

# Nancy CHAPIN

**#299641 | May 11, 2021**

## Testimony to **Portland City Council** on the **Design Overlay Zone Amendments, Recommended Draft**

5/11/21 To Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners: You are being asked to move forward on a city-wide Design initiative before the preliminary work is completed. Portland is a unique City! Within its boundaries are over 50 small communities. Communities with a grocery store, a restaurant or two, a retail shop, maybe a gas station and a bicycle repair shop and an auto parts/hardware store and if lucky a bank or credit union or at least an ATM in the grocery store. These communities are within walking distance for a lot of the neighbors and this little community is the local hub for residents and their visitors. Creating the possibility that long time land owners are now ready to retire and although they love the neighborhood and the 25 to 40 years they have done business there, it is hard to resist an excellent offer. An offer from a person or company who knows they can come in, build a 75' building in the midst of these one and, at most, two story buildings – maybe not even having to follow the context of retail on the bottom floor. And also without any discussions with the community about design touches that complement nearby buildings to create an architectural configuration that maintains this community's ambience and stability. Although I have included three basic informational paragraphs below that speak to the above issues, my recommendation is to STOP, realize that the cart has been created before the horse and there are two tasks to complete prior to this: One: developing standards of design for those many small communities that make Portland "Portland" and Two ; completion of the Historic Resources Code Project. I have worked and volunteered with business people and neighbors from almost every small "community" in Portland for over 35 years now (in addition to being born here). I have staffed or served on the Boards of seven of them and I want our Portland leadership to stop letting those who want to build, build whatever they want to – as high as 75 feet next to a one-story buildings with no review process in place. Hoping you will slow down, take care of the preliminary work and then move forward on DOZA and its Requirements. Sincerely, Nancy Chapin TSG Services President, 82 nd Avenue (of Roses) Business Association 3 Clarifications Unequal Treatment for East Side Mini-downtowns - Most Main Street are zoned for 45' with a bonus potential of 55'. So since none of our older streetcar main streets have zoning at these 65' heights, there will be NO design Commission Review at all. This is also an unequal treatment for the east side since central city has a 45' height threshold for design review. Future Work proposing "Character Statements" lack teeth and don't impact the Standards which will guide most new development - The Staff Report notes how important these older vintage main street centers are and that they call out needed tools of "Character Statements" as a future work item. (see pages 51-53) However these proposed Character statements will only apply

to the guidelines, have no teeth, and will not apply to projects using the standards. Climate Impacts: small lots, narrow streets mean big impacts of demolition. Builders cannot get the economy of scale in these places and thus tend to demo more buildings instead of just infilling vacant parcels to get larger buildings and higher profit. This leads to greater carbon and climate impacts, increased impervious surfaces, trapping heat and pollutants.

Testimony is presented without formatting.