

February 20, 2025

Dear Councillors Fontaine and Minhas,

We are residents of Queen's Park and are writing to you regarding the landscaping work that has been conducted on, and is being proposed for, the wide Fifth Street and Second Street median boulevards in Queen's Park. It is our understanding that you are interested in hearing from the community regarding the changes to these two boulevards, so we thought we should pass along our concerns.

### **Appropriateness of the Design for a Heritage Conservation Area**

This work on the median started at Third Avenue and Fifth Street in 2023 after the completion of the new tree plantings along this median. Sylvain Martel, the City's Superintendent of Urban Forestry, and Erika Mashig, Deputy Director of Parks, have indicated that the City's plan is to continue this new "wildlife corridor" to the boulevard on Fifth Street all the way up to Sixth Avenue, and to the Second Street Boulevard. Martel discussed this plan in a letter to a Fifth Street resident, and Mashig confirmed the plan at a recent Council Meeting. These changes to the boulevard include (a) removal of all the grass, (b) the replacement of grass with a random placement of shrubs similar to what one typically finds in woodlands, (c) the dumping of huge amounts of leaves, and (d) the introduction of logs to form multiple, awkwardly placed, pathways.

Our view, and that of many residents in the neighbourhood, is that the new design is aesthetically unappealing and unsuitable for a boulevard in a Heritage Conservation Area. Although the earlier tree plantings on the median were welcomed, the more recent activities are spoiling the ambience of what was, historically, a lovely traditional-style boulevard. Importantly, the new boulevard design seems inconsistent with the City's own Statement of Significance of the Queen's Park Neighbourhood within the Official Community Plan (OCP).<sup>1</sup> According to this statement, one of the key features of this Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) is that it is "valued for its aesthetic significance" and for the way it conveys a "unique sense of time and place." In particular, this document highlights how the "assortment of grand homes and grand streets with treed boulevards," in particular the "Second and Fifth Street boulevards," provides a "sense of elegance and permanence" to our special community. Moreover, the OCP stresses how the streetscapes, which include the traditional treed boulevards, "encapsulate the essence of the neighbourhood" by contributing to the "endurance", "patina" and "aesthetic quality" of the community. These sentiments are echoed in other areas of the OCP (i.e., the lengthy discussion of the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area Policy;<sup>2</sup> the detailed HCA Landscape Design Guidelines<sup>3</sup>), as well as in the Cultural Landscapes Section of the widely used Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.<sup>4</sup> This latter document highlights that historic districts represent cultural landscapes, and hence deserve special attention when any changes to their format are undertaken. As well, the Fifth Street boulevard is listed on the Canada Historic Places Register.<sup>5</sup>

To sum up, we believe that the City's plan to completely revamp the traditional landscaping design style of these historic median boulevards should be abandoned or extensively revised to fit the standards for an HCA that were approved by the City and widely supported by the community. The rustic woodlands style may fit well into less populated wilderness type areas of the City (e.g., the ravine, or even forested areas of Queen's Park itself). However, the median boulevards within the Heritage Conservation Area deserve a more traditional, structured, and elegant approach that complements, and is respectful to, the beautiful gracious historic homes situated along these streets (Second St. and Fifth St.). Although both of these boulevards were traditionally composed of large trees and sod, there are ways to beautify and upgrade these boulevards without returning them to a woodland or forest-like state (see attached image of Fifth St in the 1930s that reveals a more formal organized layout). One need only look at Friendship Garden or the Rose Garden to get a feel for how public landscaping can be done in a way that respects the heritage of the community. Although we have heard recently that, due to numerous complaints, the large logs will be removed, this action seems like "lipstick on a pig."

## **Lack of Consultation with Residents and Community Groups Prior to Starting the Project**

The complete reinvention of two boulevards that represent an important landscape feature in the HCA would seem to constitute a major project. Yet, prior to beginning this work, there was a complete lack of full consultation with the residents who live along these boulevards, the Residents Association, the Heritage Commission, the Heritage Preservation Society and Queen's Park residents. Indeed, the Councillor liaison for our neighbourhood only recently visited the site and stated she was unaware of these changes until she was recently notified by the residents association. Although Mashig stated at the Council meeting that staff will do a better job sending out work notifications prior to beginning work, a work notification is not full consultation. Work notifications occur after it is decided that work will occur. Full consultation would have allowed the City to evaluate whether a project should occur, or continue, at all.

Although we have heard recently that, after considerable blowback, the City now plans to get feedback from residents, we have not been notified what form this evaluation will take (Public meeting? Survey?), nor who will be included in this evaluation (Residents of Fifth Street? Residents of Second Street and Fifth Street? Residents of Queen's Park?). As well, we have been told that the City will wait a whole year to consult with residents so that the community can come to appreciate the aesthetics of the new format. Having seen the first section of the boulevard redesign begun in 2023, many residents have already had more than a year to evaluate the general rustic design and they really don't need another year to come to appreciate its "beauty." The delay in consultation does not seem necessary. In sum, the consultation process, thus far, has been very inadequate.

In addition to the lack of prior consultation for this project, it is also worth noting that the City staff's communications to the public when queried about this project have been very unclear. Sylvain Martel indicated in a letter to a resident that the City plans to continue the "wildlife corridor" all the way to Sixth Avenue. Mashig stated clearly at the Council Meeting, numerous times, that the City plans to proceed with naturalization changes to both the Fifth Street boulevard and the Second Street boulevard as part of the Biodiversity Strategy to create two wide wildlife corridors. She made no mention of full consultation with the neighbourhood at this meeting, and focused on the benefits of the current and planned work on these two wide boulevards. In a recent letter to a resident, however, she states that the boulevard changes on "a small portion of the median" on Fifth Street were only a small scale "pilot project" for a "pollinator garden." This new portrayal of the project as a mere pilot project seems rather different than her public position at the Council meeting. She also now states that no additional work *on Fifth Street* will occur until evaluation by the neighbourhood, and that there are "currently no plans or work scheduled for naturalizing the *Second St.* median." Given all the inconsistent messaging, and what seems like some back peddling, isn't it time to explain to residents what exactly is happening here? Does the last statement from Mashig mean that the Second Street boulevard plan previously outlined to the public has been abandoned, as some may interpret it, or do Second Street residents have to wait on consultation regarding Fifth Street a year from now to know whether or not the original plan for Second Street will be enacted? The community deserves clear messaging about the project. It would be greatly appreciated if the City could send a letter to Queen's Park residents clarifying the situation given that many people believed what they were told at the Council meeting. This letter should describe the original plan for both boulevards that was presented to residents at Council and in letters to residents (i.e., the creation of wildlife corridors all along Second and Fifth Street boulevards as part of Step 7 of the Biodiversity Strategy), the changes to this plan (i.e., that the boulevard changes are now part of a little pilot project, the future of which depends greatly on a high level of positive community support), and the precise details of how consultation and evaluation will occur.

## **Justification for the New Boulevard Design**

City staff have attempted to offer justifications for the new boulevard design, but we do not find them particularly compelling. First, in his letter to a resident, the superintendent indicated that one main reason for "naturalizing" the median boulevard and creating pathways is to "enable people to access nature which is proven to have mental and physical health benefits." It seems to us that it is quite unlikely that people are going to use these trails for a mental and physical health stroll given that (a) Fifth Street is a busy street where cars come speeding along on both sides of the median, (b) there is easy access to woodland type parks within walking distance, and (c) there are lovely sidewalks adjoining these streets with their own treed boulevards. We walk this neighbourhood daily and have rarely seen anyone walking on the trails on the median boulevard, some of which have been installed for over a year.

Second, at the Council meeting, the deputy director stated that we need a corridor for the bees and other wildlife. That is all well and good, but these two boulevards are surrounded by homes, many of which have expansive gardens containing all sorts of plants that are attractive to pollinators. It is not clear to us why a pollinator corridor is needed in this particular location in the City. It seems to us that we already have one - the homes along these boulevards contain gardens that include most of the plants listed on the City of Vancouver's pollinator plant list.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, if the City is intent on adding some pollinator plants to the boulevard, it would seem there is a way to do this that fits with a more traditional landscaping style. The City has indicated that the boulevard changes are part of its Biodiversity Initiative. It is unclear to us why this initiative should take precedence over the OCP's Heritage Conservation Area requirements, requirements that focus on a traditional style, not a woodland style.

Third, Mashig highlighted at the Council meeting that maintenance costs will go down with the current naturalization approach because lawn cutting is reduced with the removal of the sod. But the lawn only requires cutting during a portion of the year - creating and maintaining what the City is now, after many complaints, calling a "pollinator garden," will surely take up more resources than cutting the lawn for a portion of the year, especially if extended. To look well maintained, pollinator gardens require a great deal of work.

## **Conclusion**

We appreciate everything you have done so far to make the community aware of the boulevard situation, and hope that you will be able to act as a voice for those residents who wish to preserve the boulevards that form an essential part of the character of our neighbourhood. The "crowded, rustic woodland" design that has been thrust on the neighbourhood does not seem consistent with the OCP as it pertains to Queen's Park. Nor is it respectful to the history of our neighbourhood and the many current residents of Queen's Park who embrace, and work diligently to adhere to, the Queen's Park Landscape Design principles. Thanks very much for considering the issues we have discussed here.

Sincerely,  
Cathy McFarland and Gary Mockler  
Second Street Residents

<sup>1</sup> **Statement of Significance of the Queen's Park Neighbourhood in the Official Community Plan (OCP)**

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Schedule\\_B\\_to\\_Official\\_Community\\_Plan\\_SOS.pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Schedule_B_to_Official_Community_Plan_SOS.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> **Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area Policy (Schedule A of the Official Community Plan)**

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Queens\\_Park\\_HCA\\_June2017\\_Consolidated\\_April2023.pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Queens_Park_HCA_June2017_Consolidated_April2023.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> **Landscape Design Guidelines for the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area**

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Section\\_C\\_Landscape\\_Design\\_Guidelines\\_\(June\\_2017\).pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/Section_C_Landscape_Design_Guidelines_(June_2017).pdf)

<sup>4</sup> **The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes>

<sup>5</sup> **The Canada Historic Places Register**

<https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=16716>

<sup>6</sup> **City of Vancouver: Support for Bees and Butterflies**

<https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/support-bees-and-butterflies.aspx>

cc:

- Queens Park Residents Association [presidentqpra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqpra@gmail.com)

- Erica Mashig, Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning [emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)

- Mayor Patrick Johnstone and Councillors [mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca](mailto:mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca)

- Deane Gurney, President, New Westminster Heritage Preservation Society [gurneyds@outlook.com](mailto:gurneyds@outlook.com)



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**From:** Erika Mashig  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 27, 2025 7:52 PM  
**To:** Jane Merilee Howley  
**Cc:** Tasha Henderson  
**Subject:** RE: Fifth Street Boulevard

Hello Mrs. Howley,

I am following up on your question to Councilor Henderson regarding the HCA and biodiversity improvements. While the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) Landscape Guidelines primarily focus on residential properties, we acknowledge that the heritage significance of city-owned features should also be considered with any changes. The core purpose of the HCA is to retain the existing heritage values of the neighbourhood, and at the same time, managing change. It is also important to note that the HCA Landscape Guidelines were developed in alignment with the City's biodiversity and climate action goals. The guidelines specifically discourage:

- 1) Gardens consisting of only turf lawn or non-vegetated materials;
- 2) Plantings that are invasive, require high water usage, or do not promote habitat and biodiversity; and
- 3) Artificial turf, or lawn alone with no accompanying planting.

In this regard, and in response to inquiries from yourself and others, the Parks and Recreation Department has reviewed the Fifth Street Boulevard initiative with the City's Planning and Development Department to confirm that the current boulevard works, with intended amendments, fall within the intent of the HCA Landscape Guidelines and the designation of the neighbourhood as a Heritage Conservation Area.

The recent changes aim to diversify the median's vegetation to support pollinators and enhance biodiversity, while also incorporating sustainable practices like leaf mulching. With the feedback from the neighbourhood, we are reviewing the landscaping plan to ensure it balances ecological goals with the area's heritage aesthetic. We are also looking at examples like [North Vancouver's Grand Boulevard](#), which is undergoing a [similar transition](#) and is also listed on the [historic places register](#).

Regarding your inquiry about costs:

1. City resources (labour and equipment) were used for the plant and log installation. I am currently gathering further information regarding the extent of resources used for this work and will share that information when available.
2. The removal of the logs will be handled by a contractor already engaged for dead and dying tree removal on city streets and boulevards. They are scheduled to be in the area within the coming weeks and have agreed to include the log removal within their existing contract. Therefore, we do not anticipate any changes to the overall contract value.

This initiative is rooted in the [City's Biodiversity Strategy](#), which aims to enhance biodiversity across the city and highlights the limited ecological value of mowed turf on medians and boulevards. The Strategy suggests enhancing biodiversity in these linear corridors by introducing vegetation that provides cover and food,

including pollen for pollinators. While both Fifth and Second Street medians are identified as opportunities to enhance biodiversity, we are currently only focusing on a small portion of the Fifth Street median as a pilot project. To this end, the current workplan includes:

1. Removal of the logs.
2. Complete the planting.
3. Allow the garden to establish for a year before conducting an evaluation with the neighborhood, through the Queen's Park Residents Association.

No further work on the Fifth Street median, other than what is listed above, or any work on the Second Street median will occur until after this evaluation is complete and next steps are determined and communicated in advance to the neighbourhood.

Thank you,  
Erika

Vacation Alert: I will out of office from Tuesday, March 4 to Monday, March 10.

Erika Mashig | Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning  
T 604.527.4530 | E emashig@newwestcity.ca  
City of New Westminster | Parks & Recreation  
newwestcity.ca/rec | @newwestrec

We recognize and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. We acknowledge that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. As a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

Share your input on the Parks and Recreation Plan!  
[www.beheardnewwest.ca/people-parks-play](http://www.beheardnewwest.ca/people-parks-play)

-----Original Message-----

From: Tasha Henderson <thenderson@newwestcity.ca>  
Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 8:01 AM  
To: Jane Merilee Howley §.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
Cc: Erika Mashig <emashig@newwestcity.ca>  
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Fifth Street Boulevard

Hi Merilee

I don't believe our city work plans are broken down to be project-specific on that granular level, but I've CC'd Erika Mashig here, who would be better positioned to respond to you.

Tasha

Sent from my iPhone

> On Feb 24, 2025, at 9:09 PM, Jane Merilee Howley <jmerilee@mac.com> wrote:  
>

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>

> Hello Tasha,

>

> Thank you for getting back to me so promptly. I worked for my father who was a Landscape Architect after attending Queens University. He later became the Superintendent of the respected Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture.

>

> There may have been \$5000.00 dollars spent on plant materials. As my father used to bid and tender jobs I would be interested in more of the complete picture of labour hours, gas, trucks that were here for weeks to understand how my hard earned tax dollars are being spent. Could you advise who can give me a more accurate figure. Also a figure for removal.

>

> Thank you kindly,

>

> Merilee Howley

> Fifth Street

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Feb 23, 2025, at 9:21 AM, Tasha Henderson <thenderson@newwestcity.ca> wrote:

>>

>> Hi Merilee

>>

>> Thanks for the nudge.

>>

>> In 2023 and 2024, approximately \$5000 was spent on plant materials (primarily new trees and plants). All work was done by Parks staff, there were no external consultants on the project.

>>

>> I am going to let Erika Mashig respond about the interplay between the Biodiversity Strategy and the HCA. I think the attached photos are helpful in seeing what the project is intended to look like after this initial mulching phase, which isn't aesthetically pleasing for sure. I've copy and pasted her email to another resident below, which I think might be helpful additional information.

>>

>> I'll send a note to Erika and CC you, asking for her response.

>>

>> Take care,

>> Tasha

>>

>> \*\*\*\*\*

>>

>> We understand your concern about the current state of the 5th Street median between 3rd and 4th Ave. A small portion of the median is currently undergoing a transition from turf to a naturalized pollinator garden. The initial phase, involving turf removal and soil amendment, is complete. Staff acknowledge that the logs placed on the median are overscaled for the space and they will be removed in the coming weeks (end of February/early March). Additional vegetation will be planted in March/April to complete the garden. We understand that the current appearance is not aesthetically pleasing, but we are confident that, like our other successful pollinator garden projects (e.g., Sapperton Park and Connaught Heights), it will establish and beautify the area over time. See images of these gardens below taken soon after planting (attached).

>>

>> To clarify the timeline for 5th Street, we want to assure you that we plan to allow the current pollinator garden to establish for a full year before evaluating its success with the neighbourhood. Only after this evaluation will we consider

any further work on the 5th Street median. This means there are no plans to convert additional areas along the 5th Street median until we review the success of this pilot area with the neighbourhood. Regarding 2nd Street, we can confirm that there are currently no plans or work scheduled for naturalizing the 2nd Street median.

>> We appreciate you sharing your and your neighbours' feedback. We are committed to working with the community throughout this process and will take all feedback into consideration during the evaluation period.

>>

>>

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Jane Merilee Howley S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

>> Sent: Saturday, February 22, 2025 3:24 PM

>> To: Tasha Henderson <thenderson@newwestcity.ca>

>> Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fifth Street Boulevard

>>

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>>

>> Hello Tasha,

>>

>> I am wondering if you can provide me with a figure for the money spent to date on the Fifth Street Boulevard?

>>

>> I also wondered if you had found out anything about how the Biodiversity Strategy trumped the fact this is an HCA.

>>

>> Thank you,

>> Merilee Howley

>> Fifth Street

>> Sent from my iPhone

>>

>> <Sapperton Park.jpg>

>> <CH Park.jpg>

>



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**From:** Erika Mashig  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 27, 2025 8:12 PM  
**To:** 'Cathy McFarland'; Paul Minhas; Daniel Fontaine  
**Cc:** presidentqpra@gmail.com; gurneyds@outlook.com  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Letter regarding Fifth Street and Second Street Boulevards Landscaping

Dear Mrs. McFarland and Mr. Mocker,

Thank you for your letter addressed to Councillors Fontaine and Minhas and copied to Mayor and City Council dated February 20, 2025, expressing your concerns regarding the recent landscaping changes to the Fifth Street median. We appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts.

### **Appropriateness of the Design for a Heritage Conservation Area**

We acknowledge that the recent changes, particularly the logs, have caused concern in the neighbourhood. We agree that the logs are oversized for the space and will be removed in the coming weeks. The planting is not yet complete, and once the logs are removed, more pollinator-friendly plants will be added only to the area where the lawn has been removed.

We understand your concern about maintaining the heritage character of the area. While the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) Landscape Guidelines primarily focus on residential properties, we acknowledge that the heritage significance of city-owned features should be considered with any changes. The core purpose of the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area is to retain the existing heritage values of the neighbourhood while, and at the same time, managing change. It is also important to note that the HCA Landscape Guidelines were developed in alignment with the City's biodiversity and climate action goals. The guidelines specifically discourage:

- 1) Gardens consisting of only turf lawn or non-vegetated materials;
- 2) Plantings that are invasive, require high water usage, or do not promote habitat and biodiversity; and
- 3) Artificial turf, or lawn alone with no accompanying planting.

The recent changes aim to diversify the median's vegetation to support pollinators and enhance biodiversity, while also incorporating sustainable practices like leaf mulching. Informed by the recent feedback from some neighbourhood residents, we are reviewing the landscaping plan to ensure it balances ecological goals with the area's heritage aesthetic. We are also looking at examples like [North Vancouver's Grand Boulevard](#), which is undergoing a [similar transition](#) and is also listed on the [historic places](#) register.

### **Lack of Consultation with Residents and Community Groups**

We apologize for the lack of thorough consultation through this change. We acknowledge that more proactive discussion with residents through the Queen's Park Residents Association would have been appropriate.

This initiative is rooted in the [City's Biodiversity Strategy](#), which aims to enhance biodiversity across the city and highlights the limited ecological value of mowed turf on medians and boulevards. The Strategy suggests

enhancing biodiversity in these linear corridors by introducing vegetation that provides cover and food, including pollen for pollinators. While both Fifth and Second Street medians are identified as opportunities to enhance biodiversity, we are currently only focusing on a small portion of the Fifth Street median as a pilot project. To this end, the current workplan includes:

1. Removal of the logs.
2. Complete the planting.
3. Allow the garden to establish for a year before conducting an evaluation with the neighborhood, through the Queen's Park Residents Association.

No further work on the Fifth Street median, other than what is listed above, or any work on the Second Street median will occur until after this evaluation is complete and next steps are determined and communicated in advance to the neighbourhood.

### **Justification for the New Boulevard Design**

Regarding the benefits of naturalizing the median and creating pathways for access to nature, staff identified existing “goat paths”, which are narrow, informal trails along the median created by pedestrian use along the route. We acknowledge that delineating the path with over-scaled logs was not the action for this neighbourhoods context and will be removing the logs, but will ensure pedestrians can still use the informal trail and enjoy the pollinator garden.

Regarding the need for a pollinator corridor, while residential gardens provide valuable pollinator resources, the boulevard project aims to establish a connected corridor that enhances biodiversity on a broader scale.

Regarding maintenance costs, through the establishment of other pollinator gardens in the city, we have developed a sustainable maintenance plan. Our experience shows that with the right soil conditions, these areas require less maintenance than traditional lawns which require seasonal mowing on a weekly or as-needed basis.

### **Moving Forward**

We understand the current design may not meet everyone's expectations. We are committed to completing the pollinator garden as outlined above and conducting an evaluation with residents in one year. We value your feedback and are committed to working together to achieve a design that balances both ecological and aesthetic goals.

This email response will be shared with the Mayor and Council for their information.

Thank you,  
Erika

Vacation Alert: I will out of office from Tuesday, March 4 to Monday, March 10.

Erika Mashig | Deputy Director- Parks, Policy and Planning  
T 604.527.4530 | E emashig@newwestcity.ca  
City of New Westminster | Parks & Recreation  
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Share your input on the Parks and Recreation Plan!  
[www.beheardnewwest.ca/people-parks-play](http://www.beheardnewwest.ca/people-parks-play)

-----Original Message-----

From: Cathy McFarland s.22(1)Personal and Confidential

Sent: Saturday, February 22, 2025 2:00 PM

To: Paul Minhas <[pminhas@newwestcity.ca](mailto:pminhas@newwestcity.ca)>; Daniel Fontaine <[dfontaine@newwestcity.ca](mailto:dfontaine@newwestcity.ca)>

Cc: Erika Mashig <[emashig@newwestcity.ca](mailto:emashig@newwestcity.ca)>; Mayor and Councillors <[mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca](mailto:mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca)>;  
[presidentqpra@gmail.com](mailto:presidentqpra@gmail.com); [gurneyds@outlook.com](mailto:gurneyds@outlook.com)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter regarding Fifth Street and Second Street Boulevards Landscaping

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Councillors Fontaine and Minhas, please find attached a letter expressing our concerns regarding the Fifth Street and Second Street Boulevards. Thanks for taking the time to consider our perspective on the situation.

Sincerely,

Cathy McFarland and Gary Mockler,  
Queen's Park Residents

March 1, 2025

Dear Ms. Mashig,

Below, we present our comments in response to your recent email to us (February 27, 2025) in which you responded to our letter to Councillors Fontaine and Minhas regarding the landscaping on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevards.

1. In our letter to Councillors Fontaine and Minhas (dated February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025), we noted that the current rustic woodland boulevard design seems inconsistent with the Landscape Guidelines in the HCA in that these guidelines focus on maintaining an aesthetically pleasing, traditional, and historic landscaping style. In your rebuttal to our letter, however, you stress to us explicitly, by quoting directly from the Landscape Guidelines text, that it is “important to note” that the Landscape guidelines actually discourage gardens consisting only of turf lawn, or invasive planting, or artificial turf, thereby mischaracterizing our position by implying that we are arguing for a lawn-only approach. In our letter, we never said that a turf-only boulevard is what we are advocating for, and we certainly never argued in favor of invasive plantings or artificial turf. What we actually said is that we welcomed the tree plantings, and that “if the City is intent on adding pollinator plants, there is a way to do that that fits with a traditional style.” We also state that although the boulevards were originally composed of large trees and sod “there are ways to beautify and upgrade these boulevards without returning them to a woodland or forest-like state.” We even attached a photo of the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Boulevard that depicts a traditional style that includes trees and smaller shrubs in addition to sod. In sum, it appears that you have fallen prey to creating a straw man argument (i.e., presenting an erroneous picture of our position, and then arguing against it). We feel compelled to clarify this issue because we do not want our position misconstrued. Our position, which was clear in our letter, is that the new boulevard changes are discrepant with the Landscape Guidelines because they do not capture a traditional historic style. We never advocated for a “sod-only approach” so there was no need to emphasize to us the guideline’s prohibition against such an approach.

2. You argue that the City’s recent boulevard works (with the amendments of large log removal and more plants) comply with the HCA Landscape Guidelines because they don’t involve artificial turf, invasive plants, or a turf-only approach. You state further, in a letter to another resident, that the Planning Department has confirmed that, *in this regard*, the boulevard works fall within the intent of the HCA guidelines. It seems to us that you have set the bar extraordinarily low for considering a landscaping design as compliant with the guidelines and have not focused near enough on their primary intent.

You made passing reference to moving forward in a way that conforms to the area’s heritage aesthetic, a goal that we believe must take center stage if you wish to embrace the HCA guidelines. As an example of a boulevard that better captures the heritage style look, you presented links describing a pollinator garden situated on Grand Boulevard on the North Shore. It is noteworthy that the photos (see below) of this garden depict an organized planted area within a cleanly delineated border. Also, the garden area is located centrally, separated from the boulevard traffic on either side by considerable distance, and makes little use of logs and mounds of dead leaves. If our City is really serious about adopting a more traditional historic style, as you say, why doesn’t the current “pilot project” (i.e., which keeps everything the same for a year with the exception of removing the giant logs and adding more plants) include more of the key features of that example boulevard? The landscaping on our 5<sup>th</sup> street boulevard (see attached photo) extends all the way to the curb, accenting its wild, informal, disorganized, and over-scaled nature, and no mention has been made, in the latest plan, of having any separation border area. As well, according to the article you cited, the Grand Boulevard garden makes up only a very small portion of that entire massive boulevard. It seems that much more will have to be done to create the more pleasing heritage style aesthetic that is promoted in our Guidelines. How does it make sense to have the community evaluate a pilot pollinator garden that fails to incorporate the heritage aesthetic you are promising the community?

2. We were disappointed to see that you did not respond to our request that the City send a letter clarifying the boulevard situation to the residents of Queen’s Park. You seem to be responding to complaints on a piecemeal

basis, attempting to put out fires here and there, rather than offering up a more transparent, and widely distributed, account of what is happening with the boulevards. Why can't the letter we suggested be sent out to the community to better inform them? There is a lot of confusion out there and we do not understand your resistance, especially given the City's focus on transparency and public engagement.

3. At many points in your letter, you highlight the City's Biodiversity Strategy. This document states clearly that "when designing pollinator gardens" one should "install pollinator plants away from traffic." It also states that ground nesting bees are at risk of trampling and that their sites should be fenced off and protected. This all begs the question: Why is the City intent on installing pollinator gardens (with trails) on the full width of the median boulevards of two very heavily travelled commuter streets? This is not really the best location if you want to be consistent with your own policy. Additionally, in response to our point that we already have pollinator gardens in people's yards all the way along these boulevards, you state that we need a "connected corridor." But aren't the homes connected? It seems like wildlife can move from one home's garden to the next in a "connected" manner.

4. In our letter, we questioned the cost of the pollinator garden approach to the 5<sup>th</sup> St. and 2<sup>nd</sup> St. boulevards and you respond by stating only that you have a sustainable plan based on experience. We and others in the community would like to know more specifics about the costs of creating the gardens, and maintaining them. At the Council Meeting you indicated that there was a master plan to use this approach on both of these lengthy wide boulevards, but wasn't there a budget to go along with this plan? And don't we know exactly what the first portion of the naturalization effort has cost the taxpayers? The initial section has been there since 2023. If residents are told what the cost of the initial portion was, we can extrapolate this value to the full length of these boulevards, adjusting for the fact that the first section was not well maintained (see photo below). A councillor was told that "staff will be watering the site weekly from June to October for the next three years. They will also be doing some light vegetation management for an hour in June and August to keep invasive plants out and make sure the plants don't grow into the road or path." Two hours in the year for vegetation management of these garden boulevards seems like a drastic underestimate of work time to those residents experienced with gardening. The projected cost of properly maintaining this massive project is very important to taxpayers. To properly evaluate the project, they need to factor in the costs.

As an aside, we are not confident in the City's ability to maintain a huge pollinator garden spanning two lengthy boulevards. For example, if you walk around Queen's Park, there are numerous stumps sticking out of the boulevards located beside the sidewalks. These unsightly stumps have been there for years. In our view, the City's maintenance efforts do not inspire confidence.

5. You state in your letter that the current boulevard treatment (minus the logs and addition of more plants) will be evaluated with the neighbourhood after a year. As we noted in our letter, this year long wait makes little sense because we have already seen what the boulevard looks like, with large logs removed, after a year (see attached photo). We doubt that the addition of a few more plants is going to save this rather unsightly creation. We had also asked for more details on the nature of this evaluation but you said very little about it, stating that you will be conducting "an evaluation with the neighbourhood through the Queen's Park Resident's Association." We spoke with the President yesterday and she said she has not been contacted about the evaluation process and is unclear regarding the association's role in it. Many people would like to know what questions will be used in this evaluation and precisely what your criterion is for deciding to go ahead with the master plan of this boulevard project. Also, as noted above, given that you are not currently adding significantly to the heritage aesthetic prior to this evaluation process, are we going to be asked to simply imagine what it would look like when you make the promised changes?

Sincerely,  
Cathy McFarland and Gary Mockler

Photos:  
Grand Boulevard:



City of New Westminster Fifth St. Boulevard (pictured over a year after it was planted):



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**From:** Bryan Thorp S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 6:54 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rewilding of 2nd and 5th Streets - SUPPORT

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Dear Mayor and Councillors, As a property owner on Second St, I **SUPPORT** the City's Biodiversity Strategy and would very much like to see my street, i.e., Second St, 'rewilded' and 'naturalized'.

Bryan Thorp

S.22(1)P2 Second St



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**From:** susan Adamson S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 7:16 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rewilding and naturalizing of Second Street boulevard

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,  
I have owned a home on Second Street for over 25 years. I am in support of the city's Biodiversity Strategy as it pertains to the rewilding and naturalization of the boulevard on Second Street. In fact, the city is welcome to naturalize all of the city property in front of my house!

Susan Adamson  
S.22(1)P Second Street

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**From:** Robin & Ross S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 7:31 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Fifth Street Boulevard Project

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I like the new “natural” landscaping on the 5th St blvd (and I expect it will improve further over time), and if the “experts” stand behind the environmental benefits, then I’m in support. I think lawn blvd’s are a waste of city resources and taxpayer money (in top of environmental impacts / emissions), and I’d prefer to see a low maintenance solution.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Queen's Park Residents' Association <[qpra.newwest@34875657.mailchimpapp.com](mailto:qpra.newwest@34875657.mailchimpapp.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 5, 2025 at 7:23 PM  
**Subject:** Fifth Street Boulevard Project  
**To:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

Hello Queen’s Park Residents:

Over the last month the QPRA has received a large number of emails regarding the change in landscaping on the Fifth Street boulevard. Many questions have been raised so I thought I would provide a summary of what has been happening and what I have heard in response to questions and other discussions.

The City has developed this project as part of their Biodiversity Strategy with a goal to ‘naturalize’ the green corridor on Fifth Street and Second Street, which they believe will help address climate change and improve our neighbourhood. If you haven’t walked or driven on Fifth Street in a while you should do so and see first hand the changes that have been made to this point so you can form your own opinion.

Here are some of themes/questions we have heard so far: Is that a finished product? Why were we never invited to provide feedback on the plan? Are they really taking this all the way to Sixth Avenue? Is Second Street next? Why did they not consider the Design Guidelines

when planning this project? Isn't this a fire hazard? The weeds, woodchips and leaves on the boulevard provide a new home for rodents-who will deal with that?

Councillor Henderson, who is the assigned liaison to council for the QPRA, recently attended a QPRA directors meeting to hear first hand the messages we have been receiving as well as some questions we had ourselves. Her visit, along with discussions at a recent council meeting provided some responses.

The Manager responding to the councillors' questions agreed that the logs are not to scale on the site and has recommended that they be removed and the installation should be reviewed for improvement. Logs are intended to be removed at the end of February/beginning of March.

Why were we not asked for feedback: Going forward, the plan is to deliver written information to all households on the street informing them when work will be done and what we hope is that this will include an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

Is this going through to Sixth Ave? Yes, that is the plan

Is Second Street next? Yes, that is the plan

Here is some additional information provided:

The site will be watered weekly from June to October

They will do some light vegetation management for an hour in June and also in August to check for invasive plants.

The manager mentioned a few times that making these changes will eliminate the need to do maintenance (ie. mowing) of the boulevards and therefore reduce carbon emissions.

In responding to a resident, the manager highlighted the transitioning from turf to a pollinator garden as a good thing, but the Biodiversity Strategy states that pollinator gardens should not be created where there is traffic. Given that both Fifth Street and Second Street are popular routes for commuters to get through Queen's Park to Sixth Avenue, they may not be the best choice for creating pollinator gardens.

Queen's Park, a Heritage Conservation Area, has a statement of significance which is included in the OCP and speaks to landscapes, streetscapes, and in fact specifically references the boulevards on both Fifth and Second Street so it is not unreasonable to question the major changes made to the boulevard so far.

You may love the new 'look' or you may hate it, and if you would like to communicate your thoughts to mayor and council, please send an email to their new email address at: [mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca](mailto:mayorandcouncillors@newwestcity.ca) If you sent something to QPRA but didn't copy the city, no need to write something new, just resubmit to the above email address so it reaches council as well.

If you have been copying/sending your emails to the QPRA, we would appreciate if you continue to do so. We won't forward your email to the city without your permission.

In response to a resident the Manager said there is 'no current' plan for work on Second Street, but the project has not been cancelled so it is important that everyone is heard prior to work commencing.

Also, a motion is going forward to council to identify a length of time for a 'pause' to be in place on this project. The notice of motion will be published on March 10th and will be debated on March 24<sup>th</sup> so that may be a date to sign up for public delegation on March 24<sup>th</sup> to be heard in person at council.

Gail North

President, QPRA

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You are receiving this email because you have provided your contact information to the QPRA and indicated a desire to be contacted about pertinent updates and information.

**Our mailing address is:**

Queen's Park Residents' Association  
Queens Park  
New Westminster, BC V3L 1J9

Canada

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**From:** Gord [REDACTED] S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 8:12 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Cc:** Info QPRA  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fifth Ave

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Dear council

Why have a boulevard if you choose to destroy it? Gaza looks more interesting to explore.

A complete waste of money, including the consultation, planning and execution.

As a QP resident I am tired of hearing from this council and Mayor is that we do not have any resources.

Money would have been better spent on sidewalks, curbs , crosswalks and traffic calming anywhere in our city.

If you have a problem missing what this city needs, please consider not seeking re election Gord

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Sheilah Harris S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 8:41 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 5th St and 2nd St boulevards

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To Mayor and Councillors,

As a resident of the Queens Park neighbourhood and habitual walker, I have been intrigued and even pleased by the changes on the 5th St blvd. However, I am concerned about the safety aspect of continuing the "rewilding" on the 2nd St blvd where traffic is heavier and faster, and visibility is already dicey. With so many children crossing 2nd St to go to and from school, their safety should be the number 1 priority.

I agree that the rewilding process should be halted in favour of consultation with the neighbourhood.

Sincerely,  
Sheilah Harris  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential Patrick Street

Sent from my iPad

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**From:** Naomi Perks S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 5, 2025 9:10 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** Queens park blvd

Dear Mayor and Councillors

I am a resident on Second Street and I fully support the rewilding and naturalizing of 2nd and 5th Streets.

I appreciate the efforts the city is taking to help fight climate change while also making our streetscapes more interesting.

While I have your attention, I am also in favour of the efforts made on 5th street to slow vehicles down as they turn from 8th Avenue. I would love to see a similar treatment on 2nd from Royal avenue to help curb drivers speed.

i truly appreciate the efforts made by some of council to ensure our streets are safe for all road users and our city does what it can for the environment!

Naomi Perks  
S.22(1) Second Street

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**From:** Andrew Banares S.22(1) Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 6, 2025 11:21 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Not in support of Queens Park Blvd. Rewilding

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Hello New West Council,

We do not support the rewilding of the 2nd St boulevard.

One of the reasons why we moved to our current home at S.22(1) P&A Second St was because of the boulevard and how it elevated the look and feel of the Queens Park neighbourhood. Furthermore, this is a heritage district which includes not only the homes but the streetscape and heritage aesthetic which the boulevard plays a big role.

What the city has done to the 5th street boulevard is shameful. It is ugly, looks messy and does not fit in a heritage aesthetic. A complete downgrade to the street and neighbourhood.

Rather than focusing resources on the boulevard, council and the city should focus on making 2nd street safer by incorporating speed and/or street calming measures ie. speed tables and/or roundabouts along 2nd St between 4th and 6th Ave. Furthermore, improve the intersection at 6th Ave and 2nd St. Cars speed along 2nd and have no regard for the people walking, cycling or kids crossing the street.

We have lived on 2nd St. for more than 10 year. The traffic safety along this street should be priority rather than changing the aesthetic of the boulevard which is not needed.

Regards,  
Andrew Bañares

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**From:** Corina Meisl S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 6, 2025 11:42 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Cc:** qpra.newwest@34875657.mailchimpapp.com  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fifth Street Boulevard Project

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To Mayor Patrick Johnson and City Councillors,

We are in recent of the information flyer circulated to residents of Fifth Street and also had an update from the QPRA. We appreciate some of the clarification as to what is going on and would like to give our feedback.

We had noticed this unsightly (in our opinion) naturalization of the boulevard and were appalled at why this was being done. We also see that parts of Queen's Park are also under a 'naturalization' plan.

We live on Fifth St. and witnessed the removal of all the beautiful holly trees which had been on the boulevard for many, many years. When we asked why they were being removed, we were told it was because they were an 'invasive' species. Not sure if we buy that reasoning. These trees had been planted many years ago and provided privacy and screening from Westminster Mall, which is across the street from us. We thought it was an unnecessary, make-work project.

However, now that the prospect is looming that the 'naturalization' of the boulevard will move further up Fifth St., we want to let you know that we are totally against this plan. Besides making the boulevard look uncared for and neglected, we think the mulch, leaves, wood, logs and scrub brush will attract an assortment of animals, including rats, which would call this their home.

In light of the City of New Westminster's 'heritage mindset' for this area, we can't reconcile how the City sees that 'naturalizing' the boulevards in this way is in sync with the original intent of the boulevards.

We also don't agree with the argument that this is a cheaper option considering the upfront costs and the ongoing maintenance cost to have this as a 'wilderness' boulevard versus cutting the grass a few times a month (at most) during the growing season.

We truly hope that the City will not run roughshod over the residents that will be most affected by this 'naturalization' project, and will at least allow us to have some input...which may or may not be listened to.

Thank you.

Corina and Werner Meisl  
S.22(1)P Fifth Street

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**From:** Tanya Rank S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 6, 2025 12:02 PM  
**To:** External-NWParksRec  
**Cc:** qpra.newwest@gmail.com; Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project Concerns

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Hello Erika,

Thank you for your recent summary and information regarding the Fifth Street median project you delivered by mail to residents on Fifth Street. It would have been more efficient to have some community input prior to work being done on the median. This is not the first time that the city has failed to communicate with residents in this area. When the trees (holly) along the median were removed a few years ago no communication was issued at that time either. With the recent article in the news and information circulated by the QRA I wanted to reach out with concerns I have on your recent Fifth Street naturalization project before further work is done along the median.

A few concerns that I have highlighted are:

1) Dark environment- the 5th street corridor is already a poorly lit street and turning the ground into a pile of dirt with logs and leaves creates a further darker environment. This is concerning as these logs are massive for the space they are in and create a very poor sight line for drivers in a narrow road. The pile of leaves, woodchips and logs create more breeding grounds for rodents which is already a problem for many residents in this area.

2) Safety concerns- blocking the sight lines of the boulevard has made it unsafe as small animals, children/individuals will not be seen from cars on either side. Especially approaching the roundabout. A driver has limited time to respond to something approaching out of the project area as they cannot foresee an animal (ie. cat/raccoon) etc. coming from behind a massive log or dark zone or have a view into the crosswalk coming up fifth street. Also creating these barriers in sight lines right before the roundabout at 5th street and 4th avenue is unsafe for drivers as I have witnessed near miss accidents at cars coming up from Fifth Street. This road is a popular commuter route.

3) Fire and flooding risk- dumping a pile of leaves and fresh logs creates a risk for fire and flooding. Encouraging people to walk through this area with leaves and logs creates opportunity and risk that cigarettes be disposed of in a pile of leaves. In the summer I have witnessed people gathering in the boulevard, while I am not against the gathering it often involves individuals coming together to smoke. Leaves and logs create poor drainage for this area and potential for flooding. Recently in a heavy rainfall the intersection of 4th avenue and 5th street had numerous drains being blocked by leaves and debris right next to your project area. This caused flooding and impacts to the roundabout. Ultimately wind and rain will continuously carry leaves and debris off the boulevard.

4) Unsightly- a beautiful green open environment with fresh new trees has been turned into a pile of dirt and leaves. Honestly this is quite unsightly and an eye sore. I understand the purpose of the project but this is better

to do in an area such as in a section of a big urban park like Queens Park or or an industrial area not in a narrow boulevard. This area is rich with beautiful blooming gardens and well cared for front yards and boulevards. Creating an area with dead logs counters the vibrant community that it is. Although not comparable in size, please have a look at the Grand Boulevard Pollinator Garden in North Vancouver as a successful and appealing boulevard garden. Another idea could be to create a rain garden to add some context to the space.

It is unfortunate that this is all being done only to save the mowing costs, why don't you reduce the amount of times you mow the median as you mow way more than necessary and what is needed as per guidelines on how tall to let grass grow before cutting it. This is unfortunately such a shortsighted approach! Please don't waste your time and money on this project.

Hope these above concerns can be addressed and that the **project can be discontinued (Cancelled) and no further median work is done.**

Thanks,  
Tanya  
(5th Street Resident)

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**From:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 6, 2025 3:09 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] rewilding of useful space to make it unattractive and useless

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As a resident of New westminster for 40 years and second street for 30 years I was happy to see the invite of residents to provide feed back, albeit after the launch of this project. The manicured boulevards offer more than a compliment to the care and attention the neighbours give to their own yards, they have offered a park like space for their children and families to enjoy and use. Over the years we have witness community members use the space to set up outdoor activities such a slack lining, safe summer meeting spaces, in this residential neighbourhood the well kept area allows us to safely cross the street to greet and chat with neighbours and friends. The manicured boulevard allows the street have a neighbourhood look, and feel like a neighbourhood where a community grows and is pleased to look out the window to see a space that is green and a friend across the street where we can all meet in the middle to say hi or have a chat.

We consider the City to be part of that community in a way that it maintains its space the way we are expected to maintain ours. It is bad enough that we have taken park spaces and made much of them unnavigable. These are our spaces to use and enjoy. Not a committee's space to fill and destroy. Keep the boulevards clear of debris. Please do not confuse this space as one that needs improvement by letting it grow wild and placing dead timbers on it. That goes against the nature of a vibrant proud community. There are many areas of the city that could use the attention of council and the city's resources. These boulevards are not amongst them.

Thank you

Paul Dumontet

 Second street

Paul Dumontet

Insurance by Armstrong Dumontet & Co

Mutual Funds through Hub Capital

#305-555 6 street New Westminster

BC

Office 604-522-7977 ext 1

S.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Toll Free 1-866-923-7977

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 6, 2025 7:11 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 2nd and 5th Street Rewilding

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

We wish to register our opposition to the proposed rewilding of 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> street.  
We have lived on 2<sup>nd</sup> street for 30 years and have always enjoyed the aesthetics of the boulevards.  
We view what we see currently on the rewilded section of 5<sup>th</sup> street as a negative impact on the appearance of the boulevard and we further see it as a welcoming habitat for rats.  
We therefore respectfully request that this initiative be permanently cancelled.

Sincerely  
Pamela and Michael Dunn

---

**From:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Friday, March 7, 2025 4:42 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 7th Street Bike Lane

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Good Day, Folks

The surveys the City sends out are always worded in such a way as to not get a true opinion of the responder. Also, often it seems that community consultation is happening after the decisions have already been made. I'm offering the following as an observation, and to express an opinion I don't think the survey or open house session was able to collect.

No doubt, the opportunity to change this project is long gone - the work is probably in the pipeline - but I don't think you folks have this right. I have been using 5<sup>th</sup> Street for at least the past 20 years. It's a well marked bike lane and has been for many years. It connects very easily and appropriately with the bike lanes below Royal. I have never seen a bike rider on this route. Now the 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevard is being converted to some sort of "wild" area when it could be converted to an off-street bike lane, and 7<sup>th</sup> Street is going to be changed to accommodate a bike lane. This will result in removing many valuable parking spaces for residents, but more importantly, for citizens accessing the medical building and local businesses. In addition, access to the 6<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> mall will be restricted. Traffic congestion will increase which will result in more vehicle and vehicle/pedestrian accidents. The connection to bike lanes below Royal is, in my opinion, far more dangerous than the one that currently exists.

The cost of this project is really not necessary, considering the lack of usage of an already-in-place more appropriate, seldom-used bike access on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, the other needs in the City, and the HEAVY tax burden on the taxpayers. Surely there are many more worthwhile projects this money could be used for, if not deleted to lower the tax burden.

Respectfully

Mary Gagnon  
S.22(1)Pers Ninth Street





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**From:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 9, 2025 5:32 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] New West Council Meeting on March 24 - Re: Queen's Park Boulevard

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It has been brought to our attention that there are plans in the City's Biodiversity Strategy to change the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street boulevard to the 'rewilding' or 'naturalizing' look that you have implemented on the 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevard.

When we first saw the change to the 5<sup>th</sup> Street boulevard, we assumed it was for a movie set. When we found out that the city had done this as a permanent change, neither one of us could believe it. First, what a complete waste of money. There are much better ways to spend the city's funds than implementing this. Second, I find it absolutely unattractive. I feel so bad for those residents that can no longer look at green grass, but have to look at mulch and logs that don't belong in the city or the neighbourhood. Third, to implement this and not consult the local residents that were affected by this, is so wrong.

We are residents that faces the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street boulevard. We are completely opposed to this and would like this email to be our voice for the March 24<sup>th</sup> New Westminster Council Meeting to halt the proposed 'rewilding' and 'naturalizing'. We love to look out at the green grass on our boulevard and do not want that unsightly design to be placed in front of our home.

Sincerely,

Mary Winstanley and Mike Ireland

 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, New Westminster

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**From:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2025 10:04 AM  
**To:** External-NWParksRec; Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rewilding of Boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street

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Dear Mayor and Council and Parks and Recreation Department:

I am writing to comment on the rewilding project that has been completed on 5th Street, and is planned for 2nd Street. I live on 2nd street and often drive down 4th Avenue to get home, so I often drive by the rewilded section of 5th street (the part closest to 4th Ave).

I agree that there are benefits to Biodiversity of the rewilding of public spaces, and many cities have had success with rewilding efforts (High Line in NY comes to mind). I am also not opposed to change.

However, I do feel that there is a right way to do this, and I don't think the work done on 5th Street was done right. Here are some of my concerns:

1. need to consider the surrounding neighbourhood in rewilding efforts: the section of 5th street which has been rewilded is completely disjointed from the neighbourhood. If this were in a provincial park it would be great, but it looks like a campsite was dropped next to residential homes. I understand that the large logs are going to be removed, and that is a good thing, but really this boulevard rewilding work is far too rustic compared to the surrounding heritage area. I think going from manicured lawns of the homes on 5th Street to wild forest in the boulevard is not cohesive.

2. maintenance costs: I assume that the City will be maintaining these gardens. doing spring cut backs, weeding, etc. This will not be inexpensive. There will be cost savings for not having to cut the lawns, but I hope that the intent isn't that the spaces just manage themselves with little to no maintenance. If that is the intent, I do not support the rewilding effort. The rewilded spaces will be a mess and likely become an unuseable/unwalkable tangle of blackberry bushes if allowed to just grow however they want with little maintenance.

3. overall aesthetic: the section near 4th avenue just looks like a mess. The area closer to 3rd avenue looks a little more planned out and intentional. It's true that gardens don't look great when they are first planted, and maybe the boulevard will look better next year, but for now, to the casual person driving by, it just looks like a mess of leaves, logs and mulch.

4. boulevard inhabitants: I am also a bit concerned about whether these new "wild" spaces will become inhabited by homeless people. I have seen tents pop up on 5th street in the past, and with more cover and overgrown areas I could see more homeless use of the boulevards. I think this will be a risk to safety, spaces could become fouled with garbage and waste, and obviously this would bring with it other risks to nearby homeowners and their properties. How would the City deal with this should it become an issue?

In general, I believe that naturalizing or rewilding boulevards in Queen's park can be a positive thing. If done right, it could be a feature of the area and bring more people to come and walk those spaces. However, there are possible problems for the residents and if not done right could become a detriment to the neighbourhood.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours, Emma Tones, New West Resident

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**From:** S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2025 1:48 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] March 24th meeting

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I am writing this to voice my opinion on the rewilding and naturalizing of 2nd and 5th Street boulevards. I thought the 5th Street logs looked horrible from day one and about a month ago I walked through it which confirmed my feelings. It looks messy and ugly.

I am against this type of development. I understand the many, many logs now in Queens Park are meant to keep us away from the newly planted trees which we have received funding for but it also looks ugly. Why do we need to do this to a perfectly lovely park? It's funny that we talk about rewilding boulevards and then we do the opposite in the park. Kids like to run around free in that park, not have to stay on the "designated" trail.

Put our taxes towards things like cleaning up the ever growing homeless camp on Front Street and fix up the public washrooms that we do have. I can't tell you how many times my friend and I try to use either Moody Park Pool washroom, Quayside washrooms or Pier Park washroom between 8 am and 9 am during the week on our walk only to find that none are open (mostly because they've been vandalized.)

Thank you, Gayle Azyan, S.22(1)P 2nd Street

---

**From:** John Janzen S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:06 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 5th St. boulevard installation

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Good afternoon Mayor Patrick Johnstone and councilors,

We are writing in response to a letter we received at our front door. This letter is pertaining to the recent "rewilding"/"naturalizing" of the heritage boulevards.

We strongly oppose these types of installation as we feel they are an eyesore to our community and unnecessary. We have been residents on 5th St. for 40 years and are very happy with the heritage vibe of our community.

Queens Park itself, which is just steps away, is where these types of installations are more suited. The boulevards are not suited for this, in our opinion, for the simple reason that aesthetically they clash with the refined look that has been encouraged in the past..

We have enjoyed a lot of good installations by the Parks Board that has made good sense. However this casual look does not make sense for the refined 5th St. Boulevard.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

John C Janzen

---

**From:** Suzette LAQUA S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 12, 2025 3:42 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors; Legislative Services  
**Cc:** Myles Liversidge  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] March 24th NW Council Meeting - "rewilding" and "naturalizing" of the heritage boulevards on 2nd and 5th St  
  
**Importance:** High

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Dear Mayor Johnstone and Councillors,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed "rewilding" and "naturalization" of the heritage boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street in Queen's Park. This initiative is entirely out of step with the historic character of our neighborhood and should not only be paused but permanently stopped. We urge you to support the motion introduced by **Councillor Daniel Fontaine** and backed by **Councillor Paul Minhas** at the City Council meeting on Monday, March 24th, at 6 PM.

The heritage boulevards in Queen's Park are an integral part of our neighborhood's identity. The well-maintained grass and tree-lined streets reflect over a century of thoughtful urban planning and align with the **Heritage Conservation Area (HCA)** that protects this district. The claim that "rewilding" and "naturalizing" is necessary to reduce costs does not hold up to scrutiny. Additionally, during the dry summer months, the city does not water these boulevards, eliminating any significant financial burden related to their upkeep.

Many residents, including us, would like to understand the costs associated with the two completed boulevard projects on 5th Street. Specifically, **we request the following:**

1. The total cost of the "rewilding" and "naturalization" of the boulevard completed in 2023 on 5th Street between 3rd Avenue and Blackford Street.
2. The cost of the "rewilding" and "naturalization" for the boulevard on 5th Street between Blackford Street and 4th Avenue.
3. The projected cost of "rewilding" and "naturalization" for all remaining intended boulevards on 2nd Street and 5th Street.

Please ensure this information is available for all residents of Queen's Park at the upcoming meeting and onwards. We believe it is important for the community to have transparency regarding the total projected cost of rewilding and naturalizing 5th Street and 2nd Street, as well as how these costs compare to the expense of traditional lawn maintenance, which involves periodic mowing and upkeep.

Additionally, we request a comparison of the **annual maintenance** costs for the **rewilded/naturalized boulevards** versus the annual maintenance costs for **traditional lawn care**.

Beyond aesthetics and historical preservation, there are serious practical and safety concerns with this rewilding initiative:

**Lack of Community Consultation** – Residents were not adequately consulted about this drastic change to their neighborhood, leading to frustration and a sense of exclusion from the decision-making process.

**Safety Hazards** – Once mulch is laid down, hazardous objects such as needles and other waste become difficult to detect, posing risks to children, pets, and residents. A neighbor’s 14-year-old daughter raised this concern, and she is absolutely right—it’s a real safety issue. Needles were seen in the lawn, but it was definitely easier to see.

**Irreversible Damage** – The rewilding effort disregards the fact that these boulevards have thrived for decades with minimal intervention. There is no need to drastically alter a system that already works and contributes positively to the neighborhood’s historic charm.

**Alteration of Neighborhood Aesthetics** – The shift from manicured lawns to unmanaged natural landscapes represents a significant change that does not align with Queen’s Park’s heritage character. The community has worked hard to preserve the beauty and integrity of this area, and this initiative threatens that legacy.

**Maintenance and Upkeep Concerns** – Overgrown, unkempt boulevards could become an eyesore if not properly managed. Given the city’s inconsistent maintenance of the "rewilding" and "naturalization" boulevard between 3<sup>rd</sup> and Blackford Street 2023-2025, and the residents having to pull the weeds and pick up the garbage on their own time, residents are justifiably concerned about how these areas will be handled long-term.

The heritage designation of Queen’s Park exists to protect its character, not to allow it to be gradually eroded under misguided policies. We need a firm decision to stop this plan permanently, not merely delay it.

I urge you to vote in favor of this motion and to ensure that any future changes to the boulevards are only made with full and proper consultation with local residents. Please respect the heritage, safety, and wishes of the people who live here.

We are including Legislative Services in this email in order to be added as a speaker at the upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,  
Suzette Laqua & Myles Liversidge

S.22(1) Personal and Confidential

██████████ Fifth Street  
New Westminster, BC

S.22(1) Personal and Confidential

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**From:** Ethel Field S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2025 7:20 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Cc:** Daniel Fontaine; Paul Minhas  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Opposition to the Naturalization of Boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street

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Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed naturalization of the boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street. The Queens Park area is well-known for its impressive boulevards, beautiful streetscapes, and well-maintained residential front lawns, all of which contribute significantly to the aesthetic and community character of our neighborhood.

As I look out my windows, the boulevards appear almost as an extension of my own yard, and I deeply appreciate the current landscaping and upkeep. I believe that naturalization, while appropriate in some areas, is not suitable for these particular boulevards.

I have several concerns regarding the proposed changes:

1. **Increased Vegetation and Wildlife:** The additional vegetation could attract rodents, as well as larger wildlife, such as coyotes, which poses potential safety risks.
2. **Impaired Visibility:** The new plantings could obstruct visibility, particularly when using the turn lanes that intersect the boulevards, which could create safety hazards for drivers and pedestrians.
3. **Potential for Dumping and Littering:** Naturalized areas tend to appear less maintained, which can unfortunately encourage dumping and littering in the area.

Moreover, looking at examples of other naturalized roadways, it's clear that these changes do not necessarily improve the visual appeal of the area. Rather, they often detract from the cleanliness and aesthetic quality of the streets.

I ask that you reconsider this proposal and maintain the current landscaping, which has served our community well for many years.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Ethel Field

S.22(1)P Queens Avenue, New Westminster  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

---

**From:** Caitlyn James S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 8:11 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Boulevards Queens Park

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I wish to express my support for the naturalization of the Boulevards in Queens Park.

I trust the City employees in charge of making effective and beautiful decisions to take feedback from residents and work to avoid them being nurseries for dandelions and other enthusiastic weeds.

I realize it will take several seasons for the Boulevards to mature. I understand that there are so many competing considerations - both from Mother Nature (watering, encouraging people to dump compost, inter-species competition, people camping, unwelcome wildlife, consistency with the neighbourhood of manicured lawns and shrubs - lots of rhododendrons, etc.)

Yours,  
Caitlyn James  
Regina Street  
New Westminster, BC

---

**From:** Jeff Dresselhuis S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 8:54 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re-wilding projects on 2nd and 5th Street boulevards

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Dear Mayor Johnstone and Council Members,

As a longtime resident of New Westminster, I wish to thank Mayor and Council for returning to the above issue for discussion on March 24, 2025.

I am in agreement with both the sentiment and substance of the letter already sent to council [March 12] by S.22(1)Personal and Confidential and S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

Although I presently reside on St. George Street, my family and I previously lived at S.22(1)P 5th St., right on the Fifth St. boulevard.

Aesthetically pleasing to look at, beautiful in winter snow, and a never-ending source of fun raking leaf piles up and having our kids jump in them during the fall -- the boulevard always represented a very wide, and safe area for supervised activity, not to mention its refined beauty.

I fully support the concept of **rewilding**, and can think of a number of areas, such as some portions of Queens Park, and elsewhere in our City, which have benefitted or could benefit from this approach. However, the twin heritage boulevards under discussion have been maintained to remind us of an entirely different time in our city's history -- and I therefore believe they are inappropriate to be included in a rewilding process.

As Mayor and Council are likely aware, the paired boulevards were designed by previous governing bodies, and intended to serve as an impressive and grand approach to what was supposed to be the parliament buildings of British Columbia -- which were to be located on the site of what is now Tipperary Park as well as [ironically] our current City Hall. Many of us know the story of how that plan did not come to pass, as the title of capital city of British Columbia was wrested from New Westminster by Victoria, and those legislative buildings were never constructed! The beautiful Boulevards on Second St. (then known as Clinton Street) and Fifth Street (then known as St. George's Street) are largely all that is left to remind us of this part of our city's history, and they were designed as highly refined, highly altered, traditional lawn or manicured landscapes for that very official purpose. Their original design and intent was the antithesis of rewilding; they were intended to create a tamed and peaceful landscape surrounding the capital buildings, in the midst of what was at that time still a very dominantly wild region of our nation.

Leaving aside many of the other issues which have already been raised, including the unintended consequence of the Fifth St. exemplar providing a haven for increasing numbers of rats, I believe that, given their history, the aesthetic intent of these particular boulevards is actually undermined by attempts to artificially "re-wild" them.

I would therefore encourage Mayor and Council to rethink this particular decision and return or maintain both the Fifth St. and Second St. boulevards in their original and intended state.

kind regards,

Jeff Dresselhuis  
St. George Street

8.22(1) Personal and Confidential

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**From:** Lynn Archer S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 11:19 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Naturalization of meridians on 5th and 2nd Streets

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Hello,

As a resident of 5th street, I am writing to express my support for the naturalization of the meridians on both 5th and 2nd streets. The planting of native plant species and reducing the need to cut grass provides a healthier environment for both citizens and the general biodiversity of the community. Perhaps moving forward more information could be provided regarding how the meridians will look a few years from now and also fewer logs than were placed in the one section on 5th street. Many citizens would benefit from receiving more information as they may have traditional notions of what a park or city landscape should look like.

Please continue with the naturalization process for the wellbeing of New Westminster. Maintaining the status quo does not improve the environment.

Regards,  
Lynn Archer

---

**From:** Julie Matheson S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 2:24 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Resident Feedback for March 24 Meeting re: Queens Park Boulevard

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing to oppose the motion to halt the boulevard wilding in Queens Park.

I am supportive of the boulevard naturalization as a Queens Park homeowner living in close proximity to the boulevards in question.

The boulevard dissent being promoted by the QPRA struggles to formulate an argument beyond aesthetic preferences. "Well maintained grass" is not a heritage feature, though to be fair it would not be a heritage feature worth preserving regardless. There are many naturalized and grassless yards attached to heritage homes throughout the city.

The already planned program evaluation for the boulevard seems more than sufficient.

Thank you for your time.

Julie Matheson

---

**From:** Karen [REDACTED] S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 3:04 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rewilding and naturalizing of the heritage boulevards on 2nd and 5th Street.

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am completely against the rewilding and naturalizing of Fifth and Second Street boulevards in Queens Park.

Sincerely,

Karen Beguin  
[REDACTED] Second Street  
New Westminster, B.C.  
[REDACTED] S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

---

**From:** Dawn Walker S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 10:36 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support of Fifth Street Median Naturalization Project

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Dear Mayor Johnstone and Councillors,

I am a renter who has lived in the Queens Park neighbourhood since 2022 and I am writing in support of the naturalization efforts on the Fifth Street Median and the planned future naturalization of the Second Street Median on the street where I live.

I regularly walk in the neighbourhood and walk to Uptown/6th street to shop and run errands. Since the naturalization of the median, I change my route to go by and check-in on the progress regularly. The transformation of turf lawn and an underutilized space into a naturalized habitat has piqued my interest and curiosity. As part of my walks, I now enjoy tracking the progression of plant life over the season and identifying new native and pollinator species (when I can). I'm thankful to have this experience in my community.

It gives me hope to see a proactive effort to change to low carbon maintenance practices, given that we are in a climate emergency. I am also grateful to live in a city that, first of all, has a biodiversity strategy, and then second, also acts on it. The pollinator gardens and rewilded areas in the city make large issues tangible in my everyday life: how we can reverse [the more than 45% decline of insect populations in my lifetime](#) or how we can act on [Canada's goals and commitments around halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030](#).

As a gardener who dreams of one day designing a garden of my own, I read the [Landscape Design Guidelines](#) of the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area with interest (I really did). In it, I found guidelines to limit lawn coverage, increase biodiversity, and promote native species, perennials, and water-wise plant selections to create gardens in a variety of styles, all of which are design elements I see when I look at this project!

I look forward to the expansion of naturalization efforts and appreciate the Parks team's efforts so far!

Best,  
Dawn Walker  
Queens Park resident



---

**From:** Ron Zapp S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 10:51 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Cc:** Jeannette  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rethink 5th and 2nd Street??

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My family is in full support of the position taken by Councillors Fontaine and Minhaus, as well as S.22(1)Personal and Confidential. To rewild or naturalize 5th and 2nd streets, is to try and undo our history, rewrite our developments and goes against our historic protection zoning.

Last summer we were returning home by Uber driving south on 2nd street from 8th Ave, our ride which started in Burnaby with freeway and Canada Way led our driver, a new Surrey resident from India to comment, wow it's nice here I feel like I'm in "Heaven".

That is how nice our neighborhood is, your proposal would change everything. Changing a historic district to a "compost" welcome district.

Ron and Jeannette Zapp  
S.22(1)P Fourth Ave  
New Westminster, BC S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

---

**From:** Erin Williams  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 10:08 AM  
**To:** \_Mayor & Councillors  
**Cc:** Marius Miklea; \_CAO and Directors  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] 5th Street Debris Field

Good morning Mayor Johnstone and members of Council, Please see my response below to Mr. Church's email regarding the 5th Street boulevard project.

Regards,

Erin Williams | Fire Chief  
Office 604-636-4326 | Cell 604-841-7310 | Ewilliams@newwestcity.ca

New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services | Administration  
1 East 6th Avenue, New Westminister, BC V3L 4G6 www.newwestcity.ca

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-----Original Message-----

From: Erin Williams  
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 10:05 AM  
To: 'Larry Church' S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] 5th Street Debris Field

Good morning Mr. Church,  
Thank you for the update on the 5th Street Parks project. As we move into spring with warmer temperatures and drier conditions, we will be monitoring this area as well as others for the potential of increasing fire risk. As the BC Wildfire analysis stated, this area does have a lower risk factor as it is surrounded by non-combustible asphalt which creates an occluded zone and acts as a fire break with the ground fuels that are present.  
Sincerely,

Erin Williams | Fire Chief

Office 604-636-4326 | Cell 604-841-7310 | Ewilliams@newwestcity.ca

New Westminister Fire and Rescue Services | Administration  
1 East 6th Avenue, New Westminister, BC V3L 4G6 www.newwestcity.ca

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-----Original Message-----

From: Larry Church S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 4:42 PM  
To: Erin Williams <EWilliams@newwestcity.ca>  
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] 5th Street Debris Field

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Mr Williams

This is an update to the 5th Street debris field.... The city is now removing the logs from the boulevard which leaves the entire boulevard ( 22000 square feet) covered in the ignitable wildfire fuel source.

I trust you have been apprised by the city.

Larry Church

> On Feb 3, 2025, at 9:32 AM, Erin Williams <EWilliams@newwestcity.ca> wrote:

>

> Good morning Mr. Church,

>

> Thank you for your thoughtful reply in regards to your fire safety concern on 5th Street. The Fire Departments role in this project was to provide an analysis of the fire risk based on the type of ground fuel and location of materials that were placed on the boulevard. This included a measurement of the distance between the combustible material and potential interface risk. I shared our analysis with a Structure Protection, FireSmart BC and Fire Behavior Specialist with BC WildFire and he supported our findings.

>

> Please see the response below and I sincerely hope that this puts your mind at ease as to the fire risk with this City project.

>

> Hi Chief Williams,

> Thank you for reaching out, regarding the photos and area of concern you brought to my attention,

> This is as the “crow fly’s” potentially considered the Extended Zone (10-30m / 30-100ft), and this level of vegetation is very common in this area, with FireSmart Practices. It is also worth noting there are minimal ladder fuels present, and the trees are Deciduous and limbed at an appropriate height which will promote resiliency in the unlikely event of a ground fire. The surrounding area, on the other side of the road looks to be well manicured vegetation that will not readily support fire spread. But in truth, as this is located within a Green Island with roughly 25ft of asphalt surrounding it, Extended Zone does not truly apply. It resembles more closely a micro-Occluded Interface and given the small size, lack of ladder fuels, is a low-risk area for ember generation and transmission without significant external factors. The logs themselves are of minimal concern as you correctly noted they are a heavy fuel. With only the pictures, it is difficult to gauge the volume of mulch, but that is my only area of potential concern, and again it is the “extended zone”. Given the fact that it surrounded by asphalt, the most resilient fuel break possible, and in the middle of hydrant-ed community supported by your department, it would appear to be a low level of concern. I hope this helps, feel free to reach out, if you would like to discuss this further.

>

> Many thanks,

>

> John

>

>

>

> John McDonald

> Structure Protection Specialist | Fire Services BC Wildfire Service |

> Ministry of Forests

> Mobile: 250-808-6402

> Report Wildfires: 1 800 663-5555 or \*5555

>

>

>

>

> Erin Williams | Fire Chief

> Office 604-636-4326 | Cell 604-841-7310 | Ewilliams@newwestcity.ca

>

> New Westminister Fire and Rescue Services | Administration

> 1 East 6th Avenue, New Westminister, BC V3L 4G6 www.newwestcity.ca

>

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>  
>  
> -----Original Message-----  
> From: Larry Church S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
> Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 1:54 PM  
> To: Erin Williams <EWilliams@newwestcity.ca>  
> Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] 5th Street Log Dump

>  
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> Mr. Williams

> You have missed the point which is Fire Prevention for our neighbourhood and your response confirms the threat of fire exists with all the combustible debris that has been deposited.

> I was surprised that you would take the time to precisely measure the distance between the log dump and the residential properties. This action tells me you are justifying your project approval complies with FireSmartBC in the extended zone. This is not the case in this situation because the boulevard adjacent to the residential properties must be by law maintained and cleared of any debris thereby designating this boulevard as the intermediate zone. Also, homeowners are requested by the city to water the boulevard trees twice weekly during hot and dry seasons.

> The city nor homeowners would not be permitted to deposit combustible debris on the boulevards adjacent to residential houses as they have on the central boulevard, so again the street curb would be start of the intermediate zone.

> This is about fire prevention in my neighborhood during our climate change crisis and you are our leader for this, so please reconsider your approval for this project.

> Respectfully

> Larry Church

> Sent from my iPad

>> On Jan 30, 2025, at 2:28 PM, Erin Williams <EWilliams@newwestcity.ca> wrote:

>> Good afternoon Mr. Church,

>> Thank you for raising your concerns regarding vegetation on the boulevard of 5th Street and also for referencing FireSmart BC guidelines. In regards to the concern that you raise with the "log dump", these are actually considered heavy ground fuels which means that although they support combustion for longer periods, they tend to not be supportive of fast moving fires and require a significant amount of heat to ignite. Fine fuels such as dried grass burn rapidly and can move quickly especially when influenced by wind. With our current Fire Service response times and our availability of a hydrant supplied water system, heavy fuels such as these logs present a lesser degree of risk.

>> FireSmart BC defines priority zones measured from the house (Immediate Zone - 0 to 1.5 metres which is suggested as having non-combustible material, Intermediate Zone - 1.5 to 10 metres where normal vegetation grows, and Extended Zone - 10 to 30 metres where trees and other normal

combustibles are acceptable. In this situation, the “log dump” is considered to be in the Extended Zone (several random measurements were taken and the closest to a fence line was 11 metres) and therefore according to FireSmart BC guidelines within acceptable ranges.

>> As with any area of our community we will continue to monitor this location regularly, assess fire hazards and plan accordingly.

>>

>> If we can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact us.

>> Kind regards,

>>

>> Erin Williams | Fire Chief

>> Office 604-636-4326 | Cell 604-841-7310 | Ewilliams@newwestcity.ca

>>

>> New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services | Administration

>> 1 East 6th Avenue, New Westminster, BC V3L 4G6 www.newwestcity.ca

>>

>> We recognize and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. We acknowledge that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. As a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

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>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Larry Church S.22(1)Personal and Confidential

>> Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 2:10 PM

>> To: Erin Williams <EWilliams@newwestcity.ca>

>> Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5th Street Log Dump

>>

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>>

>> Chief Williams,

>> With all due respect, I was shocked to hear from city staff that you approved the dumping of combustible wood debris on the boulevard of Fifth Street with total disregard for the recommendations from FireSmart BC.

>> The pine needles, cedar cuttings, wood chips, mulch along with various species of logs including cedars are the ingredients for wildfire ignition. Knowing that over 40 percent of wildfires are human caused, the population density and the concentration of the urban forest in the Queens Park neighborhood makes my community vulnerable to wildfires.

>> I'm certain that home insurance underwriters and adjusters will have repercussions when notified their clients properties are within 10 meters of the city deposited combustible debris. The previous landscaping of manicured grass was the ideal ground cover for wildfire prevention recommended by FireSmartBC.

>> I urge you to reconsider your approval for this project and follow the FireSmartBC recommendations and observe the studies for community wildfire mitigation during our Climate Change Crisis.

>>

>> Concerned Queens Park resident,

>> Larry Church

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**From:** Graeme Davy [REDACTED] S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 11:25 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Naturalization of 2nd and 5th Street Boulevards

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Johnstone and Councillors,

I am writing to offer my strong support for the cities plan to naturalize the boulevards in Queens Park.

The boulevards as they are now are unused and frankly are visually boring.

Some of the objections from residents seem awfully trivial. For example concern that traffic levels will endanger pollinators. That has not stopped residents from planting flowers on their front lawns.

Also the claim that naturalization of the street is contrary to heritage values seems spurious to me. I sincerely doubt that the city did much mowing of green spaces in the 1890's.

The cities decision to temporarily lay down logs on the boulevard for no apparent reason has unfortunately needlessly alienated some residents. At the moment the boulevard on 5th St looks a bit like a log sorting yard. I am sure that once they are removed and the project is up and running, most citizens will come around.

Sincerely,  
Graeme Davy  
[REDACTED] St Patrick St  
New Westminster BC

[REDACTED] S.22(1)Personal and Confidential  
[REDACTED]