem Health with additional monies raised by volunteers.

NEN takes excellent care of our parks and we have many unsung heroes who daily help to clean up trails and debris from fields. Other volunteers help to remove invasive species and improve the area with native, drought resistant plants.

We don't understand why NESCA would be rewarded the D Street Park. They already have a surfeit of park land, they don't have the history of park conservership that NEN has, they came late to the party in requesting this park (NEN included it in their neighborhood plan which predates NESCA's and advocated for years for the purchase of the park), and their neighborhood has a considerably smaller population (approximately 35% less).

Over the years, NEN has LOST substantial park and recreational land (5 areas have been lost) to the State, City and School District. We NEED more parks as our population continues to grow (due in part to the ADUs which are proliferating throughout NEN, and the current craze of subdividing properties).

There are simply no areas of green space, as even the empty lot across from North Salem High (owned by the School District) is now paved over. Outside of the D Street Park, the few options available for park creation in NEN would be for the City to purchase existing homes and tear them down. That's not going to happen. Or, the City could lease land.

As the price of real estate continues to escalate what extremely few empty spaces there are will be subdivided and sold for a much high price than the city could afford. Most likely those lots that are available would be developed and improved by the Parks Department, then sold by the owners for an even more enhanced value.

So, again, it is a matter of fairness AND greed.

The City has an hypothetical policy of awarding neighborhoods deficient in parks more park land. We would like to see this policy implemented, as the 2013 Comprehension Parks System Master Plan calls for the development of 3 additional parks in NEN. Where could these parks be placed? With the Planning Department's recommendation the City seems to disregard the Parks Department and their Master Plan. There is simply so very little land within the redrawn neighborhood boundaries for any future park, let alone 3. Will NEN be fated to have no additional parks even as our population continues to increase? With an enormous amount of luck, we might eventually get an extremely tiny pocket park or two.

I had naively wished that the D Street Park could be shared between NEN and NESCA. I understand that isn't a realistic concept. If NESCA had been/would be reasonable and communicative this could be. As they've thrown out NEN representatives from NESCA neighborhood association meetings and have excluded NEN from discussions with counselors and City officials they have demonstrated they are NOT interested in compromise and sharing.

They want it all. Not only that, they have designs on the Dome Building as well.

I call this 'The Great NESCA Land Grab'.

As NEN has no advocates from the City we are fighting this battle alone. We sincerely hope you will take the time to study this issue with an open mind. While parkland should be enjoyed by all, I sincerely recommend and **STRONGLY** urge that the D Street Park be awarded to NEN. This would be the first park awarded to NEN in 66 years! About time!!!

Thank you for taking the time to read the submitted materials and give this issue the attention it deserves.

Jacqueline Schindele

NEN resident

970 15th Street NE

Salem, OR

P.S. For years, the City, State and Salem School District have greatly benefited from selling off, ceding and acquiring NEN's Park and recreational land. We've lost 5 areas of recreation which we'll never get back. We're long overdue for a new park! We can't quite understand why the City can gift us with an additional 80 people (1280 Center St. NE) but deny us a new park.