

Amy Hagopian, PhD
School of Public Health
University of Washington
PO Box 357230
Seattle WA 98195-7230

October 27, 2018

Dear Dr. Hagopian,

I write for the Safe Seattle Facebook page and The Blog Quixotic. I've been following homelessness issues in Seattle for several years, and I've given particular attention to an advocacy group called SHARE (the Seattle Housing and Resource Effort). I understand you're familiar with SHARE and its director, Scott Morrow.

As you know, SHARE currently manages the day-to-day operations at the Licton Springs Village city-sanctioned low-barrier homeless camp at 8620 Aurora Ave North in Seattle. SHARE and its partners (the City of Seattle and the Low Income Housing Institute, or LIHI) were required to host a public one-year review of the camp to gather community input on its operations. That meeting took place on the evening of March 26, 2018 at North Seattle College, and I attended it. At the meeting, you and five of your students at the School of Public Health (SPH) presented an executive summary of an evaluation study¹ that you said was commissioned by SHARE. Though the executive summary is critical of SHARE's performance on some points, it is mostly approving, and it recommends that the City continue funding and permitting the camp for another year. The document ends by urging the City to giving SHARE and LIHI even more money.

As you know, the City recently announced it would close the camp after its second year, due to concerns about management, cost effectiveness, and crime.² In its analysis, the City has been particularly critical of SHARE's role.

I have some questions about how the study was produced and presented. I hope you'll be willing to answer them and to *document your answers accordingly*:

- 1) How much did SHARE pay you to produce the study and to whom was the money paid?
- 2) How many student and faculty hours went into the study and executive summary?

- 3) Besides the Licton Springs Village community meeting, where else was your study presented and to whom? Has it been submitted to any journals? If so, which ones?
- 4) Before beginning the study, did you submit a study design to any review board at the School of Public Health or elsewhere? If so, did you disclose your relationship to SHARE? What did you say about that relationship?
- 5) Why didn't you disclose your relationship to SHARE in the executive summary or in your remarks to the audience at the March 26 community meeting?
- 6) One of the students who co-authored the study, Shaina Coogan, notes on her LinkedIn profile that she was a "planning consultant" for SHARE between January and March of 2018 (see attachment). Why was Ms. Coogan's employment with SHARE not disclosed in the Executive Summary or in your presentation at the community meeting?
- 7) In the "Community Relations" section of the Summary (page 6) you suggest that the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) represents the neighborhood or community around Licton Springs Village. The CAC is appointed by staff at LIHI, which co-manages the camp along with SHARE. People critical of the sanctioned homeless camp model, or of LIHI, or of SHARE, are never chosen to be on the CAC, and in many cases, CAC members don't even live near the camp. In that same section, you say that "Stakeholders from the Aurora/Licton Springs neighborhood consistently agreed that Licton Springs Village has had a positive effect on the community and exceeded the expectations of those involved in its development." Who are the stakeholders of whom you speak, and what do you mean by "involved in [the camp's] development"? Did you talk with any neighbors who weren't "involved in the development" of Licton Springs? If so, who were they? Do you have a record of your conversations with them?
- 8) In the same section ("Community Relations") you say you found no evidence of an increase in crime or homelessness in the area around Licton Springs, and one of your students, Shaina Coogan, repeated this claim in a letter to the editor that was published in the *Seattle Times* on October 11, 2018.³ On October 12, you defended Coogan's statements on your Facebook page (see attachment), citing Coogan's letter and directing your readers to the *Times* page with her editorial. Your claim that crime has been stable in the Licton Springs Village area is in stark contrast to what several neighborhood residents said in their testimony at the March 26 meeting.⁴ The camp neighbors testified that, in the year since the camp was opened, there had been increased break-ins, prostitution, drug use, and various nuisance crimes. Data recently released by the Seattle Police Department supports what those neighbors were saying. The attached report from the Seattle Police Department Data Team shows that, while crime was stable or even

went down in the North Precinct or the N3 sector, when we drill down to the census block around Licton Springs Village, we see that crime went up significantly across three indices, with increases between 20% and 100%. This data might not have been available to you at the time of the study, but now that you have it, will you publish an updated version of your summary online and issue a public correction to Coogan's claims on your Facebook page? If not, why?

- 9) On page 6 of the Executive Summary, you compare exit-to-housing data from Licton Springs Village favorably with data from another of SHARE's sanctioned encampments, Nickelsville Georgetown, stating that 59% of Licton Springs Villagers leaving the camp since it opened had moved into permanent housing. This number varies significantly from what Human Services Department employee Lisa Gustaveson told the same audience on March 26, both on a PowerPoint slide that she presented and in her remarks. On page 5 of the meeting transcript,⁴ Ms. Gustaveson says that, of the 27 people who had exited the camp in the previous year, 13 (or 48%) went to permanent housing. Presumably, Ms. Gustaveson was using the same HMIS-supplied data as you. Given her number of 48%, why did you report that 59% of Villagers exited to housing? Also, why didn't you mention the actual number of people exiting from Licton Springs Village to permanent housing anywhere in your summary, as Ms. Gustaveson did in her report?
- 10) Do you have de-identified copies of the survey instruments or any audiorecorded interviews of study participants? If so, are those available for public review?

Study Bias and Conflict of Interest

Your relationship to SHARE and its tent camps goes back at least as far as the spring quarter of 2009, when you taught courses at SPH (Health Services 572 and 573) that involved a close collaboration between yourself and SHARE director Scott Morrow, whom you listed as faculty for the course.⁵ Students in those courses spent hours or days interacting with the residents of a SHARE-run homeless encampment that was on University property at the time.

In April of 2009, Mr. Morrow got a "community partner" service award from the School of Public Health, and presumably you had something to do with that. The blurb on SPH's Web page says:

SHARE and WHEEL are self-organized, grassroots organizations of homeless and formerly homeless individuals. SHARE supports the operation of Tent City, whose residents have welcomed our students' visits and support for several years. Morrow has enhanced the learning experiences by connecting students with residents who participate in the Department of Health Services' *Community Development for Health* course. Tent

City residents also served on a panel organized by Students for Equal Health and have agreed to be subjects for a thesis project.⁶

In 2010 you were appointed by Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn to his “Encampments Task Force.” The task force was charged with determining where to place one or more of SHARE’s unsanctioned tent camps on public land such that the City would not evict them.⁷

You have known Mr. Morrow and have interacted with him and SHARE staff regularly since at least 2009. Based on the public record of those interactions, it’s fair to say that you have enthusiastically supported Morrow and his camps. It would clearly not be correct to say that you’ve been a neutral and dispassionate observer. You’re a cheerleader.

SPH’s online “value statement” lists integrity as the first item and elaborates by saying that members of the school will “adhere to the highest standards of objectivity, professional integrity, and scientific rigor.”⁸ Given your relationship with SHARE and Mr. Morrow, even a layperson – to say nothing of your peers – would conclude that you did not adhere to the “highest standards of objectivity, integrity, and scientific rigor” when you accepted SHARE’s commission to produce this study of Licton Springs Village. That was a mistake, and you compounded it by failing to disclose the true state of affairs when you presented your executive summary to the audience at North Seattle College on March 26.

My final question to you is this: Do *you* feel that your study on Licton Springs Village adhered to the highest standards of objectivity, integrity, and scientific rigor?

Please get back to me within two calendar weeks. I’m anticipating publishing a story on this. Thank you.

Sincerely,



David Preston, editor
Safe Seattle,* The Blog Quixotic**

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(attachments)

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Notes

¹ Licton Springs Village Evaluation, Executive Summary. March 2018. Kaeli Barrett, Shaina Coogan, Emily Less, Jessica Mock, Catherine Romberger, Nicole Shearer, Alyssa Virtue, Alix Warren, with faculty advising from Amy Hagopian, PhD.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IMxeFcvBQzeGK5_wq9AOh5PyjzyKn9IL/view

² “Controversial tiny house village for homelessness in North Seattle to close.” *Seattle Times*, September 26, 2018.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/controversial-tiny-house-village-for-homelessness-in-north-seattle-to-close/>

³ “Licton Springs Village Not a Bust.” Letter to the editor of the *Seattle Times* by Shaina Coogan. October 11, 2018.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/tiny-house-villages-licton-springs-not-a-bust>

⁴ Licton Springs Village Community Meeting Notes. March 26, 2018. North Seattle College. Auto-generated voice-to-text transcript.

<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Homelessness/CAC/LSV-Community-Mtg-Transcript-03-26-18.pdf>

⁵ University of Washington School of Public Health Course Syllabus. Spring, 2009.

<http://courses.washington.edu/comdee/syllabus.spring09.html>

⁶ “Allison Eisinger and Scott Morrow Win School of Public Health Service Award for Community Partners.” April 22, 2009. University of Washington School of Public Health Web page.

<https://sph.washington.edu/news-events/news/alison-eisinger-and-scott-morrow-win-school-public-health-service-award-community>

⁷ “Nickelsville tent city may return permanently to where it started, in West Seattle.” *Westside Weekly*. October 28, 2010.

<https://www.westsideseattle.com/robinson-papers/2010/10/28/nickelsville-tent-city-may-return-permanently-where-it-started-west?>

⁸ University of Washington School of Public Health online mission statement.

<http://sph.washington.edu/about/mission.asp>

All online material current as of October 27, 2018.



Shaina Coogan, MPH



Shaina Coogan, MPH



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Experience



**Continuing Education
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 of Medicine
 Oct 2018 - Present • 1 mo



Research Consultant
 University of Washington School
 Mental Health Assessment,
 Research, and Training (SMART)
 Center
 Jul 2017 - Jun 2018 • 1 yr



Evaluation Planning Consultant
 SHARE/WHEEL
 Jan 2018 - Mar 2018 • 3 mos



Research Consultant
 Washington State Department of
 Health Essentials for Childhood
 Nov 2017 - Dec 2017 • 2 mos



Amy Hagopian

October 12 at 7:56 PM ·



My students (now alumni) wrote this important letter to the editor in defense of Licton Springs Tiny House Village after Danny Westneat in the Seattle Times trashed it. My students know a lot more about this than Mr. Westneat, as they spent 10 weeks evaluating the Licton Springs Village experience last winter.



seattletimes.com

**Tiny-house villages:
 Licton Springs not 'a...**

Re: "No logic in allowing dru..."

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3 Comments 7 Shares