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**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Big Dry Creek "Improvement" Open House

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Well, I attended the Big Dry Creek "Improvement" Open House.

The good news is that the food truck offerings were delicious. The BBQ Brisket food truck even offered a vegetarian option ... that is the Jack Fruit BBQ sandwich with a very good side of potato salad. I would say that the dessert truck might have even been better, as the Snickerdoodle Ice Cream sandwich was particularly delicious ...and HUGE!

But, when we talk about the event itself ...well that was more than a little depressing and disturbing.

Lots of visuals around, but the renderings did not even measure up to what had already been destroyed on the site. That is, usually the graphics make a place look even better than it is. These renderings made the site look even WORSE than it had been before. And when you looked out the window, or if you sat on the interconnecting patio between the 2 City Park recreation buildings, the devastation was even more dramatic.

Why in the world was it necessary to take out approximately 40 large, mature and beautiful Cottonwood trees?

Why was it necessary to destroy the wildlife habitat that already existed here only to replace it with sheer destruction that won't measure up to anything of beauty or actual purpose for another 10 or so years - at the earliest?

There seems to be a mantra in Westminster that change is good, no matter how expensive and destructive it is ... and then we label it as "improvements", even though everyone can tell that it is actually no improvement at all!

NO! Change is only good if it makes things better - not worse! I am really getting sick of seeing beautiful places destroyed at the hands of huge bulldozers and "planners" who think action is the same as advancement. Thoughtful planning and truly GOOD and MINIMAL actions are needed to keep our beautiful places intact while offering true and meaningful change in a much better way to REDUCE disruption to people and wildlife as well.

I would have loved it, if we - as a city - had incorporated natural techniques of stream bank & soil erosion mitigation such as phasing the plan, or even using nature's engineers...that is beavers, to mimic what happened centuries ago before the White man came and converted, perverted and destroyed all that is natural simply to accommodate human's singular needs that often exclude the needs of the rest of the planet. Beaver dams can slow down spring runoff or other fast flooding events, while also allowing for the passage of water in a more slowed and effective form. Beaver dams can also offer places for ducks and other waterfowl to breed in slower and warmer waters, the same is true for fish. All the while, the beaver dams allow for hydration of surrounding soils and keep water around much longer throughout the summer, meaning that the severe droughts we are seeing today, did not exist to the extent we are seeing on a regular basis in the past.

It is estimated that before the White Man came to North America and trapped & killed beavers - by the millions - to send their furs back to Europe, the erosion that we see along most riverbeds throughout the nation, did not even exist. That is because the beaver dams kept flooding waters in check, so the drastic flooding and soil erosion did not even occur to the extents that we see today. And I know for a fact, that some existing beaver families that have tried to make Big Dry Creek their home have been forcibly removed. I used to LOVE seeing the beavers as part of our Open Space and wildlife habitat...yet we constantly destroy them and their ability to keep our waterways in check. Heck, the damage that we saw, nationwide and in the past, with hurricane Katrina is thought to be way more dangerous than if we had kept existing wetland areas intact around the area. Who knows how the devastation of the current Hurricane Helene would be if we let nature, instead of outright destructive human intervention and "Human Engineering" rule all land use decisions?

There has got to be a better way to do things around here than to constantly destroy everything that is beautiful.

Sincerely,  
Karen Kalavity