

From: Gloria Bennett [<mailto:dcleopatra@comcast.net>]

Sent: Friday, February 27, 2015 10:23 AM

To: Planning and Sustainability Commission

Subject: Comprehensive Plan Testimony

Dear Commissioners,

The land at 6801 SE 60th Ave. in Portland is currently zoned as **Low Density Multi-Family Residential with an Alternative Density Overlay (R2A)**. It is our understanding that in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the zoning designation will be changed to **Residential 5000(R5)**. We respectfully request that, instead, you re-designate and re-zone this parcel of land to **Open Space (OS)** as part of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

This site is the location of several thriving urban farming programs, providing fresh produce for local families and supporting hands-on experience with edible farming. These include the PSU Learning Gardens Lab, the Portland Fruit Tree Project, the Brentwood Neighborhood Community Garden, and the Master Gardeners' Demonstration Garden. The PSU program includes beds used by Lane Middle School students, Lane Family Gardens, PSU students, or students in the Beginning Urban Farmer Apprenticeship program.

I have participated in one of these programs: the Demonstration Garden created and maintained by volunteers from the Multnomah County Chapter of the Oregon Master Gardeners Association. Since 2008 chapter members have developed unproductive bare land into a highly productive demonstration edibles garden at 6801 SE 60th Ave. Through thousands of volunteer hours, we have created over 2,000 sq. feet of well-tended raised beds. This garden now yields over 2,000 pounds of fresh, organic vegetables, fruits and herbs, which are donated to the Lents Meals on Wheels program and the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods [SUN] program at Kelly School. In 2014 alone, 2,209 pounds of food were donated.

Changing the designation to **Open Space** will allow the Master Gardeners to continue to improve the site and to serve as a source of high quality fresh food to organizations that serve low income people. The requested zoning would also allow the other community organizations who use the site at 6801 SE 60th Ave. to provide opportunities to grow and harvest food while strengthening community ties.

Food scarcity is a real problem in Oregon. All the food grown at 6801 SE 60th Ave. is a positive, healthy, local community-based answer to that problem. Designation of this productive, fertile piece of ground as **Open Space (OS)** in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan can only be a winning proposition for the City of Portland and the people in the surrounding community who benefit from it.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. I encourage you to come and visit this amazing location and we think you will see why an **Open Space (OS)** designation is so important for its future.

Sincerely, Gloria Bennett, OSU Master Gardener

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