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BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

In the Matter of the Appeal of PROTECT VOLUNTEER PARK., of a Determination of Non-Significance Certificate of Approval issued by the Department of Construction and Inspections for Construction in Volunteer Park	Hearing Examiner File: MUP 17-015 Department Reference: <u>3024753</u> DECLARATION OF ELLEN HECHT
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I, ELLEN HECHT, declare as follows:

1. I am a resident of the City of Seattle, Washington and a member of Protect Volunteer Park. I live in the vicinity of Volunteer Park. I am over the age of 18 years and am competent to testify herein. I make this declaration based on my personal knowledge.
2. I am writing as a member of Protect Volunteer Park to share my view of the significant negative impacts that I will experience due to the SAM's desire to expand into Volunteer Park.
3. One of the driving forces for my move to Seattle from New York, 27 years ago, was access to nature and an improved

quality of life. When I found a home on Capitol Hill, three blocks from Volunteer Park, I thanked my lucky stars. As a former Central Park runner, having another Olmsted park practically in my backyard made it seem that my dreams had already materialized.

4. Over these almost three decades, I have been an avid user of the park and enjoyed so many of its gifts.

5. I run in the park an average of 1-2 times weekly and my running route includes both the park's roadways and its paths. My immediate concerns are about how the construction vehicles and road/path closures will impact my ability to do this during construction. More serious are my concerns about the future. I see no evidence from the traffic studies that any mitigation of parking and increased traffic challenges in the park and neighborhood will occur. I already avoid running-- or even walking- in the park on days like SAAM's first Saturdays as, even in winter, there is a virtual procession of cars gridlocked within the park. This would become a permanent negative impact to me, forcing me to choose routes on city side streets that, in addition to lacking the serenity and beauty of the park, include hazards such as broken sidewalks and traffic.

6. Because of Volunteer Park, I've become an avid lover of trees. I've taken more than one tree walk through it with local experts and I retain a copy of the tree map to occasionally refresh my memory. As a recent King County Master Gardener, who has considered becoming a Seattle Tree Ambassador, I cannot fathom the irresponsibility which the city is exhibiting by allowing this project to go forward and especially without measures in place for protection of the specimen trees. Loss of these significant trees, that are undoubtedly in harm's way from the construction and after-effects of the extension's shading and other climactic events, will be a huge deprivation to me personally. The trees offer seasonal beauty, cooling effect in summer, a quiet spot for a book read or picnic and valuable bird habitat. In addition, I enter the park at the southeast entrance off of 15th and, since the glass-block building will be right there in what is currently a welcoming greenspace, the impact will

change to create a jarring first impression.

7. My time spent in New York, and subsequent visits back there, causes me to appreciate Seattle more all the time. And it is why I know what impact loss of valuable green space has on me. I suffer greatly with the idea of giving up even one square inch of green space in an urban area and see it as a huge failing on my part- as a global citizen- that I am not doing enough to increase these iconic places that are already in our midst.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated this 11 day of May, 2017, at Seattle, Washington.



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