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Sent: Tuesday, August 09, 2016 10:25 AM
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>
Subject: Written testimony on Central City Plan

My feedback is fairly general, but after reading the recap of the July 26th hearing and some of the other materials I have been following, I wanted to provide some brief comments.

- One of the main points from the July 26th recap was the “need for new structures in historic districts to be compatible with the historic character around them.” Generally, I think this is a good principle, but too often people use it too restrictively (i.e. this building is too big for the neighborhood, it doesn’t fit in, etc.). As I walk through the Irvington neighborhood for example, I love the variety of the houses that were built. And at the time, I bet there were some owners complaining that the new house looks too different, doesn’t fit in, or whatever. We have to be careful about letting people dictate what fits in and what doesn’t. Another example is the latest addition of towers to the Pearl District. I totally support it! Too many buildings were popping up that were on the shorter side and too homogenous. I believe the taller buildings give the Pearl more character and are visually appealing. I hope future towers in the Pearl can even soar higher.
- Another main point from the July 26th recap was the “importance of protecting public views of surrounding mountains and natural features.” I am completely against this principle. In looking this far into the future for development, I think Portland is making a mistake with its height restrictions, whether it be in the Central City or along the urban corridors. And I don’t think we should try to maintain views from the West Hills looking east. I read that the newest draft specifically changed earlier drafts to “reduce building heights in parts of Goose Hollow and the Central Eastside to protect view corridors.” Why are view corridors important in the first place? I think Portland got it completely wrong in not allowing South Waterfront to build taller and fully utilize this “blank canvas” so close to downtown. I can’t believe that we gave any weight to the complaints of the neighborhoods to the west (Corbett for example), arguing that the buildings would block their views of the Cascades and the Willamette River. They do not and never had an irrefutable right to a view. And that should go for all of Portland. We are creating a plan to guide development for decades to come, and I believe Portland should pay particular attention to density. I think buildings on both sides of the river (I live and work in the Lloyd Center/Sullivan’s Gulch area) should not have any restrictions on height. Why does Portland have only two buildings that exceed 500 feet? We should be allowing buildings to exceed 800 feet even. It is our skyline, and especially our tallest buildings, that catch the eye and are aesthetically pleasing. And we need to be planning for the future and not just now. By going more vertical, we are allowing more growth in this wonderful city of ours.
- Related to the previous point, I am disappointed in the evolving height restrictions along certain urban corridors. I live between NE Broadway and NE Weidler, and along main thoroughfares such as this we should be encouraging **even taller** buildings with more density. I believe we have allowed a very vocal minority to influence our perception of needing more restrictive height allowances and step-back requirements. Unfortunately, people who are not against taller buildings or who are for allowing buildings that “don’t fit in” the existing neighborhood (I am obviously saying it sarcastically since this is often the argument used when some existing homeowners don’t want change in the neighborhood) are often silent or don’t see the need to speak up. Realizing we are planning for decades into the future and not just for how we want our neighborhoods right now, I think we should be opening our minds up to new ideas. And I

firmly believe those new ideas should include taller buildings and higher density than what is shaping up in the latest draft plan.

Thank you for taking the time to read my feedback and considering my points. You are doing great work!

Sincerely,
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