

John Rush and Alicia Ahn
6060 SW Mill Street
Portland, OR 97221

March 10, 2015

Ms. Joan Frederiksen
c/o Planning and Sustainability Commission
1900 SW 4th Avenue #7100
Portland OR 97201
Via email to psc@portlandoregon.gov and joan.frederiksen@portlandoregon.gov

RE: Zoning Change Request 6141 SW Canyon Court (R326896)

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed rezoning of the property located at 6141 SW Canyon Ct. to R2 Multi-family.

My wife and I agree with and support all of the points articulated in the attached letter from the Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association (SHNA) requesting denial of the request to rezone the property.

In addition, we would like to emphasize a few critical items included in the SHNA letter as follows:

Increased Neighborhood Traffic: This is a current issue within the neighborhood as an increasing amount of cut through traffic is already impacting the neighborhood, especially during peak commute and school hours. The bottlenecks that occur at SW Montgomery and 58th Ave (location of East Sylvan School) are significant now and would only become worse with addition of up to 26 households in the local area in a space currently zoned for 2 households.

Decreased Neighborhood Safety and Livability: As thoughtfully stated in the SHNA letter, there are current and long-standing issues with neighborhood safety related to increased traffic on streets that are winding and lack sidewalks. My family and my children walk frequently on 61st Avenue, but we avoid walking on the street during peak hours. Further increases in traffic to access a dense development that has only two streets for access will only worsen the situation. In addition, in the rare times that the neighborhood experiences "winter conditions", both SW 61st Avenue and Canyon Ct are some of the first locations to become impassable. Significant backups and accidents occur on both roads during even the slightest amounts of winter weather.

Neighborhood Character Conflicts: In addition to the excellent points articulated in the SHNA letter, there are some census based factors to illustrate the point about how the proposed change fits with the overall character of the neighborhood. Based on 2010 Census data, the proposed development at 6141 SW Canyon Ct would be approximately 22 times more dense in terms of population per area than the average for the neighborhood (42 people/acre vs 1.9 people/acre for the overall neighborhood). While this is not terribly dense as compared to the core city, the difference between the current neighborhood density and the density proposed highlights the conflict between the proposed zoning and the nature of the vast majority of the neighborhood.

While we understand that the needs of a growing metro area will require changes to how property is used over time and support thoughtful development, we do not believe that the proposed rezoning and development at 6141 SW Canyon Ct is consistent with the next phase in the evolution of the neighborhood.

Finally, we could not verify the Property owner's claim that the property has been annexed to the City of Portland as part of its Comprehensive Plan. We could not corroborate this claim based on available records (tax maps, zoning maps or property details on PortlandMaps). In fact all of these sources clearly outlined that 6141 SW Canyon Ct is unincorporated Multnomah County. In fact, the 2014 Property Tax assessment available on Portland Maps did not include any of the tax line items consistent with inclusion within the City of Portland.

In summary, we strongly oppose the request to rezone the property located at 6141 SW Canyon Court because the increased density proposed would worsen already challenging traffic concerns, negatively impact neighborhood safety and livability and provide no offsetting benefits to the impacted neighborhood.

Thank you for consideration of our input.

Sincerely,

John Rush and Alicia Ahn

Attachment: 6141canyon.ltr.shna.150226.pdf



Sylvan-Highlands Neighborhood Association

c/o Neighbors West-Northwest Coalition
1819 NW Everett St. #205
Portland, OR 97209
503-223-3331, fax 503-223-5308

February 26, 2015

Ms. Joan Frederiksen
c/o Planning and Sustainability Commission
1900 SW 4th Avenue #7100
Portland, OR 97201

Via email to psc@portlandoregon.gov and joan.frederiksen@portlandoregon.gov

RE: zoning change request for 6141 SW Canyon Court (R326896)

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission:

Sylvan-Highlands Neighborhood Association ("SHNA") urges the Commission to deny the proposed zoning change request for 6141 SW Canyon Court (the "Property") from R20 to Multi-Family 2,000. SHNA objects to the proposed zoning change for the following reasons:

Comprehensive Plan Conflicts. SHNA notes that the zoning change would allow over 20 more dwellings to be built on the Property beyond current zoning limits. If permitted, such a change 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 change would allow unplanned development away from the existing local hub and neighborhood corridors and promote private vehicle use as the Property is far from public transit.

Minimal Public Transit. There is no public transit near the Property. 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).

Neighborhood Character Conflicts. Although the Property has a SW Canyon Court address, its only access is via SW 61st Avenue due to a 20' tall retaining wall along Canyon. All other nearby neighborhood dwellings (on 61st and nearby streets) are single family homes. Rezoning the Property from its existing single family home to an apartment complex conflicts 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 change would certainly increase cut through traffic on 61st, a street that can least afford it. The zoning change 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. 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 change would certainly worsen safety and livability around the Property and in the neighborhood.

Summary. This requested zoning change will probably benefit the Property owner financially and certainly harm the neighborhood. This is the wrong place for such a zoning change. **SHNA strongly urges the Commission to deny the requested zoning change.** Thank you

Sincerely,

Dave Malcolm
SHNA Director and Land Use Committee chair