



Congregation Ahavath Achim

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Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
C/O Mr. Barry Manning
1900 SW 4th Ave. Suite 2500
Portland, OR 97201

Copy: Joan Fredrickson

Dear Mr. Manning,

I am writing to you on behalf of Congregation Ahavath Achim, to (1) give testimony and (2) make a request.

Our organization has become aware of the efforts by your Bureau to develop a long-range comprehensive development plan for the Westside of the city of Portland. As you can see by our address, we are located in the core area, just outside of downtown. If you recall, you, along with Metro, have hosted two community meetings of stakeholders, last Fall, in our synagogue building.

Our organization has concerns with what we have seen and heard over the last several months, and we now wish to share these concerns with you in the form of testimony and a request. We will need your assistance and we trust that you can provide us help and advice.

1. Testimony: We wish to protect our synagogue property from encroachment and development that will affect our peaceful use of the premises and avoid development, which may impact the safety of our property and our congregants. As you know, Jewish institutions are targets of vandalism and constant attack, including invasion and shootings. Security is a paramount consideration for us.
 - There are two specific issues that we are concerned about. First is the discussion by your organization and that of OHSU and Tri-Met to construct a connection corridor from the south waterfront development, through Lair Hill neighborhood, and up to the OHSU campus. We have attended various public hearings conducted by your Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. We hear various proposals for the proposed connector corridor that calls for increased foot traffic on or near our property. This presents us with fear of vandalism,

graffiti, property damage, and the attraction of persons who can do harm and damage to person and property.

Please be aware that our property is used on a part-time basis and we do not have full time personnel on site. We occupy the building only few days a week, with limited hours, as a usual basis. Therefore the opportunity for harm and damage is enhanced. The connection corridor you propose will be open 24 hours a day and that is a problem for us. It will attract unwanted activities. We propose that any connection corridor be located a long distance away from our synagogue property.

Second, Tri Met has voiced a desire and preference for a transit stop on Barbur Blvd. next to our property. This presents a problem for us in the same manner as does a connection corridor for OHSU. The possibilities of vandalism, harm and damage to our property increase with a significant transit stop adjacent to our synagogue building.

2. Our Request: We propose that if we are to endure a pedestrian connection corridor and a transit stop, that it would be better for us to relocate our synagogue to another area within the Westside of the city. That would require us to sell our property to a private or public entity that will pay a fair price, allowing us to relocate. We are willing to discuss that option.

Further, in order to secure a fair price, we would benefit from a zone change. Our present zone is residential, even though the property is a commercial use and a commercial zone would immensely benefit our value if we were to sell the property.

- Our request in any circumstance is that the zoning in the new comprehensive plan be changed to commercial to correctly reflect use of the property and give us a hedge against encroaching development of OHSU, Tri-Met and other property interests.

I expressly, hereby request a personal meeting with the officers of our congregation and officials of the City of Portland to discuss our concerns regarding security and development and our request for a zone change. We remain available for a meeting at your earliest opportunity. You may contact me at 503-318-3732 to arrange a mutual time and place. I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Matza
Director