

RECEIVED  
PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

2016 MAY 16 A 9:12

Jackie Johnson  
28 NE Monroe St.  
Portland, OR 97212

April 12, 2016

To whom it may concern,

I own two properties in the Eliot neighborhood that are currently zoned R2 with a proposal to down-zone to R2 .5. They are side by side, at 28 NE Monroe and 32 NE Monroe, in the Eliot neighborhood. I grew up in the neighborhood and have lived in my home in Eliot for 22 years.

Based on conversations that I've had with city, county, and neighborhood committee representatives, and my review of measure 50, it appears that this zone change could trigger a reassessment of my properties, which could result in a substantial property tax increase - even though I haven't made any changes to the property.

This would present a hardship to me and many of my neighbors. I have penciled out my budget with a tax increase and realize I cannot maintain these two houses if the property taxes rise more than the 3% that measure 50 outlines as a max per year.

I do not want to leave my home or my community or lose my income from my rental. I get a very small income from Social Security, which covers health insurance premiums, co-payments, and miscellaneous health issues. If the property taxes increase, I will have to sell my houses, lose my renters, lose my art studio space, and store years of paintings, or destroy them, and rid myself of most of my belongings.

My main income is from my tenants and an occasional sale of a painting. I'm now limited on rent increases because of new landlord tenant laws. Unlike many landlords, I did not displace my tenants, or hike their rent before the law went into effect. I believe that was morally wrong and bad for the city.

I have community here, the hospital is two blocks away, and there are other resources that I can walk to. I have a wonderful life that took me years to develop. I have planned for my old age in the best way that I could and I worry I will become isolated somewhere - this is not the best situation for people of my age. I have had a lot of medical surgeries and not in the best of health, but I have lived well here and I don't ask for much. I don't think asking to stay in one's home and retain a good quality of life is too much to ask. I am sure this isn't the only request you've heard.

I was told by the Eliot neighborhood association that a tax increase could not happen, yet no one at the city or county have been able to guarantee that this won't happen. The only advice I received from the city was that I could sell a house or do a reverse mortgage, etc. I was shocked to hear these suggestions.

Last night at the Eliot land-use committee, they voted to write a letter to withdraw neighborhood support for the zone change if the county could not guarantee that a tax increase will not be triggered. They now realize, based on the turnout at the meeting, that a tax increase would present too much hardship and displacement of homeowners and tenants in the neighborhood.

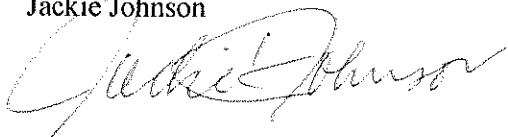
I was told by a city rep several months ago that I had a good case to opt out of the zone change since my houses are adjacent to a higher density zone near Williams Ave. But after talking to BPS, it sounds like this is not an option. I would, however, like to opt out.

I grew up in North/Northeast Portland and I know the history of displacement in this neighborhood. It looks to me like this could happen again. 22 years ago, I bought my current house in the Eliot neighborhood because I wanted to live in a neighborhood that was integrated with an assortment of people and classes. I believe that that makes the richest neighborhoods.

Please obtain an official letter from the county that reassures the neighborhood that property taxes will not increase as a result of this zone change. If that is not possible, please consider leaving the zone as is or allow me to opt out.

Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

Jackie Johnson



Cc: Multnomah County Assessor's office  
City of Portland (Office of sustainability, City Council, City Commissioners)