

City of Portland  
Planning and Sustainability Commission  
1900 S.W. Fourth Ave.  
Portland, OR 97201-5380

I have been a resident of Buckman since I purchased the Queen Anne Victorian on the corner of SE Morrison St. and SE 17th Ave in 1993. I was away for several years taking care of family, but now that I am back I am stunned at what seems to be (but hopefully isn't) a semi-secret blanket change to the zoning here.

I understand the need to provide more housing for current and future residents of Portland, but I believe the proposed rezoning of SE Belmont and SE Morrison between SE 15th and SE 19th avenues is premature and unnecessary.

This neighborhood has a balanced mix of high density and medium density already (no multi-acre lots or other suburban-style wasted land usage), and yet is still family-friendly and feels like a neighborhood, two of the traits that make Portland especially palatable. My children walk to Buckman elementary a few blocks away, and also to Colonel Summers park (which is much more family-friendly than it was in the past, as long as the sun is out...)

The areas of SE Portland / Buckman west of SE 12th Ave. have already undergone extensive rezoning to balance the increasing density of the area and at least partially preserve the Industrial district that is so critical to the health and quality of life of the entire city of Portland. Other districts that seem to be getting more sane high-density development include Lloyd, and of course the wildly successful Pearl district--my nostalgia for seeing freight trains roll right up to the Henry Weinhard brewery to load/unload new and spent hops notwithstanding, I am very proud of the way that the former railyard has been converted into high-density housing and living done right.

I, and many others in the neighborhood, believe that the density should continue to increase west of SE 12th and in other high-density-friendly areas first, and then, perhaps in 10, 15, 20, or 25 years, we can re-asses the need to infill areas east of SE 12th. A study several years ago called BLAZE looked closely into the needs of this area (encompassing Buckman/Kerns/Sunnyside/Hosferd-Abernathy), and consisted of several community events to allow the neighbors (and developers) to coordinate with the city and county to ensure that adding more residents (which is potentially a quite welcome occurrence) to the neighborhood is balanced with what makes this a great neighborhood to be in. I don't recall seeing or hearing anything remotely similar to that happening recently, and in fact it was through sheer Buckman Community Association canvassing (meaning a flyer on my front porch) that I knew this was even being considered in the first place!

No one is ever going to take the time (or spend the money) to build an 1894 Queen Anne victorian again, so it is critical that existing housing stock like mine that is irreplaceable be maintained for future generations. The 2x4 timbers in my house are actually 2 inches by 4 inches! There are already plenty of empty (or parking) lots awaiting redevelopment in the areas I've already mentioned without having to destroy historic structures.

Please "hold the line" on the current zoning on SE Belmont and SE Morrison for now, and then let's see how the next few rounds of development go in the neighborhoods that can better support them (and where it already makes more sense, both for current and future residents).

Thank you for your time,

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