**Block 7 Testimony by Daniel Salomon, 10/1/2014 (Portland City Council)**

My name is Daniel Salomon. I am an environmental writer, Goose Hollow resident, and GHFL member. I am a Neurodiverse human on the Autism Spectrum. I hold a Master of Arts in Theological Research from Andover Newton Theological School and a Graduate Certificate in Science and Religion.

I relocated cross country from the East Coast to Portland to be close to the environmental and animal movements and live in a city with accessible public transportation because I live in Section 8 Housing Voucher program. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.4)

I am against the proposal to rezone Block 7 from residential to commercial which would allow Block 7 to be turned into a parking garage and apartment high rise. I respect Portland as an ecological success story but commercializing Block 7 would be environmentally devastating (Goal 8.9, Objective G).

As a Neurodiverse citizen, the stakes could not be higher. I need safety from violent crime to be able to live independently and a lower stress environment to manage my serious anxiety symptoms. This is not to mention the influx of additional air, water, noise, light, electromagnetic chaos and carbon pollution caused that would result from building a four story underground parking garage underneath and a nine story high rise apartment building. This project would negatively impact my already fragile nervous system if Block 7 were to be rezoned from residential to commercial.

I testified at the public hearing on Block 7 May 21, 2014 (LU 14-105474 CP ZC) specifically stating the challenges that a person with my disability would face should the Block 7 rezoning proposal be allowed.

Public speaking is a challenge for anyone. I overcame my fear to help others like me and my neighbors alike.

**Yet the "Recommendations of the Hearings Officer's" report excluded any mention of my Neurodiverse Autism. The applicant and the report itself failed to uphold Goal 9. We, too, are citizens.**

**Goal 9 Citizen Involvement (see below):**

Improve the method for citizen involvement in the on-going land use decision-making process and provide opportunities for citizen participation in the implementation, review and amendment of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Medical-scientific research on the human health benefits of preserving and restoring natural areas supports my concerns and those in the general population. Research conducted by Portlander forester Dr. Geoffrey Donovan and other specialists in connection with the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the Pacific Northwest Research Station, shows a positive correlation between preserving older trees and shrubs in cities and human survival and the ability to flourish in cities. These findings were presented at academic conferences in peer reviewed scientific journals. (Goal 8.14, Objectives A, B, C, E, H)

Donovan demonstrated through three different controlled scientific experiments:

- Affluent neighborhoods that had older trees and shrubs experienced a reduction in crime. But affluent neighborhoods that had younger trees and shrubs experienced an increase in crime. This is because according to Donovan criminals can easily hide in small trees and shrubs. (Goal 8.1).

- Affluent neighborhoods east of the Mississippi who lost their native and/or non-native ash trees of any species because of the emerald ash borer also experienced an increase in mortality due to cardiovascular disease. Donovan contends that the ash stands for all mature trees. All mature trees in affluent neighborhoods only (there are other mediating factors at work in low income neighborhoods) reduce stress connected to the immune system and improves local air quality. (Goal 8.3, Goal 8.9 (Objective G), Goal.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), Goal 8.20)

- In Portland neighborhoods (both affluent and economically diverse) that had more extensive tree canopy cover, women experienced greater reproductive success, while Portland neighborhoods that did not have as much of a tree canopy experienced higher reproductive failure. For the same reasons---mature trees reduce stress, strengthen the immune system and improve local air quality. (Goal 8.3, Goal 8.9 (Objective G) Goal.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), Goal 8.20)

Block 7 is home to many native mature trees and shrubs: three elder Oregon ashes (all with circumferences between 7-11 feet), one elder Pacific Dogwood (with a circumstance of over 4 feet), one mature Pacific Yew (with a circumference over 4 feet), three mature big leaf maples (with circumferences around 7 feet) and three mature Oregon white oaks (with circumstances between 6-8 feet), all native to Oregon.

Block 7 is also home to a stand of adult paper birches and bitter cherries, a younger black cottonwood, two younger Alaskan cypresses, a younger Lodgepole pine and a native, mature Pacific Rhodendron which is the state flower of Oregon, all native to Oregon.

Not to mention two native, declining, edible, fruit producing Black Huckleberries, a native, American Holly, a stand of Camellias and a hedgerow of Leland cypresses. (Goal 8.3, Goal 8.9 (Objective G), Goal 8.11, Goal 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), Goal 8.16 (Objectives B, C), 8.17 (Objectives A, B, C), 8.20)

This means that the mature trees and shrubs of Block 7 are irreplaceable to the health, safety and well-being of the people of Goose Hollow, an affluent neighborhood which has the most to lose in terms of our health and safety from ecological destruction. The mature trees and shrubs of Block 7 cannot be mitigated through the MAC replanting seedlings. This is not to mention that some experts contend that even “big, old and isolated” Oregon white oaks, like the two in Block 7, are even ecologically important, providing a “stepping-stone” for wildlife displaced by habitat fragmentation and climate disruption. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.23, Goal 8.24)

When I see Block 7, I see Block 7 interconnected to my historic Goose Hollow neighborhood and to the City of Portland, to the Columbia River watershed and to the Earth’s watershed. I also see Block 7 interconnected to my temperate rainforest

bioregion, to an underground stream and the ruined foundations of a floodplain and interconnected to Earth's atmosphere, the global climate justice struggle and the global sustainability strategy. When I see Block 7 remaining zoned as residential, I see less parking as an incentive for more people to utilize Portland's renowned public transportation system, to carpool, to bicycle and to walk, helping to reduce carbon emissions. When I see Block 7, I see Mill Creek possibility building around the mature native trees of Block 7. (Goal 8.13)

For these reasons, I need Block 7 to remain zoned as residential. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.3, Goal 8.4, Goal 8.96 (Objective G), 8.11, 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), 8.16 (Objectives B, C), 8.17 (Objectives A, B, C), 8.20, 8.23, 8.24)

Even if a nine story high rise or a small housing development were built on Block 7 under current residential zoning, residential zoning will lower the likelihood of a major increase in traffic in Goose Hollow. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.3, Goal 8.4, Goal 8.96 (Objective G), 8.11, 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), 8.16 (Objectives B, C), 8.17 (Objectives A, B, C), 8.20, 8.23, 8.24)

Block 7 is irreplaceable to the Goose Hollow neighborhood, the City of Portland and Planet Earth. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.3, Goal 8.4, Goal 8.96 (Objective G), 8.11, 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), 8.16 (Objectives B, C), 8.17 (Objectives A, B, C), 8.20, 8.23, 8.24)

I am open however to a nine story high rise apartment without the four story garage allowed under the current residential zoning with previsions to protect the mature native trees. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.3, Goal 8.4, Goal 8.98 (Objectives G), Goal 8.11, Goal 8.13, Goal 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), Goal 8.16 (Objectives B, C), Goal 8.1 (Objectives A, B, C), Goal 8.20, Goal 8.23, Goal 8.24)

Rezoning Block 7 from residential to commercial in a residential neighborhood which also includes cutting down mature native trees, betrays the spirit of Goal 8, where the goal of Goal 8 is to make the City of Portland more sustainable, just, communitarian and in harmony with the Earth, for everyone. (Goal 8.1, Goal 8.2, Goal 8.3, Goal 8.4, Goal 8.98 (Objectives G), Goal 8.11, Goal 8.13, Goal 8.14 (Objectives A, B, C, E, H), Goal 8.16 (Objectives B, C), Goal 8.1 (Objectives A, B, C), Goal 8.20, Goal 8.23, Goal 8.24)

Thanks very much!

**Ecological Survey of Block 7**

**Mammals:**

- One bat sited (native) (declining)
- Western grey squirrels (native) (declining)

**Birds:**

- Townsend's Warbler (native) (seasonal) (migratory to open habitats like Block 7)

- Ruby Crowned Kinglet (native) (seasonal) (migratory to open habitats like Block 7)
- American Robin (native) (seasonal) (migratory to open habitats like Block 7)
- American Crow (native)
- Steller's Jays (native) (seasonal)
- Western Scrub Jays (native) (resident)
- Song Sparrows (native) (resident)
- Spotted Towhee (native) (migratory) (neotropical)
- Northern Flicker (red shafted) (native) (migratory)
- Red-breasted Sapsucker (native) (seasonal)
- Anna's Hummingbird (native) (expanding range) (resident)
- Black Capped Chickadees (native) (resident)
- Bushtits (native) (seasonal)
- Cedar Waxwings (native) (seasonal)
- American Goldfinches (native)
- House Finches (native)
- Oregon Juncos (native)

**Trees:** All native trees

- Lodgepole Pine (child)
- Alaska Cedars (child)
- Big Leaf Maples (youth)
- Black Cottonwood (baby)
- Paper Birches (adult)
- Bitter Cherries (adult)
- Oregon White Oaks (mature)
- Oregon Ashes (elder)
- Pacific Dogwoods (elder)

**Shrubs:** Native and non native shrubs

- Black Huckleberries (native) (declining) (fruit producing)
- Pacific Rhodendron (native) (state flower) (mature)
- Pacific Yew (native) (mature)
- Leland Cypresses (non-native) (mature)
- English Holly (non-native) (mature)
- American Hollies (non-native) (1 mature, 2 babies) (good food source for native birds)
- Camellias (non-native) (mature)

**Native Wildflowers:** Important for preserving biodiversity and food for wildlife

- Palmate Coltsfoots (native) (locally common)
- Queen's Cups (native) (abundant)

**Exotic Wildflowers:** Positive role of providing food for native wildlife and ornamental value

- Saint John's Wort (non-native) (good for wildlife) (ornamental and medicinal value)
- Snow Drops (non-native) (ornamental value)

**Primitive Plants:** All native, extraordinarily biodiversity and sign of good air quality and ecosystem health

- Flat-Leaved Liverworts (native) (locally common)
- Hard Scale Liverworts (native) (uncommon)
- Magnificent Mosses (native) (locally common)
- Oregon Beaked Mosses (native) (locally common)
- Slender Beaked Mosses (native) (locally common)
- Twisted Ulota(s) (native) (locally common)
- Curly Thatch Mosses (native) (abundant)
- Lover's Mosses (native) (locally common)
- Yellow-Green Peat Moss (native) (abundant)
- Licorice Ferns (native) (locally common)
- Sword Ferns (native) (locally common)

**Lichens:** All native, high biodiversity, sign of good air quality and ecosystem health

- Dust Lichens (native) (multiple species) (common)
- Bark Barnacles (native) (common)

- Cladonia Scales (native) (common)
- Peppered Moons (native) (abundant)
- Pimpled Kidneys (native) (abundant)
- Ragbags (native) (two different colors) (common)
- Sulphur Stubble (native) (abundant)

**Historical:**

- Traces, yards, staircases, gardens, plants and property lines of demolished Queen Anne's houses belonging to Chinese immigrants dating back to possibly the end of the nineteenth century.
- One possible original outdoor staircase still useable today.
- Definitely in the watershed of Goose Hollow.
- Seed bank from an earlier floodplain Douglas fir lowland temperate rainforest has survived, explains presence of both wetland and rainforest plants, as well as why many wetland trees like the paper birches grow well here and are present in extraordinary numbers, including planted ones on surrounding streets.

**Other:**

- Extraordinary mushroom and fungous diversity including the Turkey Tail.
- Can see the moon and some stars in Block 7 on clear nights.
- "Dark space"----little to no light pollution in this area after dark.
- Fairly quiet after dark too.
- Not much in the way of litter, compared to more urban places in Goose Hollow.
- Used primarily as a dog park, communal social space and for informal athletic events.
- Home to a native bee colony.
- Saw at least two orb spider webs.
- Saw one migrating dragonfly.

**Bibliography for Further Reading:**


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- Esther M. Sternberg, M.D., Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being (USA: Harvard University Press, 2009 2010). Pay particular attention to "Chapter 11. Healing Cities, Healing World" 253 and "Chapter 12. Healing Gardens and My Place of Peace" 280.