

**From:** Tom Brown [mailto:sellwoodbrown@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2016 3:16 PM  
**To:** Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Mixed Use Zone Testimony

Dear PSC-

My name is Tom Brown. This email follows my oral testimony provided to the PSC at the May 10, 2016 public hearing regarding the Mixed Use Zone proposal.

I would like to add the following points for the Commission's consideration:

- 1) My family is the long-time owner of the properties located in Westmoreland at the Southwest corner of Milwaukie and Bybee, "Block 7" in the Westmoreland business district, bounded by Milwaukie, Bybee, Rural and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The City's proposed downzone from CS to CM1 affects the entire block of property owned by my family.
- 2) The properties referenced above and proposed for downzoning from CS to CM1 are all within one-half mile of the Milwaukie Light Rail Bybee Station. The Bybee Station Area is unique for light rail station areas because it is surrounded by a golf course, rail lines, and a park. Single family residential zoning surrounds the park and the golf course. Thus, the only area available for additional development within proximity to the light rail station area are those areas currently zoned CS, the very properties proposed for downzoning to CM1. The proposal to downzone the only property available for additional development and density in the light rail station area is not accompanied by a proposal for corresponding upzoning anywhere else in the light rail station area. The downzoning proposal runs counter to the planning completed for the Milwaukie light rail line and station area.
- 3) The properties proposed for downzoning are in the heart of the Westmoreland commercial district and are surrounded primarily by other commercial development. The proposal to downzone the core of the commercial district, but to leave the rest of the corridor that abuts directly against existing single family neighborhoods at a higher density runs counter to the City's traditional zoning policy of stepping zoning down in order to buffer residential neighborhoods. The current proposal inverts the City's normal zoning approach by allowing dense redevelopment adjacent to single family neighborhoods and reducing development potential in the commercial core. As mentioned in prior testimony, downzoning is the wrong tool to try to maintain neighborhood character.
- 4) I am the recent past President of the Sellwood Westmoreland Business Alliance. The Business Alliance was never notified or asked for input on the proposed change. The lack of outreach and public process by the City on the proposed major change to the zoning in the heart of the Sellwood Westmoreland business district really emphasizes the last-minute nature of this ill-considered proposal. It has not been fully vetted and should not move ahead at this time without broader input and additional work to refine the City's approach.
- 5) The fact is that most of the buildings on the property affected by the downzoning proposal are very old and are near the end of their lifespan. Preservation of neighborhood character can be achieved without limiting growth by the careful development and application of design standards. The City's proposal for downzoning does nothing, by itself, to assure that neighborhood character will be retained when redevelopment occurs.

Rather than downzoning, the City should take the time to work with the entire community (residents and businesses) to develop design standards that help to preserve neighborhood character, while accommodating planned growth. Even if the City chooses to move ahead with downzoning some properties, properties such as those at the corner of Bybee and Milwaukie that are within one-half mile of a light rail station should not be included in the downzone.

Tom Brown