

From: Wendy Chung <wcrossiter@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, October 24, 2016 9:22:36 PM

To: Bump, Tyler

Cc: Spencer-Hartle, Brandon

Subject: Inclusionary Zoning - Testimony

Mr. Bump,

I write as a resident of the Historic Alphabet District in Northwest Portland concerning the Inclusionary Zoning Project and the Proposed Draft dated October 14, 2016. I applaud the state legislature for passing the much-needed removal of Oregon's historic ban on inclusionary zoning, and BPS for working so hard on new ordinances to implement inclusionary zoning in Portland. As you know, the affordable housing issue is one facing many cities and states across the nation, not just Oregon, and most have no such ban on inclusionary housing rules.

Here in Northwest Portland, however, we feel it particularly acutely, as we face a deluge of new high-rent luxury apartments (over 1200 in the past few years and hundreds more coming online within the year) against the backdrop of threats to historic properties by developers who are considering overpaying, or have overpaid, for inflated lots on which historic properties, both inside and outside of the Historic Alphabet District, are located. Recent examples include historic properties that have been or will be demolished at the following addresses:

1134 NW 18th Ave (Hirschberger's metal shop)

2301 NW Savier St (former Besaw's)

1120 NW 21st St (former Gypsy and historic homes)

1502 NW 19th Ave, Portland, OR (historic home and Quimby's at 19th bar)

Many more examples can be found in the Portland Chronicle: <http://www.portlandchronicle.com/> In addition, as was widely covered last week, an explosion caused by damage to a gas line by contractors working on a large-scale project across the street destroyed several historic buildings in the Northwest District. While the neighborhood welcomes development (especially the development of affordable housing) it is a painful reminder that the enormous amount of activity in and around the historic properties in our district increases the risk of loss.

Some recent development within the Alphabet Historic District is also wholly incompatible with the fine-grain, historic multifamily and single-family housing and businesses that characterize Northwest Portland. An example is the recently approved 5-story addition to the Northwest International Hostel on the corner of NW 18th and Glisan (left photo shows Glisan, right hand photo shows 18th):





Given that the entire top floor of the 5-story addition is a single-family residence, it seems like a 4-story structure would have been a better fit for the neighborhood and one that would have been less likely to dwarf the individually-listed landmark to its south. Other examples of out-sized developments in the historic district include two on NW 19th, which City Council described this way: "*Since construction, staff and the Historic Landmarks Commission have determined that these new buildings are excessively large and relatively incompatible, particularly in one case where the new building is adjacent to, and dwarfs, a Landmark 3-story apartment building directly to its south.*"^[1] (emphasis added). Many of these historic apartments buildings, like the 3-story Landmark described by City Council, offer much more reasonable rents than those newly constructed.

Increasing FAR, whether through transfers, bonuses or other means, would therefore jeopardize the viability and character of relatively affordable historic housing in favor of overly large new buildings such as the Tess O'Brien complex at 1950 NW Pettygrove, which rents some roughly 300 square foot units for over \$1300 per month. [Tess O'Brien Rentals - Portland, OR | Apartments.com](#) This project is adjacent to a historic 12-unit apartment building that was put up for sale shortly after the looming Tess O'Brien structure(s) dwarfed it. Increasing FAR, whether through transfers, bonuses, or other means, into the Historic Alphabet District is particularly worrisome, as it is likely to motivate demolition of structures within it that may offer relatively affordable options to newly constructed luxury units.



Tess O'Brien Rentals - Portland, OR | Apartments.com

See all available apartments for rent at Tess O'Brien in Portland, OR.
Tess O'Brien has rental units ran...

Therefore, I respectfully request that the Inclusionary Zoning Draft be clarified to ensure that any historic district guidelines (such as the Historic Alphabet District Addendum to the Community Design Guidelines) limit any transfers of Inclusionary Zoning FAR bonuses. Specifically, I would ask that 33.120.205.E, which provides, "*E. Maximum increase in density or FAR. In the RH and RX zones, an increase in FAR through the use of bonuses, including amenity bonuses, and transfers of more than 3 to 1 is prohibited. In all other R zones, an increase in the number of units through the use of bonuses, including amenity bonuses, and transfers of more than 100 percent is prohibited,*" be clarified such that it not be interpreted to allow transfers into a historic district of up to 3 to 1 FAR.

33.120.205.G. adds to the confusion by providing, "*2. Development standards. Buildings on sites receiving transferred density or FAR must meet the development standards of the base zone, overlay zone, or plan district, except for maximum density, which is regulated by paragraph E.2 above.*" This seems to encourage higher FAR development (up to 7:1 FAR in some parts of the City's historic districts) so long as the "overlay zone" standards requiring compatibility, are met.

As described above, over-sized projects that have gained approval by the Landmarks Commission have been later determined to be out-of-scale. Many other projects fail after costly and lengthy design review processes because developers count on the base and bonus/transfer FARs when determining how big a project must be in order to "pencil out," only to later find that the Design Commission or Landmarks Commission has reduced that "entitlement" when applying design or historic overlays to the site.

In fact, the new Comprehensive Plan, early implementation of which is occurring as we speak, seeks to reconcile these inconsistencies between historic and plan overlays and the base zones: "**Policy 4.49 Resolution of conflicts in historic districts. Adopt and periodically update design guidelines for unique historic districts. Refine base zoning in historic districts to take into account the character of the historic resources in the district.**"

Reconciling base zoning only to add to the confusion by allowing up to 3:1 FAR transfers or bonuses into historic districts would seem contradictory. Therefore, I request that historic districts be explicitly exempted from any Inclusionary Zoning FAR transfers or bonuses to which a project might otherwise be entitled. This will help to support Policy 4.49's goal of resolving conflicts, it will provide more certainty to developers, and it will support affordable housing policies sought to be furthered by the Inclusionary Zoning Project by preserving the many historic multi-family reasonably-priced units in the Historic Alphabet District.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wendy Chung
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Council Findings, Conclusions and Decision on LU 14-210073 DM (adopted January 7, 2015)