

To:

Mayor Walt Williams
Council President Dave Pierce
Councilor Bill Tuttle
Councilor Susie Lahsene
Councilor Chris Barhyte

CC:

City Manager Heather Kibbey

Subject:

Stark Boat Ramp

I would like to respond specifically to the “6 changes” (actually 7) posted on social media and from there copy-and-pasted into comments by several other individuals who may or may not have read the details. I am concerned that the City Council appears to be giving as much weight to these ill conceived ideas as a signed petition submitted last year and which took two council members several months to develop a rebuttal. It seems clear that some of the written and oral support for these were made by people who either have never visited the park and boat ramp or who only read the first few items proceeded by the “us-against-them” narrative. I am bewildered by those voicing concern about access to a natural space at the boat ramp but at the same time are advocating to pave over a park at the top of the ramp to put in a parking lot!

I would like to address a portion of these:

1 - Gate open during hours of operation:

- The intent of the gate was clear when it was installed: to enforce the operating hours and provide water safety for children in the park. It has been proven over years of research that simply having a fence and gate around outdoor pools dramatically reduces childhood drowning instances. If this were a public pool rather than a river, it would be required by law not just common sense. (Link: <https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=fencing%20around%20outdoor%20pools%20childhood%20drowning>)

- Medical emergency or trauma: The gate has been looked at by TVFR and water rescue personnel on numerous occasions. The city was provided a lock that emergency responders can unlock when the boat ramp is closed.

- ADA compliance: The ADA does not specify requirements for roadways. The ADA does specify requirements for access around boat ramps that have either a boarding slip or a transient dock, neither of which are present here. However, if the intent is to provide a ADA compliant pedestrian river access, leaving the gate open is not sufficient. The grade of the ramp would have to be adjusted, a level platform installed at the end and vehicular traffic would need to be restricted to emergency vehicles only. The park would simply no longer be a boat ramp.

- I would like to point out the cynical attempt to link ADA access to boat ramp access by claiming that simply leaving the gate open somehow makes it accessible.

4 and 5 - Survey boat ramp property and install 6-foot fence along both property lines. And, Restore native flora and fauna. The boat ramp resides exclusively in a WQRA with

strict requirements for any modifications. (Link: <https://www.cityofrivergrove.org/flood-ordinance>) Any fencing would be required to go through the existing regulatory process with permits and approvals. There is existing 4-foot fencing along the East side and the street level portion of the West side of the boat ramp. Any plans to modify the vegetation must be reviewed by the City Arborist and any actual modification must be supervised by the City. Any damage to adjacent properties would place the City at risk for liability. The City contracts with professionals who are licensed and bonded to maintain the other parks, and it should do so for the boat ramp. Organizing an unsupervised "volunteer day" is likely to result in damaging native habitat and neighboring property.

6 - A - Convert a portion of Lloyd Minor Park into a parking lot. It is a park. Public off-street parking is not allowed in an area zoned for residential use in the proposed development codes. The park resides in a floodplain. Again, it is a park.

6 - B - Install temporary toilets in Lloyd Minor Park. A quick survey of surrounding parks (Pilkington, Bryant Woods, Canal Acres, Heritage) shows no similar facilities. Pilkington Park is significantly larger, with many parking spots, playground, picnic shelter, dog park and sports fields, and yet it does not provide restroom facilities. If the City of Lake Oswego does not see them as a requirement for such a sizable park, how can the City of Rivergrove justify placing them in Lloyd Minor Park?

With regard to the boat ramp operating hours and claims that it closes too early. A look at the sunset and sunrise times for our area (Link: <https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/usa/portland-or>) when compared to the park operating hours shows that the current closing times are actually after sunset, except for two weeks at the end of April, (at the greatest difference, it closes less than 15 minutes before sunset on April 30th) and three weeks in the middle of Summer (it closes less than five minutes before sunset). In reality, except for the short times noted, the Rivergrove parks are open later than the parks in Tualatin (that are open only until sunset). Given this, current operating hours are in no way a hardship and enforcing them is appropriate.

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