

Board:

I write to you as a fellow homeowner to provide an update on Seger Park and the interest groups seeking to modify the park. I believe all of us have been receiving the updates from our President regarding Friends of Seger Park Playground (friendsofseger.org - FOSPP) on their meetings to discuss playground equipment for the west side re-design plan which is phase 1 of their 4 phase plan which can be currently found on their website.

Most of you received an email a few months ago containing a link to a letter written in regard to this organization's failure to communicate their goals in our park with the local community effectively and fairly. It also included the issue surrounding their process for concluding what they envisioned in our park (their primary plan) without a proper assessment from the homeowners, a full understanding the historical issues and changes as they relate to park activities and park users.

As a result of this letter sent to Councilman DeCicco's office, the 200 flyers sent to the local community communicating FOSSP's activities and a request from a person at the Department of Public Property to FOSPP's co-president Sharri Horowitz to meet with us, FOSPP requested a meeting with myself and our board representative to discuss our concerns. We finally were afforded a meeting after years of being ridiculed by members of this group and their blatant ignoring of members of our community and our board. We felt we finally had an opportunity to make headway and hopefully have FOSPP become an inclusive and open organization welcoming community input.

Approximately 2 months ago, Our President and I met with FOSPP's co-presidents. The result of this meeting included an assurance that modifying the east side of the park without our input

was not going to happen. One of the biggest sticking points was that FOSPP and their partner (Seger Park Advisory Council - SPAC) decided to support a primary plan which included adding more basketball. We just felt that with the historical issues and changing demands of the local community in no way under any circumstances could warrant a plan to add more of something which was already in abundance and problematic. Yet, they have ignored our requests for years, have failed to listen to the City of Philadelphia when they reduced basketball in the park, ignored our councilman's letter to remove basketball and add more tennis, and like clockwork, ignored the local community sentiment on this matter. Both co-presidents expressed that they understood the problems the city has had with the basketball courts historically, did understand our Councilman's desire to make change that worked in the interest of all of his constituents, and they told us that NO changes were in their plans for the east side of the park and that adding the additional court in that area was "off the table". We suggested they change the plans they are distributing to reflect what they are asserting in our meeting. That never happened. Further, the city has confirmed that the plan was already brought to them by FOSPP. Does anyone just bring an idea that has not been finalized to the City of Philadelphia for a public park re-design to request planning while it contains plan elements which they clearly stated are "off the table" and not part of their design plans?

Last month, one of our homeowners who is a long-standing resident and well-respected member of our community, attended an FOSPP meeting which they marketed as a playground equipment meeting (for the west side area) and much to our homeowner's surprise, they re-enforced their PRIMARY plan support which is currently being freely distributed on their website. This plan still states exactly the opposite of which they discussed in the meeting with myself and our President. Adding more basketball is still part of their PRIMARY plan approximately 1 month after our meeting with them. It continues to be freely

available for download on their website in the OUR GOALS section.

I sent an email expressing my outrage that they would blatantly tell one story to us and another to others AND, continue to make this plan available in what they claim is a conflict of their true intentions. Once again, they have ignored the highly valued stakeholders in this park, the homeowners who live on and immediately around this park so they can execute their personal vision of a park using our public space. Our President also expressed his concerns over their direct contradictions in statements made to selective groups and their continued support of a plan they claim is not really their plan but continue to distribute it online to all visitors. Make sense? No , it does not unless they are not telling the truth.

An email sent late last week from the FOSPP board president does state that they understand now how confusion over what they are saying and what their freely, distributed, written plan which they submitted to the city is saying could occur and will put it on the agenda for their July meeting to discuss. We feel that that since they have recognized how this confusion has occurred, that removing the plan immediately from their website and sending out an email to their mailing list explaining the situation is a reasonable request. I feel they can meet in July to clarify their position and re-post their written plans with their formal conceptual idea, which aligns with their "true intentions". We are waiting for a response but we will not hold our breath.

This issue is not about basketball courts, it is about a small and private group of individuals who decided they will create a facade that they are here to help the local community, and that their goal is to plan and implement a design in our public space with full community input. Yet, their actions describe a group who is seeking to plan a public park re-design in their own vision while

methodically eliminating any opposition in the community by simply selling this "community group" facade to the city officials who make the final decision. We find it very difficult to believe that this continuing disregard and disrespect of us, the homeowners, is a perpetual line of misunderstandings. Their partner, The Seger Park Advisory Council (SPAC) who operates as the local voice for the Department of Recreation, has two FOSPP's board members as voting members. SPAC has a long-standing history of operational by-law violations, which our city has continued to address, and has a history of ignoring the local community in lieu of their own self-interest. It is no wonder they are partnered with FOSPP, who is exhibiting these same traits.

Below is an excerpt from an email they sent us:

"She said that seeing the conceptual plan posted on our website gave you and other members of your homeowners association the impression that we were promoting the master plan as "THE PLAN" for the park. That was never our intention. We now can see how you and other members were left with that false perception. It never occurred to us that anyone would take the conceptual plan as a literal plan, given our repeated statements meant to clarify this point. We apologize"

AND

*"We have always said that our intention has been to use the conceptual plan as a guideline for the improvements to the playground and that **we never intended to use the plan to alter the East Side** of the park or to promote one plan for the East side over another. We have been forthright with you from the beginning about our mission and our intentions" (read their primary plan online in OUR GOALS at friendsofseger.org, clear contradiction).*

It is very difficult NOT to recognize the problem that exists when you make varying verbal claims based on who is in the crowd that contradict what you are publishing and REFUSING to cease distributing to the public. Yet, even right now, this plan they claim they recognize is misrepresenting their intentions still remains on their website. Once again, they have used the delay tactic called "the board needs to discuss it". I think we all know removing a link from a website is not a huge board matter and simply can be approved via an email vote due to the nature of the situation and the fact that others continue today to freely download a plan which FOSPP, themselves, asserts repeatedly to not be accurate. Also, they continue to claim they have been forthright yet, they call their one plan the PRIMARY plan and were quoted as saying "our preferred plan is the Primary Plan" in their May meeting which was attended by one of our homeowners. And, they simply expressed that we were using hearsay because I was not in attendance. This is clearly an effort to discredit yet another homeowner who heard the same conflicting message we have been hearing for years. The truth is finally coming to light. AND, not surprisingly, it was left out of their minutes for the May meeting. It is so clear that they are not forthright, not clear in their intentions yet they continue to write letters, which includes rhetoric preaching openness and fairness (facade). Their continued effort is to maintain this facade to the city officials that presents the image that they are working in the interest of this community. They think we are fools and think they are going to walk into our neighborhood, ignore us and do as they please. It is important we let them know that this will not be happening.

I ask you to simply write an email to the Co-Presidents of FOSPP and express that you desire a full accounting of their design plans which we can consider their formal position. I ask you to review their document at FriendsofSeeger.org - in their OUR GOALS section, and see for yourself the contradictions. I ask you to ask

them to remove the plans from their website if these plans are not an actual depiction of their intentions and post a more accurate depiction of their goals.

Presidents of Friend of Seger Park Playground:

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Best Regards,