

Letter to the Editor - Greater Park Hill Community

August 2, 2020

[News and Opinion](#)

Calling It As She Sees It

I take great offense to Kenneth Ho's letter in the July issue of *Greater Park Hill News* regarding the development (or not) of the Park Hill Golf Course.

As a principle in Westside Development Partners, the company that wishes to develop the golf course, Mr. Ho stands to make a great deal of money on the project. That's the business of business, I get that. Yet, in his letter, he's all about convincing us that Westside's primary motive is for the betterment of our community. I call bull.

He states that Westside supports a "civil, transparent community process." Well, the members of Save Open Space Denver *are* members of our community. They are neighborhood volunteers. They are our community activists. Listen to them. But, no, what Westside wants is the *appearance* of community input and, then, they will proceed in making as much money as they can off the project. Because why? Because Westside is not a charity: it is a business and the business of business is to make money.

Mr. Ho also refers to green gentrification. He refers to it as "such a big issue that there is an entire field of study around Parks-Related Anti-Displacement Strategies (PRADS)." He infers, I believe, that it's such a complicated thing we poor, lowly community members cannot possibly understand it. But we do understand it. We understand it all too well.

Further, the very article Ho suggests we read (nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/December/greening-without-gentrification/) says "for large park projects in low-income neighborhoods, planning for PRADS needs to begin at the same time as planning a park *before investors recognize the potential of new park projects.*" Let me repeat that: *before investors recognize the potential of new park projects.* (What? Did Mr. Ho not bother to read it? Or, did he think we wouldn't read it?)

In fact, the entire thrust of the article Mr. Ho cites is about "building parks for new wealthy residents who will replace longtime, low-income residents." Yep, and this is exactly what Westside intends to do: build a new, smaller park surrounded by new development. Development—mostly—for new, wealthy residents and this, as the article, states will, eventually, cause a gentrification of the surrounding area, displacing our low-income residents, displacing our neighbors.

What Mr. Ho, and Westside, cannot argue is that fact that our community *already* has a park. The Park Hill Golf Course is wide open space and we, as citizens, paid \$2 million for it not to be developed. And, that park is *already* surrounded by low-income residents. Already.

Thus, with parks-related anti-displacement strategies already in place, Ho's argument is null. What Westside wants to do is exactly what the article he cites cautions us against doing. Westside Development will be bringing in the wealthier residents and not only will we be losing open space but the current low-income residents will, eventually, be displaced. Who wins? Ho and Westside. Yet again, lots and lots of profit for the developer. I call bull.

Nan Young, Park Hill

Online Extra: *Members of Save Open Space Denver, the group that is working to preserve the Park Hill Golf Course land and city-owned conservation easement, also submitted a response to Mr. Ho's letter to the editor. The SOS Denver letter can be read at tinyurl.com/SOSDenverLetter.*

Mr. Ho's July letter can be read at greaterparkhill.org/uncategorized/letters-to-the-editor-30/