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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: 3024753

DECLARATION OF WILLIAM
BAKAMIS

I, WILLIAM BAKAMIS, 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. In 1988, my family moved to Capitol Hill (in Seattle, Washington) in large part because our new house would be near Volunteer Park, a large open Olmstead *landscape* park. We knew of the Park from my grandparents (who in 1924 immigrated to the Seattle area) and my parents and who had enjoyed the views, vistas, and areas for family events. Regularly after church at St. Demetrios, the family would go to Volunteer Park's east side and stroll and picnic. My grandparents

1 did this because they were poor and didn't have the money to visit and enter the Seattle Art Museum
2 (SAM) which charged to enter the building. Also, after funerals/internments of my relatives who are
3 buried in the cemetery that shares the Parks northern border we would often walk in the park's east
4 side recalling more pleasant memories.

5
6 3. Over these past three decades, my family and I visit and have visited the Park
7 numerous times weekly. On the east side of the Park's Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM) we have
8 picnicked, had birthday parties, sledded and run with the children and, as we aged, strolled in the area
9 that is proposed to be used for a massive expansion of the SAAM.

10 4. We enjoy and have enjoyed the now unobstructed lengthy views north and south and
11 east from the SAAM building as well as the beautiful plantings, trees and large open lawns. We have
12 also enjoyed regularly seeing the numerous varieties of birds, squirrels, raccoons, butterflies and other
13 animals that use the park. Seeing this urban wildlife has helped us educate our children and their
14 friends, and our use and enjoyment of the Park has increased over the decades as the City has grown
15 in population (and the City of Seattle has not been able to create Park open space to keep pace with
16 the growing population).

17
18 5. While we were not poor like my immigrant grandparents, it has been nice to enjoy the
19 outdoors year-round (in the wind, rain, sun, and snow) for free (although often we did have to walk to
20 the north side of the Park by the wading pool to use the rest rooms because the SAM staff still required
21 you to pay to gain entry to the building to use their bathrooms). If the SAM's proposed expansion of
22 the SAAM occurs, our enjoyment of Volunteer Park's open space east of the SAAM will be drastically
23 and negatively diminished.

24
25 6. The open space where the SAM proposes to take public park land for its expanded new
26 building will be shaded for most of the day and our morning and evening strolls and picnics beginning

1 in mid-morning in the summer will detrimentally effected as the scarce sun coming into the area for
2 picnics and fun will be in perpetual shadow or darkness (depending on the season). It is doubtful that
3 the birds and urban wildlife will be attracted to the 3-story 50-foot building that will tower over people
4 who will run, walk or use the east side of Volunteer Park.
5

6 7. In addition, there will be much less of an open space environment/landscape feel to
7 this area and much more of a massive building in the park intrusive feel. This will be exacerbated as
8 more and more visitors have to share much less park open space (75,000 new Seattle resident were
9 added to the city in the past 5 years and Mayor Murray has publicly announced the City will grow by
10 between 75,000 and 100,000 more residents from 2017-2022). These tens of thousands of new
11 residents will also share public park open space that SAM has proposed to reduce.
12

13 8. Over these years as we have lived on Capitol Hill in Seattle, we have paid city and
14 state taxes to support open space in the City's parks including open space in Volunteer Park (especially
15 for the east side of the park that we use regularly); and we have voted in the City, supported and
16 campaigned for additional City and state taxes to support Volunteer Park and other parks and for the
17 restoration (not expansion) of the SAAM.
18

19 9. It is perplexing that my and my family's standing to object to and challenge a legally
20 insufficient proposed DNS ruling by a City of Seattle staff member is being challenged when we have
21 resided in Seattle for over 29 years; voted on City matters and for Seattle and state leaders during this
22 period; paid City and state taxes during this period; participated in City and state politics and in City-
23 recognized community organizations (including serving as Vice President of the Capitol Hill
24 Community Council); participated in City political campaigns during this period; and used Volunteer
25 Park, supported it and donated funds to improve Volunteer Park's children's play area during this
26 period.

