

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PARK HILL GOLF COURSE STEERING COMMITTEE

IN RESPONSE TO THE DOCUMENT TITLED:

“PARK HILL GOLF COURSE STEERING COMMITTEE VISION SUMMARY 2021 (OCTOBER 2021)”

We are members of the Park Hill Golf Course Steering Committee (SC), and we have met consistently since February 9, 2021, for eight Steering Committee meetings, two Open House sessions, one Community Workshop, and one Working Group. We also had to prepare for these meetings and were issued Study Materials in preparation for the meetings.

Together, we have invested over 270 hours of our own time in hopes that our voices would be heard, that our opinions would be respected, and that our participation would be fairly and accurately represented in any official communications from the Community and Planning Department (CPD) of the City of Denver (the City).

Unfortunately, that is not the case with the Visioning Process overall, nor the Summary that was published by CPD on its website.

Specifically, we have the following issues with the Summary as published:

1. The composition of the 27-member SC is heavily weighted in favor of development. In fact, the “Visioning Process” of “public engagement” really amounts to a public relations campaign to push the developer’s agenda. Nevertheless, we have tried to advocate for open space as a tiny, five-member minority.
2. The City’s clear and proven bias in favor of Westside and its development plans has negatively impacted the entire process.
3. Those of us who participated in the entire process did not have an opportunity to review or comment on the final Vision Summary sent to us on November 8, after it was already posted on the CPD website.
4. Although there were two community Open House sessions, the community was not provided an opportunity to give public comment. The lack of public engagement in this process was problematic in general. CPD attempted to quiet those in the community whose visions differed from theirs and those of Westside **by not allowing public comment at all** during the SC meetings. But through our protest, CPD eventually allowed a mere 10 minutes after each SC meeting for public comment. The lack of public engagement **seen in public** -- not behind closed doors in what CPD referred to as community navigator sessions -- shows a lack of respect for the residents of Denver and further demonstrates a flawed visioning process full of bias and favoritism for the developer Westside.
5. The attorney-expert invited by the City of Denver to discuss conservation easements clearly explained that the fundamental purpose of a conservation easement is to perpetually preserve and protect the land’s conservation values. Unsurprisingly, CPD continued the visioning process with predominantly pro-development narratives. As well, CPD and the City of Denver did not address whether it is “impossible” per Colorado statute, due to changed conditions on or

surrounding the PHGC land, to continue fulfilling the easement's open space and recreational conservation purposes.

6. There has never been serious discussion on the SC of the value of 155 acres of open, green, park space to urban life. Its role in cleaning our air, water, and soil; restoring natural habitat; cooling the planet; offering residents access to nature and healthy respite from the stresses of modern, urban life; have never been considerations of the SC. The developer's agenda and interests have always dominated and guided the discussions.
7. The SC has never considered the future development that will inevitably occur near the 40th/Colorado RTD station, and its TOD possibilities; nor near 38th/Holly; nor land surrounding PHGC. There will be a huge increase in residents around PHGC: Why has the need for open space for all these new residents not been considered?
8. We know there is affordable housing planned at 40th/Colorado and 38th/Holly. These planned affordable housing projects should be part of the SC discussions, but never have been.
9. There are many more severe flaws in this process and the Summary that are too numerous to detail here.

We are citizen-representatives volunteering our time to be on this SC because we care passionately about our neighborhoods and this great City. We are deeply concerned about the way this process has unfolded, and the misleading and false representations made by CPD in the Summary.

Furthermore, it is apparent that CPD is doing the bidding of the developer, Westside, and consciously ignoring, sidelining, and dividing residents surrounding PHGC, and residents of the City of Denver as a whole. This is evidenced by the recent election results for Initiatives 301 and 302, where Denver voters clearly stated their concern about developing existing open space with a conservation easement. And yet, it seems the City and Westside are doubling down to push their development plans, ignoring the lessons from November 2. Sadly, the Summary in its current form furthers their agenda.

It is our sincere hope that CPD and the City administration will respect and fairly represent our voices in this important discussion about the future of this vital area of Denver.

We insist that our comments here be included in official City documents for this project, including posting on the City's web page for this project. These comments must be part of the official record and documentation for this project.

Thank you for your consideration,

PHGC Visioning Process Steering Committee Members:

Rachel Coates



David Martin



Drew Dutcher

Shanta Harrison



Sandra Robnett

