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Residents' Response to the Parks and Trees Committee's 7/2/23 Assessment & Recommendation of Bayview Park Garden Pr...

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To: president@nvcmaine.org, jmetcalf@nvcmaine.org, mtirrell@nvcmaine.org & 9 more

To the NVC Board of Overseers and the NVC Parks and Trees Committee (Vicky: Please share with your committee prior to tomorrow's meeting):

We offer the following in response to the Parks and Trees Committee's 7/2/23 Assessment & Recommendation to approve a large garden in the lower part of Upper Bayview Park. This garden will be approximately 40 feet long and 20 feet wide, with 16 species of plants some of which will grow to 15' tall and 12' wide. This garden would cover 66% of the width of this section of Upper Bayview Park, essentially blocking views Baysiders have enjoyed for decades.

Precedent

It is hard to image that we would sanction such a large privately developed garden in our public park. Approval could set an unwelcome precedent. How could the Overseers not approve other folks' requests for similar gardens in their front yards in one or more of our parks? Such approvals would exponentially increase the cost to Village taxpayers.

Cost

Steve, now in his 70s, has volunteered to maintain his garden for 10 years, but he presents no guarantee he will perform. Nor does he speak about what standard of maintenance he will follow. Any undertaking this large by a private citizen acting, effectively, as a contractor should provide a performance bond or should escrow sufficient funds to ensure taxpayers are not burdened with early unanticipated costs. Ultimately, the Village taxpayers will bear the full cost of maintaining the garden. The Overseers have a fiduciary responsibility to insure performance and advise taxpayers what the additional cost will be. NVC is headed for another year of double-digit tax increases. We would doubt this garden would be on the list of future undertakings for the Overseers to consider with all the important priorities they currently have before them.

Nuisance

Despite what has been stated in Steve's proposal and in the Parks and Trees Committee's "recommendation" of 7/2/23, a simple Google search shows a number of the plantings are very attractive to deer. For instance, the specified species of Hydrangea is, and we quote, "a tempting treat to deer." Not only is it likely these five Hydrangea will be eaten by the growing number of deer that graze all season long now in Upper Bayview Park, but they will also create an unsightly mess of this large segment of the garden.

Process

To our knowledge, this proposal has never been presented by Steve to either the Parks and Trees Committee or to the Overseers, so the committee and the community at large would have an opportunity to ask questions of him and more clearly understand his proposal. This proposal should have an open full airing.

Please seriously consider this letter and our previous letters on the subject when you consider this proposal, and publish all pro and con comments so all taxpayers can see the various opinions, not just those of the committee.

Respectfully,

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