

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Candace Savage - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40 - UPDATED
Attachments: 9.3.1 February 22.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 4:38 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Candace Savage - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40 - UPDATED

--- Replies to this email will go to hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org ---

Submitted on Monday, February 20, 2023 - 16:38

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

Date: Monday, February 20, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: She/her/hers

First Name: Candace

Last Name: Savage

Email: hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org

Address: [REDACTED] Albert Avenue

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Wild about Saskatoon

What do you wish to do ?: Request to Speak

If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely: In person

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: City Council February 22

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 9.3.1 Swale boundaries

Comments:

This is an updated version of the letter I submitted earlier today. Please share this version with Council.
To Saskatoon City Council
From Wild about Saskatoon

Wild about Saskatoon is proud to endorse the Swale Watchers' vision and recommendations for Swale boundaries. We are especially pleased to provide this support in concert with the Saskatchewan chapter of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Saskatchewan, Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas, Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation, Nature Saskatchewan, the Regional Center for Excellence for Education on Sustainable Development, the Saskatoon Nature Society, the Saskatchewan Environmental Society, Sierra Club Canada Foundation, SOS Trees and Walking Saskatoon.

This expression of unanimity is significant and deserves to be highlighted. It reflects a shared understanding that simply drawing a line around "the best of what's left" will not be sufficient over the long term to maintain the Swales in good health. Fragmentation and habitat loss are the leading causes of species' decline and loss. It is essential to ensure that our protected areas are as large as possible, well buffered and connected to one another.

In some instances, the necessary steps forward are obvious. To protect the sharp-tailed grouse population, for example, the city needs to take its lead from established best practices as defined by the highest regional standards. This means adding additional buffers and protections around the lek, as recommended by the Swale Watchers.

Providing buffers around the Small Swale is another simple intervention with a big reward. The Natural Areas Screening report warns that disrupting surface drainage into the Small Swale will very likely cause these valuable wetlands to dry up. This loss will be triggered if development, with its impermeable roofs and pavements, pushes too close.

The good news is that creating a buffer for the Small Swale can be achieved at zero cost. The grasses and shrubs growing there now are nothing special, but they are doing the job very well. You have to love a problem that can be solved by drawing a couple of lines on a map and then doing nothing.

In their most recent submission to council, the Swale Watchers make a number of other recommendations, all of which merit your support:

- Seek out best practices for designing conservation buffers and wildlife corridors.
- Modernize the dated (actually obsolete) 2012 Northeast Swale Development Guidelines.
- Investigate outside funding (from senior governments?) to assist with restoration of degraded habitats and the creation of wildlife corridors.
- Instruct the developer to engage meaningfully with the community in drafting the neighbourhood Concept Plan.

And most important of all:

- Ensure that birds and animals can continue to move from one Swale to the other, as well as renewing the connection between the Northeast Swale and the natural corridor of the river valley.

Movement is the essence of grassland ecosystems. It gives ecological meaning to the wide open spaces of the prairies. The proposed subdivision will fragment and distort existing patterns and relationships, making it essential for us to open up new pathways of connection.

Finally, we want to shine a light on the neighbourhood that lies at the center of the Swale Watchers' visionary map. We've seen glimpses of this type of development in Saskatoon before, in projects like Radiance and Wolf Willow Co-Housing and some of the interesting in-fill in Riversdale and elsewhere. The subdivision proposed by the Swale Watchers would incorporate this same kind of "gentle" or "missing middle" density, siting four or five homes in the space that might otherwise be occupied by one. Thoughtful municipalities have already begun to employ this concept for infill (Calgary, AB), brownfield redevelopment (Markham, ON) and new neighbourhoods (Langley and Summerland, BC).

Urban sprawl is not just cripplingly expensive; from an ecological point of view, it is a killer. The compact neighbourhood proposed by the Swale Watchers deserves serious consideration. Therefore, in addition to the above, we recommend:

That Council direct Saskatoon Land and/or city administration to report on the feasibility of a compact, environmentally sensitive, low-mid to medium-density development that will complement and enhance this unique site.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Blythe
Andrea Carroll
Chad Hammond

Wild about Saskatoon
www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org
hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org

Attachments:

- [9.3.1 February 22.pdf](#) 119.23 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No



February 20, 2023

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¹ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/e269aad8-3664-402a-b7cb-77abe89e9617/resource/6195d2d4-9f7d-43e5-ada5-81a8210fae38/download/3054250-2011-recommended-land-use-guidelines-protection-wildlife-species-habitat.pdf>

² Eg. https://www.fs.usda.gov/nac/buffers/using/how_to.html

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³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding.html>;