

Statement "for" Issue 9 submitted by Fran Mentch

On May 3rd you can vote for a public park to be built on the 1.07 acres of city owned land at Meadowbrook-Lee. Plans for the public park include restrooms, water fountain, free Wi-Fi, small stage, trees, plants, and small play area for children. The developer's "park" is one-third acre and will have none of these amenities, other than trees and plants. The developer refused to agree to put the restrooms and play area in the "park" when asked to do so by the planning commission. You can watch this interchange online.

Will the PUBLIC park be built when Issue 9 passes? Yes. The City will be obligated by the initiative to do so. Lots of people want this park. and we will work with the City to raise the funds (private and public) to build the Park; the city will maintain it. Based on the City's maintenance costs for other parks, maintaining this one will cost between 20,000-\$40,000 a year, depending on activities held there. The City just hired (for \$250,000) a consultant to manage the \$38.8 million in ARPA funds we were awarded. City gave Future Heights \$50,000 last year in Community Development funds. The money is there. The park will be built.

This is the community that created Cain Park. This is the community that prides itself on its creativity, the many artists that choose to live here and its progressive views. We can and will build the park when Issue 9 passes. Don't we deserve a beautiful PUBLIC space?

When Issue 9 passes will the city be taken to court by the developer? No. If this were a real threat the City would have added a paragraph in the development agreement before they passed it. They would have protected all of us from this risk; they were well aware of the initiative. Some of them, to their credit, even signed it. The City describes their relationship with Flaherty & Collins as a partnership.

We support the businesses on Cedar Lee. The ones currently there and the ones that will come along in the next 5, 10 and 20 years. All businesses on Lee could be hurt not helped by the proposed development. The success of the development is not inevitable. The developer offers no guarantees. University Heights did not think the University Square garage would end up as it did. There are three big problems with the development as proposed.

There's a parking problem. Total public parking behind Cedar Lee will be reduced from 541 spaces to 152 spaces. All but 164 surface parking spaces behind the Cedar-Lee will be eliminated. The parking garage holds 377 cars, but by agreement 225 spaces are reserved for tenants.

There's a traffic problem. Cedar and Lee are congested during rush hour and Top of the Hill and other apartments are coming online later this summer. And, don't forget the high school traffic.

There's a money giveaway problem. This is the result of our governance. The Mayor and City Council voted for the developer to lease 5 acres for \$10 a year (and lease is transferable), and the developer has the right, in year 40 to buy all 5 acres of this prime commercial property for \$10.

We need a better plan. Let's put forth the effort to go beyond a mediocre solution to an excellent solution. We can have both a 1.07-acre public park and a great new development on the 5-acre site-a much better plan than the one now on the table. To protect your wealth and the vitality of the Cedar-Lee district please endorse YES ON ISSUE 9! Thank you.