

## **Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems Public Input Summary**

November 2015

The kick-off public meeting for the *Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems Project* was held on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at Bruce Randolph School.

There were 53 members of the public in attendance at the bilingual community meeting, which included a large group presentation followed by Q&A, as well as an open-house format before and after allowing for one-on-one discussions to share information.

Bilingual comment forms were provided in both paper and digital formats at the meeting. Forms included opportunities for attendees to offer specific feedback based on draft concepts shown. Comments were also collected through email and via the project website through December 7<sup>th</sup>. A total of 32 comment forms and emails were submitted and/or completed during this timeframe.

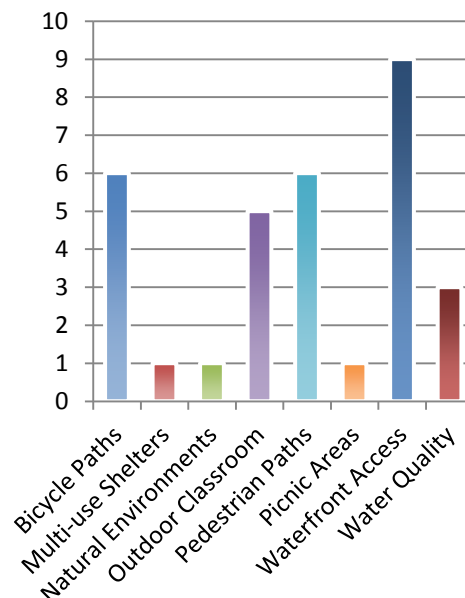
A breakdown of responses to specific questions, general takeaways and key themes can be found below. A table containing raw comments submitted during the meeting and in the two week timeframe following can be found at the end of this report.

### **Based on community input, the following themes emerged:**

- **Look and feel of detention is important-** Attendees were curious as to what actual large-format detention areas would look like and whether that design would integrate well into the community context.
- **Preference for open channel/natural landscaping-** Attendees showed interest in open channel over pipe because of the opportunity for water quality and community aesthetic.
  - Some noted a desire to see water used as an amenity rather than just additional community infrastructure.
- **Environmental/public safety is top of mind-** Community members were highly engaged in how improvements would affect water quality, public safety and impact the environment
  - Many were interested in receiving more information about how these elements would be worked into design.
- **Property acquisition is a concern-** Many residents were concerned about possible property acquisition and subsequent timing.
  - Residents and community members favored the options that impacted the least amount of properties.
  - Many requested more information regarding the process and timeline of potential acquisitions.

- **Connectivity is a desirable neighborhood enhancement-** Numerous community members stated the importance of increasing and prioritizing bike/ped connections, specifically in the Cole neighborhood.
  - Utilization of the Market Lead for this purpose was highly favorable to attendees.
  - Attendees expressed a desire to see a focus on bike/ped amenities in all neighborhoods.
  - Bike and ped access in and around Globeville Landing Park was also cited as a top priority.
- **Communication is critical to success-** Following the meeting, there was strong desire expressed for routine meeting and project update notifications going forward since this is a fast paced project.
  - Cole residents said online communication and door-to-door flyer service is not effective and prefer USPS mail and/or direct phone contact going forward.
- **Attendees want more information on how the drainage improvements will impact their neighborhoods-** Some respondents left blanks on questions or stated they needed more information in order to comment on certain concepts.
  - Several attendees asked for more specifics on what properties will be impacted.
  - Many mentioned a need for more context about where improvements will go.
- **Globeville Landing Park-** Attendees expressed concern about the future of the park and desire for it to be programmed to its full potential.
  - Attendees stated they do not want to see it become solely an area for detention or flood control. Rather, they are invested in making the park a safer and more enjoyable amenity that can be utilized by the community. (See chart below, containing the results of the amenity activity at the public meeting.)
  - Overall, attendees from the Globeville area asked to be more included in the decision-making and design process.

### GLO: What's Important to You?



**Comment Form Responses:**

*(Please note not all respondents answered every question.)*

**Question 1 :**

**Preferred method of receiving future project information**

Method	Total Number of Respondents
Mail	3
Email	12
Other	0

**Question 2:**

**How did you hear about this meeting?**

Method	Total Number of Respondents
Flyer	1
Email	6
Website	1
Other	7*

\*attended other neighborhood meetings that announced the Platte to Park Hill meeting, community Facebook page, word of mouth

**Question 3a:**

**Do you live or work in the project area?**

Yes	No
12	2

**Question 3b:**

**If so, what neighborhood?**

Neighborhood	Total Number of Respondents
City Park	0
Clayton	1
Cole	8
Elyria-Swansea	1
Globeville	0
Park Hill	1
River North	1
Other	1*

\*North City Park/Skyland

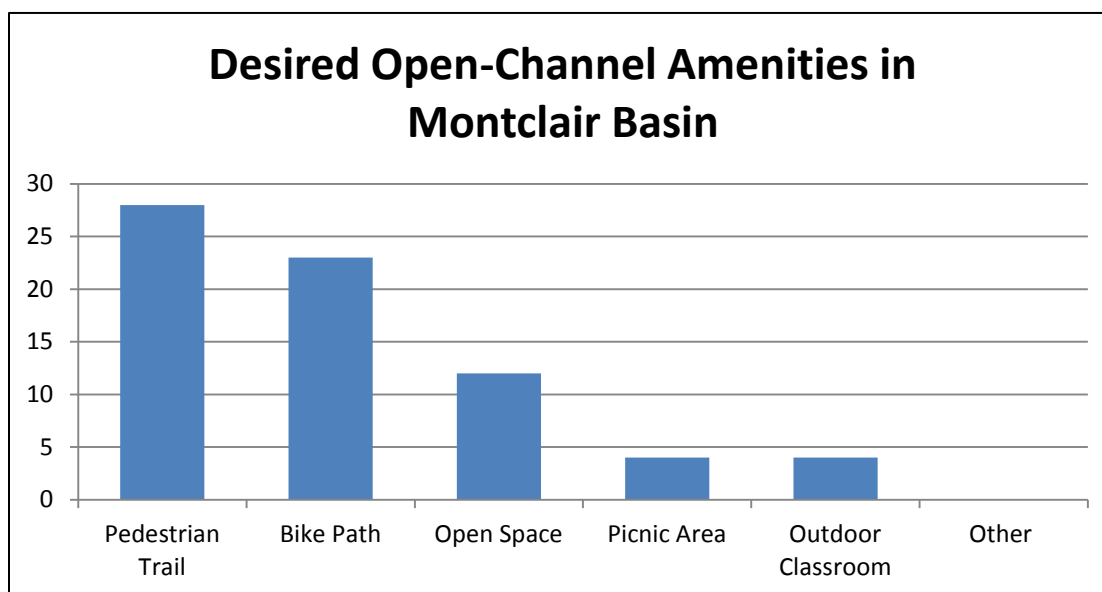
**Question:**

The long-term vision of the open channel will include phased community improvements. What type of park-like amenities would you like to see along the future open channel in the Montclair Basin? Please select your top three (use 1 for most preferred, etc.):

*(Answers shown are ranked based on feedback)*

1. Pedestrian trail
2. Bike Path
3. Open Space\*
4. Picnic Area\*
5. Outdoor classroom

\*Tied



## Open-Ended Comments

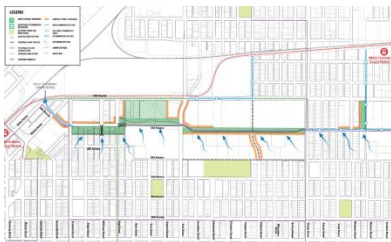
*Please note, the below comments appear as they were written. No edits have been made to spelling, grammar, format or content.*

### Question:

**Tonight you saw two draft alternatives for the Montclair Basin. Please provide feedback on each:**

#### 1) Cole neighborhood detention with open channel

##### Option 1A

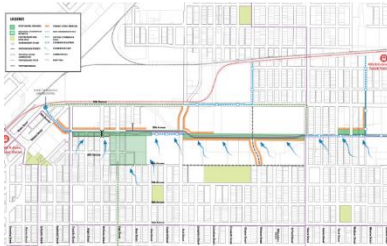


- Like the open channel and bike/ped access idea. Would love to see this extended through the neighborhoods
- Concern with acquisition of homes
- This would have a negative impact on our community. We do not want to see loss of homes.
- Yes but I respect Harrington Elementary and their need to access riparian area. Avoid concrete containment-ugly and hard. No roads to confuse purpose of swales—paths ok.
- How are we supposed to evaluate these? We're expected to look at a bunch of color maps with a bunch of jargon on them and evaluate which of these options "integrates innovative storm water management strategies" or "creates flexible, multi-functional spaces to be used through the days and seasons"? I suspect that even an expert would have difficulty making a meaningful comment given the provided information (e.g., what information have you provided on "Schedule Feasibility" or "Habitat Creation"?).
- What does "stormwater detention" look like? Is it ugly? Is it a nice pond with ducks in it? What's involved in the construction of "new stormwater pipes"? How long does it take? Does it affect traffic? How many homes will be affected by each option? How will those people be compensated? Do all of the options perform equally well in terms of drainage? Cost? Time?
- Pro: Restores 39th Ave from High St to Steele St; potential future restoration of 38th Ave and Clayton St. Bike path from Franklin to York is located mostly in the flood channel / greenway. Wide channel allows for natural treatment of stormwater. Stormwater detention on the south side of 40th Ave requires minimal demolition of existing structures.

Con: Costs - Requires acquisition / demolition of existing residential properties south of PortaPower; requires construction of two bridges, rather than one; stormwater detention on the south side of 40th Ave requires property acquisition. Neighborhood Impact - Requires dislocation of residents in the 39th Ave corridor from Franklin to Race; cuts a wide swath through the neighborhood, altering its feel significantly.

- Like that additional storm water detention location minimizes need to demolish housing. I think this plan still encroaches too far South into Cole.
- Although this option would destroy many peoples lives and homes in the Cole neighborhood. I still think it is a much better option than 1b and 1c
- I love the open channel idea. It really connects us with our stormwater flows, helps reduce pollution, and creates more green space.

### Option 1B



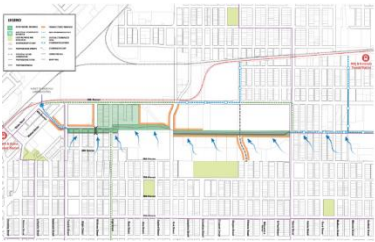
- Pro: Restores 39th Ave from High St to Steele St; creates Race St connection from 40th to 39th; potential future restoration of 38th Ave and Clayton St. Costs - minimizes residential property acquisition on the south side of 39th Ave from Franklin to Race; requires construction of only one bridge.

Con: COSTS - Stormwater detention requires substantial acquisition / demolition of existing residential / commercial properties. NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT - Requires substantial dislocation of residents / businesses in the stormwater detention area; disruptes existing access from York St via 38th Ave; alters neighborhood feel significantly. BIKE PATH - Use of stormwater pipe from Vine to York takes cyclists / pedestrians out of the flood channel / greenway. LEAST FAVORITE option.

- This option eliminates way too much housing in one of Denver's most racially and ethically concentrated areas of poverty. If open canals cannot be achieved without encroaching this far south into Cole and without demolishing so many houses and part of an employment center (Coke Factory) in the area then we should just install new storm water drains and eliminate the greenspace. The amount of homes to be demolished for a retention pond and bike path/open canal is unacceptable.

- This option would be a disaster for me and my family. My wife and I started our family in this house, and planned on growing old together in this neighborhood. This plan would force us to relocate out of Denver, which is the last thing we ever want to do.
- My house is in this proposed plan. Please...we have worked so hard at getting our house. We love our neighborhood. We chose this neighborhood because of the people and location a long time ago. Please, do NOT go through with these plans of taking peoples' homes that they have worked hard for.

### Option 1C



- Pro: Bike path from Franklin to York is located in the flood channel / greenway. Potential future restoration of Clayton St. Controls costs by requiring construction of only one bridge on Williams St.

Con: Omits restoration of 39th Ave from High St to York St; omits future restoration of 38th Ave from York to Steele. Costs - Stormwater detention requires substantial acquisition / demolition of existing residential / commercial properties between Williams and Vine south of 40th Ave.

Mixed: Neighborhood Impact is fairly high, but stormwater detention area could provide an attractive open space amenity in a part of the neighborhood currently underutilized / underdeveloped. Open space could enhance the northern approach to the neighborhood, but removal of existing structures could result in greater noise impact from the rail yard north of 40th Ave. Failure to close aforementioned gaps in the street grid makes this my second least favorite option.

- This is a better option than both a and b because there are quite a few abandoned buildings that are not being used in the area proposed for the retention pond. I still think it eliminates too much of the neighborhood when a storm drain could be used to retain these housing opportunities.
- This options also would destroy many homes in the Cole neighborhood, and i do not think it is a good idea.

### Option 1D



- Pro: Restores 39th Ave from High St to Steele St; potential future restoration of 38th Ave and Clayton St. Bike path from Franklin to York is located mostly in the flood channel / greenway. Wide channel allows for natural treatment of stormwater. Stormwater detention at the southeast corner of 40th Ave / York St requires no demolition of existing structures and provides open space at a highly visible intersection.

Con: Costs - Requires acquisition / demolition of existing residential properties south of PortaPower; requires construction of two bridges, rather than one; stormwater detention at 40th Ave / York St requires acquisition of property with potential for high commercial value. Neighborhood Impact - Requires dislocation of residents in the 39th Ave corridor from Franklin to Race; cuts a wide swath through the neighborhood, altering its feel significantly.

- I think this is the best option to minimize the loss of housing and maintain the character of the neighborhood. Most of the property to be demolished between Franklin and High consists of a yard of scrap metal and a bar that is rarely open. Retention pond location is ideal.
- Although this option still destroys quite a few homes, I think it beats many of the other options.



### Option 2: City Park Golf Course detention with open channel along 39<sup>th</sup>



- Pro: Restores 39th Ave from High St to Steele St; potential future restoration of 38th Ave and Clayton St. Bike path from Franklin to York is located mostly in the flood channel / greenway. Wide channel allows for natural treatment of stormwater. Stormwater detention at City Park Golf Course eliminates the need for significant detention in downstream neighborhoods.

Con: Costs - Requires acquisition / demolition of existing residential properties south of PortaPower; requires construction of two bridges, rather than one. Neighborhood Impact - Requires dislocation of residents in the 39th Ave corridor from Franklin to Race; cuts a wide swath through the neighborhood, altering its feel significantly.

- I like this plan over others aside from 1d/1c except for the fact that it encroaches too far south and eliminates too much housing. If this could be changed to follow the 1d canal route I think it would be ideal.
- I think this option is the best of them all. Although many homes will still be destroyed, it seems to leave north Cole mostly intact. Aside from golfers and those who live in the homes being destroyed, I believe most residents of Cole would be choose this option over the others.
- I think this is a more viable plan because the area is already provided versus constructing a new remediation area.
- Good idea for upstream relief in watershed. Do not want to see the golf course/park affected negatively
- Great idea! My preference
- Would like more info.
- No real opinion
- I believe option two and alternative two are the same? If not please send me information. I like this plan over others aside from 1d except for the fact that it encroaches too far south and eliminates too much housing. If this could be changed to follow the 1d canal route I think it would be ideal.
- I think I prefer this one as it takes fewer houses along 39th.
- Again, I really love the ideas of open channels that connect us with wate

**Question:**

**We also showed you three versions of detention at Park Hill Golf Club. Please give us your feedback on each draft alternative:**

- 1) Collect water along Smith Road in large inlets\*\*
- 2) Collect water and pipe it along 41st and daylight it into Park Hill Golf Club at 41<sup>st</sup>\*\*
- 3) Collect water and pipe it along 39th and daylight it into Park Hill Golf Club at 39<sup>th</sup>\*\*

*\*\* None of these questions received responses aside from “No opinion” or “Lack sufficient information.”*

**General Comments Submitted by Email**

Is there any information as to when there will a meeting for the people that will be affected, my mother is 90 years old and she would like to attend to start making plans?

The proposed Montclair Basin project has recently been brought to my attention and I have several concerns, the first and foremost being the City's failure to notify stakeholders in the 3800-3900 block of High Street such as myself and my neighbors. I am extremely disappointed that we were not notified of the public meeting that took place on November 17, 2015, and find it very suspect that no one on my street was notified while other residents in the neighborhood received timely notification of the meeting.

As you know, the housing market in Denver is extremely tight, especially in this area. I am concerned with many of the options listed in the development plan, but especially plan 1b that eliminates over an entire block and a half of single and multi-family housing in our neighborhood for a retention pond with green space and an open air canal with a bike path. Surely these new amenities are great in theory, but at what cost? Are we really willing to eliminate so much housing (50+ units) in one of Denver's most historically racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty for a retention pond while we are in the midst of one of the lowest housing vacancy rates in recent history?

This needs to be strongly considered moving forward and Denver needs to take lost affordable housing opportunities for low income, often minority families into consideration. Many affected homeowners have lived in this neighborhood for generations and it is extremely important to minimize the overall effect of this project on the longtime residents of the Cole neighborhood.

With these thoughts in mind, and after review of all of the proposed options, I believe that option 1c has best path for the open air canal from High to Franklin (minimal southern encroachment into Cole) and eliminates a currently underutilized area of Cole for the retention pond. I do think, however, that this area is prime for revitalization and that the best option would be to use the proposed path of the open air canal from option 1c with the retention location of option 2 or option 1d. The retention pond location for 1d would only potentially require the relocation of two auto parts stores which is much

better than eliminating approximately 50 units from the Cole neighborhood (1b) for a retention pond. It is much more responsible to minimize the loss of housing within Cole and other areas of Denver by locating this pond on public space (2) or on a space that has minimal effect (2 auto stores) on current and future housing and developmental opportunities from Cole (1d or 2).

I would like to discuss these proposed options with you further; I also expect the City and County of Denver to engage myself and my neighbors and to provide us the opportunity to discuss, vote or provide feedback that will receive equal consideration to those who were provided the opportunity to attend the November 17th meeting. We look forward to the City and County of Denver providing us an equal opportunity to engage in the planning and development processes as we are so entitled. Please timely notify us of any future developments and opportunities to engage in this project and let me know how we can provide feedback that will be considered equally to the feedback that was provided to you in the November 17th meeting. I look forward to speaking with you further about this matter and appreciate your attention to our concerns.

I am an investor who owns a home located at 3842 high St in Denver (Cole Neighborhood) and my neighbor just informed me that the city has plans to build a park where my house is located. I am trying to gather information as this property is currently for sale and I need to know what the plans are moving forward to disclose to potential buyers. I have not received any information at the property or mailed to the address on record with the city. Please send me any information regarding this potential project.

Do you have any plans and specifications associated with the Park to Platte stormwater project? If so, can you share those?

I attended the "Park Hill to the Platte Public "Meeting on Tuesday night. Thanks for your part in organizing it. I'd like to share a specific map I saw that night with my community. The map highlighted all of the water flows throughout the basins as they make their way to the Platte. Do you mind sending it my way when you have the opportunity? Thank you in advance.

It was nice talking to you and your team last night. After reviewing the plans discussed at last night's meeting I do think it would be a good idea for you to come out and take a look at our property. It seems every plan you had on display at a minimum bordered our entire property line and many of the plans ran directly through us. Again, we are very open to working with the city on this project but would like to be involved in the discussions regarding the direction it will go. I would also be interested to see what Xcel Energy says regarding the underground power line that runs along our property line (basically, exactly where you wanted to run your channel, along what would be 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue).

I'll be out of the office starting Friday and won't be back until the 30<sup>th</sup> however you can always contact me on my cell or by e-mail. If you have any other questions that I may be able to answer please let me know. I'd love to assist you where I can on this project.

I am a homeowner in the Cole Neighborhood. I live at 3814 High St. I have just looked at the purposed plans for the new Storm Water system that is going to be put in in the coming years. My house is in the path of one of the plans (1b). I'm completely scared to death now of losing my home that I have worked so hard to buy. We bought in Cole 10 years ago, knowing that this neighborhood was where we wanted to live, raise our family, and stay in forever. Please please, know that we do not support this plan. We will do what it takes to not see people of this neighborhood be run out of their homes. Especially when Denver has been trying to say that they want to keep people in affordable homes. We pay our mortgage, we update our home, we keep our home beautiful. We love our neighborhood.

Please keep us up to date of when meetings are. NO ONE has contacted us or our neighbors by mail, flyers, or face to face of these plans. We heard about this by word of mouth from someone walking down the sidewalk. That just doesn't seem fair.

One of our neighbors attended the informational session on this project and mentioned we should find out some more information about the future plans. Is there anything else you can provide apart from the one webpage? There was some mention of several options but I don't see those mentioned online.

Feel free to contact me or send any other info you might have. It would be great to know about any other meetings planned in the future as well.

I live on 38th and High all of my life my parents raised 7 kids in this house, I was born in this house and have nowhere else to go, please don't take my house away I would be totally devastated, I hope this project can be accomplished without anyone losing their house, please let me know if any further meetings I didn't even know about the first one. Thanx for your time.

I am one of the owners of 3975 York Street; the other owner is my brother in-law. Thank you for all the information as well as the presentation last night at the Bruce Randolph School. We were just putting together some feedback (on your form) as well as thoughts regarding the open channels in the Cole neighborhood. If possible could we get copies of each Alternative illustrations? I would be more than willing to pick them up from one of your city offices if you are unable to send electronically.

It was a pleasure meeting with you last night.

I've spoken with our (Cole Neighborhood) board and we are working on a time for you to come and present the 5 stormwater detention options on the table to our Denver community.

In the interim, can you please send me electronic copies of the options? Will you also keep me apprised of upcoming meetings?

On a related note, I wanted to give you some feedback. The website provided at last night's meeting points visitors to the 6 major initiatives our Mayor is working on. Nowhere on the NDCC site does it mention the stormwater project. One must know to search for it in order to find information. I question how residents would come across this information and educate themselves based on the information provided.

One other piece of feedback, I was disappointed to see that the city or the project team has already taken a preferential stance towards some of the initiatives during the presentation. This was the first public meeting and Denver residents should have an opportunity to evaluate all of the options and weigh in on them. Both the presentation and the comment form highlighted only two options.

Thank you for considering my feedback. I look forward to receiving copies of the maps with the various options.

I am a resident of the Cole Neighborhood in northeast Denver. My address is 3814 High Street, and would be directly affected by Montclair Basin Alternative 1b along with everyone else on my block. My wife and I bought this home in 2006, our daughter was born here in 2012, and we have always planned on spending our entire lives here in Cole. Plan 1b would force us to relocate our family out of Denver as real estate prices in the area have skyrocketed. We love living in Denver, and adore our home.

Since we heard the news about our home possibly being destroyed, my wife has been crying at the thought. I hope families like ours will be thought of when the final plan is decided on. Please keep us, and everyone that could possibly be affected by these plans informed of any meetings and decisions made.

I own a home at the north end of Cole, specifically at 38th and Williams. Through the Nextdoor Cole app I heard that the city is considering a number of plans for addressing stormwater/drainage in the area. One of the five options listed was to remove homes between Vine and Williams at the north end of Cole, which is why I'm writing. Do you have any more details on this project or the other options? What about a map of the proposed project area, by option, other than the one map that is rendered at the following URL:

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denver-department-of-public-works/construction-projects/construction-in-progress/platte-park-hill-stormwater.html>

I would like to understand exactly what's being proposed, what areas the individual options will impact, the timeline, etc. Any information you could provide me at this email address would be greatly appreciated.

I was unable to attend this meeting will you please forward the PowerPoint used in the presentation and point me to the information site for other public information. Thanks.

I am a resident of the 3800 Block of North Gilpin Street, an area that might be modified by the proposed stormwater system plan.

I'm wondering when the next meeting on this project is going to be?

I was not notified of the meeting on 11/17 by mail. I found a flyer that was attached to my fence the same day as the meeting.

In the past I have gotten letters from the city detailing the current construction project at 38th and Washington replacing the Blake St bridge, as well as the public meetings regarding the new i70 build-out.

I am not alone in not being notified, many of the residents on High St where the majority of changes are likely to happen did not even receive flyers.

I wanted to let you know that the city's actions in not properly notifying the people living in this area are being viewed as deceitful.

I cannot find any information online regarding any more meetings on this project.

Why was I not notified of the public meeting via USPS mail? Will there be more meetings on this project? Will more adequate notification be provided in the future?

**Criticisms:** Comments at <https://cole.nextdoor.com> indicate there was inadequate advance notification of the public meeting to Cole residents. Display boards at the public meeting lacked explanatory text, and the oral presentation didn't provide interpretive detail. The benefits of natural treatment of stormwater weren't discussed at all. Effort was required to find a person with expertise to answer specific questions. Documentation available online fails to close the information gap.

**Suggestions:** Each of the alternatives will have significant impact in the Cole neighborhood. A public meeting should be scheduled **IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD** with assistance from the neighborhood association to better inform residents about the various options and obtain direct feedback. Explanatory materials should be made available at public meetings and online to improve the quality of public commentary.

**Observations:** I am strongly biased toward options that will improve the street grid, thereby making our neighborhoods more walkable and bikeable. In selecting options for the open channel, I'd like to see priority given to easy and safe green space access from both sides of the channel.

Improvement of water quality is also very important to me. That said, I recognize that options most conducive to improved water quality may be the most costly to construct and most disruptive to the neighborhood fabric. The appropriate choices in this case may not be the ones we wish had been made in the late 19th century.