



Planning and Sustainability Commission
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201

September 22, 2014

Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association
c/o Mr. Jacob Sherman
4326 SE Woodstock, PMB 494
Portland, OR 97206

RE: Comprehensive Plan Testimony for Green Thumb (6801 SE 60th Avenue)

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

On September 4, 2014, the Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association (BDNA) unanimously voted in favor of strongly encouraging the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) to change the zoning of the 12.8 acre urban agriculture and education site known as "Green Thumb" (6801 SE 60th Avenue) from Low Density Multi-Family Residential with an Alternative Design Density Overlay (R2A) to a designation that best reflects its actual use: Open Space (OS).

The Green Thumb site is a unique 12.8-acre urban agriculture and educational garden facility that is managed by four partners: Oregon State University Extension Service's Community and Urban Horticulture Program, Portland State University's Leadership for Sustainability Education Program, Portland Public Schools, and City of Portland Parks and Recreation. For decades, this site has served as an important learning laboratory for Lane Middle School students, PSU students, OSU Master Gardener volunteers and Beginning Urban Farmer Apprenticeship (BUFA) students, Community Transition School students, S.U.N Program participants, the Portland Fruit Tree Project, community gardeners, a farmer-in-residence, local residents and more. Given the size and the scope of services offered, some community members believe there is no other place like the Green Thumb site in the Portland-metro area.

As a historically under-served East Portland neighborhood, BDNA has long-fought to protect, preserve, and invest in this deeply valued community asset. The site is referenced as a community resource in our adopted 1996 Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Plan. In the early 2000's, the neighborhood association organized and



intervened in the potential residential development of the site, successfully advocating for Portland Public Schools to sell a portion of the property to the City of Portland. As recently as last year, the neighborhood association has invested a significant portion of our savings in the development of a new project that seeks to increase civic engagement, promote social entrepreneurship, and provide affordable and nutritious organic produce to a neighborhood that faces significant food-access challenges.

Regarding the current zoning of the site, we do not want to see orchards, bird and pollinator habitat, community gardens, greenhouses, the fields of a market garden, and other community gathering spaces demolished and turned into several hundred town houses or apartments that we do not have the infrastructure and amenities to support. Rather, in our community's vision of 2035, the Green Thumb site remains a verdant and thriving place where, each year, hundreds of school-aged children, neighborhood families, university students, and other residents from around the city can access organic produce, build community, enhance their leadership skills, and learn about science, agriculture, and sustainability.

We hope you will seriously consider our request to re-zone the Green Thumb site from Low Density Multi-Family Residential with an Alternative Design Density Overlay (R2A) to Open Space (OS) as part of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan updates. Thank you for taking the time to consider this request, and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jacob Sherman, Board Chair
Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association
jdbsherman@gmail.com

CC:

Mike Abbaté, Director, Portland Parks and Recreation
Marty Stockton, Southeast District Liaison, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Anne Dufay, Executive Director, SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition
Bob Kellet, Neighborhood Planning Program Manager, SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition
Robert McCullough, Board Chair, SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition