



Genesee-Schmitz

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

January 26, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

We are pleased to write this letter in support of the Urban Homestead Foundation's efforts to acquire the surplus Dakota Substation property at 50th Avenue SW and SW Dakota Street. The property owner, Seattle City Light, has cleaned up the property to meet environmental standards, and has preserved—for the moment—the beautiful old trees and some of the vegetation on the site. Preservation of this greenery happened *only* through the strong advocacy of the GSNC, the Seattle Green Spaces Coalition, and other community members. Otherwise, Seattle City Light would have cut all the trees and sold the parcels to private residential developers, as has happened elsewhere in the city. If the Urban Homestead Foundation cannot raise the money to purchase the property *this year*, private development will still be the final outcome for the Dakota Substation.

The community strongly prefers instead that the green space be preserved for the long term and the property used for the benefit of the whole community. Preservation for community use is especially important because (1) the property sits directly across the street from the new 660-student Genesee Hill Elementary School; and (2) Seattle is in a period of extraordinary growth, and very little green space is left that can be preserved.

The Urban Homestead Foundation has proposed a plan for the old substation property that is consistent with the community's desires for the property. The Foundation is embarking on a one-year mission to purchase the property, "with plans to establish an active green space and urban gathering center that models, promotes and teaches green building and sustainable food systems through community and leadership development."

The Foundation plans to name the property "The Dakota Homestead," and it will be developed into "a vibrant corner of sustainable green practices and urban agriculture, providing a place to celebrate our natural resources through demonstration gardens, weekly classes and seasonal events. The space will also serve as a food hub and seed lending library, connecting neighbors with each other and local farmers. In addition, the

land will provide a green space for schools to use as curriculum enrichment in topics such as edible gardening, urban wildlife, seasonal cooking, crafting, and home finances.”

We believe that the Urban Homestead Foundation’s purchase of this property will be highly beneficial to the community, including the many students of Genesee Hill School across the street. We urge you to support the Foundation’s efforts as generously as you can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kerrie J. Schurr".

Kerrie Schurr, Communications Chair

(On behalf of the Executive Committee)