

Darin Honn

#331612 | April 10, 2022

Testimony to **Portland City Council** on the **Environmental Overlay Zone Map Correction Project, Recommended Draft**

Dear City of Portland City Council Members: Overall the revisions of the Environmental Overlay Zone (EOZ) related to my property at 9721 NW Caxton Lane are quasi-reasonable. That said, the overall concept of preventing any reasonable separation of the tree canopy from houses and decks is the recipe for cataclysmic fires to tear through a significant portion of West Portland, i.e., most areas west of downtown Portland and in the Mountain Park area. I gave such testimony in the Spring of 2020 to the Planning and Sustainability Committee, indicating that a failure to create 1) a tree canopy buffer and 2) ground breaks would allow significant wildfires to reach into Portland's residential areas, as has occurred numerous times in the East San Francisco Bay area and Southern California. Those concerns appeared to go on basically deaf ears at the Planning and Sustainability Committee, as the new plan was amended to only allow for a ten foot buffer area. Very, very unfortunately, we saw those predictions come to play in Oregon a few months later with significant wildfires annihilating significant areas of Oregon in the Summer of 2022, including destruction of numerous residences and loss of life. In driving through those areas, it was significant to note that the forest-urban interface buffer zone was more than ten feet in most of the fire areas I visited (Santiam Highway [Highway 22]) (probably because most rural areas are much more amenable to reasonable forest-urban buffer zones). Notwithstanding that these buffers along Highway 22 were often 25-40 feet from the tree canopy and undergrowth to the residences, vast areas and whole towns burned. In other areas of the West of which I am familiar, the tree buffer is suggested/expected to be 100 feet. While such tree buffer distances may not be realistic in the Forest Park and certain other forested areas of Portland, we all know that a ten foot tree canopy buffer will have practically no effect in stopping a wildfire that reaches tree crowns and will allow wildfires to destroy or do significant damage to structures, AND allow wildfires to burn entire neighborhoods. Wildfires are going to occur in Western Oregon (the Tillamook Burn and 2020 Oregon fires are prime examples), but enacting "environmental regulations" that will substantially endanger our residents is irresponsible (at best). A true analysis of responsible wildfire management rules in Portland (including rules that do not charge hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars for the City to review removal of a single tree) by persons who are responsible local, state and national wildfire experts is required before adopting rules that will at sometime sentence hundreds of homes to destruction, and maybe Portland citizens to their deaths. I understand that this is blunt, but BPS and the Portland City Council are gambling with homes and lives. I am testifying in writing this time, as I want to ensure that my words are in the record and received and viewed by all decision

makers, as opposed to on video as was my last testimony. Please make good and informed decisions. I am available to discuss at honnhome@comcast.net or at 503-296-7707. Darin Honn 9721 NW Caxton Lane, Portland

Testimony is presented without formatting.