

# Margaret Rose Hess

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

We love our old Portland neighborhoods, and we want their character and integrity to remain vibrant as they grow, change, become more dense and more diverse, including with more BIPOC and low income members. For this to happen, that is, for our neighborhoods to become more (not less) welcoming, we must keep design review and an appeals process intact. Yes, many of us are privileged people among, those of us who have made our home in Portland. And, yes, we must give up any erroneous, destructive, ignorant notions of exclusivity about that privilege, so that we can become more and ever more diverse. This must happen soon and it should be viewed as an exciting and hopeful prospect, with Portland showing leadership to the state and nation in this regard. But we must not scapegoat or misuse BIPOC and low income people, as has so often happened in the past, by implying that livability has to be sacrificed in the name of diversity. It most certainly does not and indeed must not! BIPOC and low income people deserve to live in desirable neighborhoods and therefore it is essential to keep design review and appeals processes vital, so that our city neighborhoods remain desirable and livable. It's pretty simple, really. It should not be made out to be "either / or", such that either we abandon design review or we can't achieve density and affordability goals. That notion amounts to very short sighted thinking, profiting some in the short run but not resulting in long term good outcomes for residents, both current residents and new comers. Instead it must be acknowledged that this is about "both / and", meaning that a process for design review and appeal must be maintained for all of our proposed developments in order to protect the livability and the desirability of all of our neighborhoods, for all those who live here now and for all those who will be our neighbors in the future.

Testimony is presented without formatting.