

Re: Case no. CE 190735

Van Egmond property at 1620 E Williams St.

I am writing in support of the natural yard at my neighbor, Warren Van Egmonds, residence at 1620 E. Williams St. The city of Tempe invited citizens to weigh-in on plans for a sustainable community. Mr. Van Egmonds yard demonstrates sustainability and instead of being vilified and persecuted for a yard that reduces evaporation with its lush overstory, eliminates the use of noise and co2 polluting lawn equipment as well as the use of toxic herbicides and pesticides, Mr. Van Egmond should be hailed as a hero in the vanguard of the no-mow, natural-yard movement. The city should educate the public and revise ordinances to be natural-yard friendly if it is serious about sustainability. Snags, leaf litter and long grass returns nutrients to the soil and offers food and shelter for native birds (not the pesky pigeons) and other wildlife, which in turn help control insects. Over 3 billion birds in North America have vanished mainly from lost habitat and cat casualties. The feral cat colony across the street from Mr. Van Egmonds is the true public nuisance but that is another story. Pesticides have been catastrophic for our pollinators and the natural yard is a step in the right direction in providing a healthy habitat for pollinators, too.

I would be heartbroken if Mr. Van Egmond loses his appeals and his yard suffers abatement. It would destroy the soothing, natural oasis in a sea of clipped grass and trained bushes.

Laurie Nessel