



Collins View

October 4, 2017

To: Mayor Ted Wheeler
Commissioner Amada Fritz

The Board of Collins View Neighborhood Association is writing this letter to express our concerns regarding neighbor safety within Marshall Park and the River View Natural Areas. We request that action is taken to improve current safety monitoring, patrols and violation enforcement policies of illegal activities within nature parks and natural areas. We are specifically concerned about areas within Southwest Portland (Marshall Park Natural Area and River View Natural Area). An illegal-user activity recently came to our attention in which harm was done to a neighbor of Collins View while legally recreating in Marshall Park.

The event occurred on August 20, 2017, and involved an interaction between a pedestrian and a mountain biker within Marshall Park Natural Area where the pedestrian was injured while being run over by the mountain biker. The interaction was posted on Nextdoor by the pedestrian but has since been removed. (Attachment A). As mentioned in the Nextdoor post, the interaction was reported to the Portland Police (PPB report 17-270558) by the pedestrian, and a complaint from another neighbor of Collins View was filed with PPR of the incident.

This interaction drew wide criticism and outrage on social media with growing concerns for the lack of safety enforcement from PPR to monitor these illegal activities. As a neighborhood association, we also question how many of these interactions go unreported. The neighbors of Collins View are committed to the protection and conservation of the natural areas in and around the community. It is with great concern and alarm that we are informed through comments posted on Nextdoor of the increasing number of neighbors citing their reluctance to enter the natural areas.

We were also made aware that a neighbor wrote to the City and Commissioner Fritz. Commissioner Fritz replied thanking the neighbor for bringing this to her attention, that she would share this incident with her staff and gave best wishes to the injured pedestrian.

Some members of the board were also made aware of illegal trail vandalism in River View Natural Area in April of this year. The trail vandalism benefited a user group that is currently banned in River View. The illegal activity was reported to PPR via email with a response from PPR confirming the illegal activity and a corrective action of placing more signs. To our knowledge no signs were ever placed. If signs were placed, they were promptly removed.

Furthermore, the board cites a statement from the last River View PAC committee meeting (9/22/15) in which PPR staff is quoted as saying “and as of Oct. 1 (2015), there will be no dedicated Rangers in natural areas except Forest Park,” which is understandable given the size (Attachment B). However, that leaves most, if not all, of the parks, nature parks, natural areas, etc., within Southwest Portland unmonitored with no checks for illegal use, trail vandalism or illegal camping.

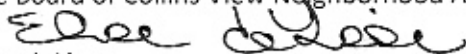
In conclusion, the board respectfully requests that Portland Parks and Recreation consider the following solutions to improve the safety conditions within the property that is owned by the citizens of Portland for legal recreational use:

- Increase funding for the Parks Ranger program during the next budget cycle to hire more rangers.
- Increase property patrols and place barriers in areas to detour illegal biking trail usage.
- Consider a working partner agreement between PPR and Portland Police for parks and natural areas in Southwest Portland.
 - We are aware that, as an example, Oregon State Parks entered into an agreement with Portland Police after a rash of car break-ins at Tryon Creek State Park to provide more patrols.
- Improve signage, although we recognize signs are easily removed, as seen in River View.
- Rearrange park rangers’ scheduled patrols to include at least one day a week for visits to some of the Southwest Portland parks, natural area and nature parks.

We appreciate your attention to making changes that provide a safer environment for the communities that would like to enjoy the parks and natural areas without concern for their personal safety. We are concerned that no action will result in illegal activities becoming more frequent and potentially more dangerous to the communities that access the parks. In addition, the damage to the environment will become costly to repair.

Sincerely,

The Board of Collins View Neighborhood Association



Elise deLisser

Chair

CC: Commissioner Nick Fish

SWNI Parks Committee

Commissioner Dan Saltzman

SWNI Public Safety Committee

Director Mike Abbate (PPR)

Marshall Creek NA

Chief Danielle Outlaw (PPB)

Arnold Creek NA

Sylvia Bogert, Executive Director SWNI