

Dear Jamie,

I hope you are well and enjoying the gorgeous spring we're having.

I thought I would reach out regarding your recent article here, seeing as I am the person subdividing the property adjacent to the Post Point heron rookery.

First, with the judgements passed in your piece, I believe it important you know just a little about me. I am not a developer. I'm a photographer and am not looking to turn a profit whatsoever from this property. Post divorce, I am simply looking to build a home for my 8-year old son and I **(which would lie completely outside of the 197' heron buffer and not be visible from the nests).**

I can very much understand your and other's concern over this sensitive property, as I share the same concerns. Given my nature-respecting upbringing, line of work and if you knew me, who I am at my core, I very much consider myself an environmentalist and wildlife advocate. Had you taken the time to give me a call or walked the property with me, I am hopeful your article would have had a different tone and a more well-rounded perspective.

I want to make clear a few points pertaining to your public story and give you a little history here.

You begin by stating the city approved a Critical Area Permit (CAP) without public process. To my knowledge, and I have been working very closely with the city to follow all due procedures, we have very closely followed the public process. I believe the first public notice about this, was posted in early September, 2018, followed by a neighborhood meeting in October, at which all of this was discussed. I wish you had joined us.

You then go on, stating the new homes will, "encroach deeply into the city's own designated 197-foot buffer around the colony". To be very clear, my homesite is completely outside of the 197' buffer and the nests are not at all visible from the homesite. The building envelope on the other lot, at it's "deepest" point, would encroach about 35' into the buffer, then, moving east, tapers quickly to 0'. More importantly, there are thick conifer trees between this homesite and the rookery, almost completely blocking the nests, visually, from the homesite (165' away at it's closest point). Further, I will be required to plant even more coniferous trees in this area, to ensure complete screening. Visual disturbances from the nests are the biggest issue in protecting the herons. **Neither my home nor the other home will be visible from the nests.**

I would also like to point out, after the major cons

You seemed to take issue with the (very respectable) wildlife biologist I hired, so I feel the need to shed some light here. While trying to purchase the property, I had many meetings with the city regarding the best practices in protecting the herons, while "developing" this property as minimally as possible. One of the first calls I made, was to Ann Eissinger, the biologist who has studied this rookery for many years. We subsequently had a few very cordial and educational calls. I very much hoped to hire Ann, as she clearly has a long history with this heron rookery. However, after our calls, it was mutually clear, that due to Ann living in Oregon, it would not be efficient to hire Ann for the multiple site visits and meetings required. I then inquired locally and hired, Vikki Jackson, a local biologist, who is extremely knowledgeable, professional and I guarantee, has the heron's best interest in mind. Vikki, her co-workers and I, have walked the property numerous times, always discussing how best to protect the herons. Per Vikki's recommendations, which I would imagine Ann would be in agreement with, Kim Weil, the City's Environmental Planner, would issue a Critical Areas Permit (CAP) to create these two homesites with very stringent protection for the herons. **Most importantly, I am required to enhance the 197' heron buffer in ways which will provide MORE protection for the herons than they currently experience. This includes: installation of a 555' split rail perimeter fence, closure of existing "pirate" trails used by humans and dogs (that passes very near to the nests), exterior construction of two homes limited to the 5 months while herons have migrated south, exterior lights on homes to face down, "Native Grown Protection Area" signage on fence, tree plantings, continued monitoring of rookery, etc.**

Essentially, when the herons migrate south for the fall/early winter, they will come back to two homes they can't see, a fence around their buffer (which has been put into a conservation easement) and the closure of human/dog trails that pass under them.

You mentioned the removal of trees. I would like to point out, NO trees need to be removed within the 197' buffer. Regarding the few trees that need to be removed on the two homesites, I have worked closely with both Vikki (heron biologist) and Kim Weil (City Environmental Planner) to very carefully select these trees. Both agree these removal of these few trees, will not affect the rookery.

Regarding your comments of two “luxury homes” being built here, I don’t understand how the type of homes built here, is any of your concern or how it supports your argument. What constitutes an adequate residence, is all based on perspective. My son is adopted from Ethiopia, from where I am currently writing you. Three days ago, my ex-wife, son and I, shared coffee and popcorn with his birth family in their very rural home; a round 20’ diameter hut, made of sticks and mud, with a dirt floor and thatch roof. 5-10 people live in this house. I have plans to build a 2400 sf, 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home as a primary (and only) residence for my son and I. I believe most Americans would consider the home I hope to build, an average-sized home in our country and not excessive. Regardless, this isn’t the issue at hand.

In my (and the city’s) opinion, if you look at the history of this property, the conservation easement property I am creating (half of the property) and look closely at the CAP requirements, ***the herons will actually be better-protected than they are today.*** I can assure you, I have been very, very diligent in planning this with my core beliefs in mind; conservation.

Ultimately, I prefer to have these conversations in person and would very much welcome a stroll around the property with you or **anyone else interested.**

Thank you for your time, Jamie, and I hope to connect soon.

Sincerely,
Gabe Rogel