

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission:

I am writing to personally echo and reiterate the objections of the Sylvan-Highlands Neighborhood Association (“SHNA”) concerning two zoning variance requests:

- 1) 6141 SW Canyon Court, from R20 to Multi-Family 2,000.
- 2) 6400 SW Canyon Court, requesting a height variance on currently CN2 zoning to allow 266 apartment units (does CN2 even allow multifamily?)

I urge the Commission to deny the proposed zoning change requests for the following reasons:

Comprehensive Plan Conflicts. SHNA notes that the zoning change would allow over 290 more dwellings to be built on the properties beyond current zoning limits. If permitted, such changes would significantly increase local density and traffic without the benefit of any significant public planning or infrastructure improvements. A prime goal of the new Comprehensive Plan is development along corridors and centers. If permitted, this zoning changes would allow unplanned development away from the existing local hub and neighborhood corridors and promote private vehicle use as the properties are far from public transit. While the properties are adjacent to US 26, the only access is through small local streets, through residential neighborhoods and through school zones.

Minimal Public Transit. There is no public transit near the properties. The #58 bus stop at the Highway 26 westbound onramp at SW Skyline Boulevard is the closest transit connection. There are no local transit connections to the north, west and south. Other local transit connections are to the east (the #63 bus line and Washington Park MAX station), almost 2 miles away.

Neighborhood Character Conflicts. Although the property at 6141 has a SW Canyon Court address, its only access is via SW 61st Avenue due to a 20'+ tall retaining wall along Canyon. The property at 6400 SW Canyon court is currently commercial, but does not follow the guidelines of CN2, commercial supporting the neighborhood. Regardless, allowing 266 units at 6400 SW Canyon will only increase density without adding any infrastructure to support the neighborhood, compounding the existing problem. All other nearby neighborhood dwellings (on 61st and nearby streets) are single family homes. Rezoning the properties from its existing single family home and CN2 to a apartment complexes conflict with the current neighborhood character.

Increased Neighborhood Traffic. 61st is a small, winding neighborhood street that lacks normal improvements like sidewalks and storm drainage. If permitted, the zoning changes would certainly increase cut-through traffic on 61st, a street that can least afford it. SW 61st is the only connector to Burnside/Barnes, points in Northwest, the closest available groceries (QFC on Barnes, almost 2 miles away), etc. This street already suffers from significant cut-through traffic, connecting Forest Heights to US26. The zoning changes would also aggravate traffic at the bottlenecks of SW 58th Avenue at both SW Montgomery Street and Skyline. These two bottlenecks, about 200' apart (one small block) are greatly burdened by cut through traffic to and from northwest Portland and (much more) Washington County. Additionally, the 58th/Montgomery intersection is aggravated by traffic to and from East Sylvan Middle School during morning commute and mid-afternoon times.

Decreased Neighborhood Safety and Livability. For decades SHNA experienced safety and livability issues from excessive traffic and underdeveloped infrastructure. Due to topography, many SHNA streets are small and winding, with many blind curves. Some were logging roads 100+ years ago that are paved today. People walk in streets like 61st because there usually isn't a shoulder (and no sidewalk) to use. Drivers normally speed through SHNA streets; commonly at twice the posted speed limits. For as long as SHNA experienced traffic safety issues, police enforcement has been lacking. Naturally, this creates safety and livability issues for pedestrians and cyclists. Permitting the

zoning changes would certainly worsen safety and livability around the properties and in the neighborhood.

Summary. This requested zoning changes will probably benefit the Property owner financially and certainly harm the neighborhood. This is the wrong place for such zoning changes. I strongly urge the Commission to deny the requested zoning changes. Thank you

Sincerely,

Joel R Levy
6124 SW Barnes Road (corner of SW Barnes & SW 61st)