



Woodstock Community Center, 5905 SE 43rd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97206

To: The Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
From: The Woodstock Neighborhood Association
Re: Low-rise Commercial Storefront designation at SE Woodstock Blvd.

With this letter, the Woodstock Neighborhood Association wishes to speak against the proposed low-rise commercial storefront designation of a portion of the Woodstock Commercial corridor.

The March 2016 Proposed Draft of the Mixed Use Zones Project (MUZ) introduced new mapping and Zoning Code regulations intended to continue the scale and characteristics of older main street areas where low-rise Streetcar Era storefront buildings are predominant. The Proposed Draft identifies some properties along Woodstock Blvd., between SE 44th Ave and SE 47th Ave to be rezoned Commercial Mixed Use 1 (CM1).

The Woodstock Neighborhood Association and its Land Use Committee believe that the CM1 designation does not meet the intent and criteria of the Low-rise Commercial Storefront Areas as the properties included do not have contiguous concentration of low-rise Streetcar Era storefront buildings. In fact, the buildings included in these blocks are utilitarian commercial structures built in the 1940's or later. Interesting to note, the proposed CM1 designation includes a New Season store that opened in late 2015. While we appreciate the city effort to preserve areas of the city with buildings of established historic character, we believe this does not apply to the Woodstock Commercial Core. Furthermore, the 80' width of Woodstock Blvd Right of Way is about 20' wider than most of the other locations within the city where the CM1 designation is being proposed, making the height of buildings to width of right of way ratio less of a concern.

Most of the properties within the proposed CM1 designation are currently zoned CS. Table VI-1 Zone Conversion Table (p.316) in the MUZ Project Proposed Draft indicates that for Mixed Use Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan Designation (such as Woodstock Blvd.), the conversion of the current CS zone would correspond to CM2 in the new MUZ Project. We believe that the CM2 designation is more appropriate for the subject properties, more consistent with the current zoning entitlements as well as with previous drafts of the MUZ Project that have been circulated over the course of the Comp Plan Update process.

Representatives of the Woodstock Stakeholders Group (commercial property owners), made their case against the CM1 designation at the WNA general meeting on April 6, 2016. At that meeting, the WNA board voted in support of the Stakeholders Group and gave the mandate to the Land Use Committee co-chairs to draft a letter of support for the Stakeholders Group and against the proposed CM1 designation. At the April 20, 2016 meeting, the Woodstock Land Use committee further discussed the matter and a straw poll vote showed again support for the Stakeholders Group.

The content of the above testimony was reviewed once again by the Woodstock Neighborhood Association board on May 4, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Bortolazzo and Terry Griffiths
Co-Chairs, Woodstock Neighborhood Association Land Use Committee