

To: Port of Port Townsend Board of Commissioners
From: Gateway Poplar Alliance

Re: Lower Sims Gateway and Tree Management Project (Project)

7-13-22

The following points are intended to clarify some misunderstandings and misrepresentations that have come to our attention about the Project and efforts Gateway Poplar Alliance has engaged in to retain the poplars on Lower Sims Way:

- All the agency boards adopted resolutions calling for the removal of all the poplars before there was a meaningful public process.
- The entire so-called city supervised "public" process came after the decision and a preferred alternative was chosen.
- There was no open invitation to the public to participate in the city's "technical" process of what amounts to a revision of the 1993 Gateway Development Plan. We have never been invited to serve on the city's "stakeholder" technical advisory committee. Furthermore, we don't formally represent the Port Townsend community and have never claimed we do. We are not in a position to make agreements on behalf of the community.
- Since the beginning of this year we have met three times with Eron Berg and once with PUD manager Kevin Streett. Otherwise, since last year, no other agency manager and only 4 elected officials have met with us once each and none of the managers and only one elected official formally answered any of the emails, questions or information we requested from them.
- The majority of the members of the committees that are developing for or will present to the city council their findings about revisions to the "Flats" transportation corridor of the city's Gateway Development Plan are composed of a majority of members who, before they were appointed, or in the meetings of the city boards on which they serve, were known to be in favor of the removal of the poplars. This is a matter of public record.
- We have always supported the port boatyard expansion project, including the undergrounding of the overhead PUD high voltage wires.
- The city has no legitimate economic development plan regarding this Project. The city to this day has provided no justification for its participation.
- We have reviewed the public records and found what are incontestable misrepresentations about the need to remove the poplars by one agency manager, which was supported by the other two with their silence. In a public presentation to his board since that removal statement, that manager has expressed a 180° change in his position and declared there is no need to remove the poplars to underground the overhead wires.
- There never was a need to remove the poplars.

Presented on behalf of Gateway Poplar Alliance

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