Submitted by Adam La Motte 8/8/18 Test 1×2 Polfd



Southwest Hills Residential League c/o Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. 7688 SW Capitol Hwy Portland, OR 97219 http://www.swni.org/swhrl contact@swhrl.org or president@swhrl.org

Good afternoon, my name is John Neumann. My address is 2798 SW Montgomery Dr. I am the Co-President of the Southwest Hills Residential League, which is neighborhood association that overlays the Patton Street property.

This property is in the heart of our almost exclusively residential neighborhood. Myself and many of our neighbors purchased our homes in the neighborhood knowing that this property would be protected as an amenity-based, retail node.

SWHRL has followed this matter closely and testified at both May hearings. addressing specific Comp Plan goals point by point. We have also proposed and offered to collaborate with the owner to find an agreeable solution that meets the neighborhood's, owner's and city's goals and needs.

In the past months, SWHRL has worked hard researching and talking to residents to try to find a middle-ground solution we believe will best represents both the neighborhood and owner's needs. The SWHRL Board's position is to support the removal of the grocery-only and 24 related conditions in exchange for a new mixed-use, grocery conditions to maintain some neighborhood retail space. Such a condition should include:

- 1. Square footage dedicated to a small format grocery store and you'll hear expert testimony today about the viability of such a format in our neighborhood.
- 2. Additional square footage dedicated to other small shops that sell foods and services such as a coffee shop, bakery, or café but not offices.

We are willing to discuss reasonable, new conditions with experts and will in fact be providing testimony by one today.

The The 1984 Ordinance and amendments represent a consensus between the neighborhood, the City, and the landowner that this property is integral to the livability of the Southwest Hills and they were put in place to ensure that the property maintains a retail, amenities-based

benefit to the community. We believe a new consensus can be reached. We thank you for your time and attention to this important matter that has a significant impact on the livability of the Southwest Hills Neighborhood.

**AESHA LORENZ** 

2747 SW Roswell Portland, OR 97221

Eyez\_Lorenz@mail2world.com

August 7, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: <u>Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov</u>

### Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

I, Aesha Lorenz, have a personal interest in this retail location. In 1909 my grandparents Anne and Max Lorenz, German immigrants, camped in the woods below Strohecker's and slept in a tent until the log house near Periander was built, and my father was born at their house on Upper Drive. What a convenient place to camp, live, raise a family and shop for your food staples right in the neighborhood. Walking the area was as necessary as it was a pleasure.

In 1984, the City agreed to change the Strohecker's store zoning from R5 (single family residential) to CN2 (commercial), allowing a significant expansion of Strohecker's family grocery store with neighborhood support. City Council agreed to impose conditions of approval limiting the site for use as a grocery and not allowing further expansions that would increase the building footprint. This was, in effect, a binding contract that gave the property owner permission to erect a larger building up to a specified size and in exchange, the neighborhood was assured that an invaluable asset for the community would remain.

In early 2016, the grocery closed. The property owner/applicant, Southwest Hills, LLC, acquired the property in January of 2012 and was admittedly aware of the limitations specified in the 1984 Ordinance at the time he purchased the property. The applicant is requesting conditions be removed, asserting that they effectively deprive the property of all economical viable use with an unsubstantiated single claim that he has done his due diligence to prove a grocer is not a viable tenant. This request for elimination of all conditions in the Ordinance would allow a wide variety of uses at a greater development intensity, without any suggestion of what ultimate use will be proposed.

The site is currently zoned CM1 which allows for commercial, mixed use, or residential only. It does not require any neighborhood-serving retail component though it has served as a 1-stop shop offering a variety of services at the heart of our community including a post office, pharmacy, espresso bar, bakery, deli and liquor store. A grocery enjoyed success on this property for almost 114 years, from 1902 until 2016. The times and grocery landscape have changed substantially throughout the century which is why this review is timely to approach revisiting its future preservation.

Sincerely,

Aesha Lorenz

BILL FAILING

Portland, OR 97201

503-309-2768 wlfailing@gmail.com

August 8, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

## Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor Wheeler and City Council Members,

Most of you know me already...I am a 5th Generation Portlander, and my family, past and present, have lived in this Neighborhood for over 100 years. City History is most interesting to me---I have recently served as Board Chair of the Oregon Historical Society and am a strong advocate for preserving those icons which should be preserved. My first memory of Stroheckers goes back to 1944---and I have been able to experience its informal community value provided for neighbors, my family, and myself. Retaining space for a food market and retail allows this property to continue to keep its community focus. This property, aligning with adjoining Portland Heights Park...enjoyed by kids and adults alike...is the perfect catalyst to energize this cocal community.

The city's 95 neighborhoods are each unique and should be viewed with overarching goals of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan with a lens that tailors an approach to the assets and deficits of each neighborhood. The city councils' predecessors weighed in on the value and limitations unique to this neighborhood and valued this property as a resource that cannot be replaced.

On multiple occasions, the City has re-affirmed its commitment to protect the option of a grocery store on this site by adopting a new Comprehensive Plan and "tweaking" the zoning from CN2 to CM1, a comparable zoning designation that allowed the development limitations to remain in place. As Council chose to affirm the very provisions that the applicant is challenging here, that decision should be entitled to significant, if not decisive weight.

The current CM1 zone allows a broad range of options from one single-family home, multi-family housing options, a commercial retail, service, restaurant, or office use or some combination of these uses. The ability to provide commercial retail or service uses with the same intention, scale and variety that previously served the neighborhood will be difficult if not impossible once the use limitations are removed.

The Hearings Officer offered a fair and balanced review of the bulk of the ordinances however failed to recognize the singular value of this resource to this neighborhood. He also concluded that removal of all ordinances would on balance satisfy the comprehensive plan policies which would be impossible. Our desire is to protect the designation that has proven suitable for grocery stores in the past and update the conditions reflective of the changing grocery landscape so that it may serve as an asset to the neighborhood in the future

Sincerely, Bill Failing MARK VAN DER VEER

## 2401 SW Sherwood Dr Portland, OR 97201

markv@acm.org

August 7, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

## Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Mark van der Veer, a retired software engineer. and have lived on SW Sherwood Drive for 31 years.

The Hearings Officer's findings were fair and reasonable in that many of the 24 conditions were antiquated, irrelevant and now superseded by current code that performs the same, similar or better than the original code implemented in 1984. However, the Hearings Officers finding around Ordinance 155609.a stating use of the site shall be restricted to a grocery store, was flawed. It is the neighbors' assertion that the value of the commercial site as a scarce resource to this neighborhood was not weighed appropriately alongside the value placed on access to a grocery by the 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

A caveat is that the HO did find that "Given the unique nature of the site, the City Council could impose conditions requiring some form of commercial development on the site, either exclusively commercial or as part of a mixed-use development. In addition, the Council could require some form of food related use – a small market or restaurant – as part of any commercial development."

We feel this is on balance with the Comprehensive Plans specific provisions calling for the protection of grocery stores which include the safeguarding of lands accommodating such uses. Specifically,

Policy 4.85 Grocery stores and markets in centers.

Facilitate the retention and development of grocery stores, neighborhood-based markets, and farmers markets offering fresh produce in centers. Provide adequate land supply to accommodate a full spectrum of grocery stores catering to all socioeconomic groups and providing groceries at all levels of affordability.

### Policy 4.86 Neighborhood food access.

Encourage small, neighborhood-based retail food opportunities, such as corner markets, food co-ops, food buying clubs, and community-supported agriculture pickup/drop-off sites, to fill in service gaps in food access across the city.

While this site is not within a market center, the intention is very clear in both policies that the priority of the city is valuing the importance of a grocery to a community and its access to fresh, healthy food.

Sincerely,

Mark van der Veer

Annotated evidence:

1

2035 Comprehensive Plan p HTU-5

**Jonathan Ater** 

3344 SW Fairmount Lane Portland, OR 97239

503-223-4784 jaa@aterwynne.com August 8, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: <u>Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov</u>

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

I am Jonathan Ater. I have lived within ½ mile of Strohecker's for more than 20 years. I practiced law in Portland for more than 50 years and am now retired as the senior partner of Ater Wynne.

I am addressing a key flaw in the Hearing Officer's opinion, namely his mis-reliance on a single finding, quote: "based on the expert testimony from the applicants real estate brokers, that a grocery store is no longer viable as the exclusive use on the site, due to changes in the grocery market and shopping behaviors."

Even if this finding is correct, it does not support a finding that mixed-use retail including grocery is not viable on the property. Thus, the Hearing Officer's finding does not support his recommendation, which is to remove all of the 1984 conditions, thus creating the prospect that there will be no retail on the site.

The Hearing Officer acknowledged that this case involves a balancing. But, he did not fairly balance the interests of the neighborhood in preserving a long-standing agreement with the City and preserving neighborhood retail services at this site. In this respect, his findings and recommendations do not satisfy ZC 33.810.050(A)(1), which requires that the proposal to remove the conditions be equally or better supportive of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan than retaining reasonable conditions. That plan contemplates retail services. The Hearing Officer would allow them to go away.

Later you will hear witnesses describe how a small-format grocery store and other neighborhood services can surely be incorporated into a new mixed-use development on the Strohecker site. What we need is the Council to establish a reasonable set of conditions which promote that kind of common-sense outcome.

Perhaps the Hearing Officer did not have the authority to propose sensible new conditions. He does unequivocally point out that the Council does have such authority.

The Council has the legal authority to impose appropriate conditions on the Strohecker site, which conditions will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which sees this site as a retail node. More than 1100 of our neighbors ask you to do so.

## 7809 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Portland, OR 97219

Phone: 503-928-9539 shannonh@prosparus.com

August 08, 2018

## City Council

City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Shannon Hiller-Webb and I am a neighbor in SW Portland who has been a part of the grocery industry for the last 8 years. My grocery career began as a Project Manager for New Seasons Market and I left in 2012 to co-found Green Zebra Grocery, a local, small format grocer. I currently consult with a focus on Small Format Grocers, product development and strategic planning.

I have reviewed the Hearings Officer recommendations and the influence the Marcus and Millichap letter weighed in his considerations and thought I would provide some context.

The grocery model is rapidly changing. Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods in 2017 arrested the industry and many grocers slowed or halted growth plans to reassess the impact of the acquisition on the market; including New Seasons and GZG. The timing of the Marcus and Millichap approach to these grocers is not lost on me as they were retained in February 2017 and news was spreading about the Amazon/Whole Foods deal with the official announcement in June 2017. Risk assessment for the industry was at an all-time high given the timing of their approach for the Stroheckers space.

I would like to specifically discuss the grocers approached from their letter. It appears they may have targeted shear number of grocers rather than good fit. 8 of the 14 stores have operating facilities within 3 miles of the subject property that would need a cannibalization study related to impact on their other stores and would limit the likelihood of the space being viable. In addition, several of the companies would not have been an ideal demographic/trade area fit to begin with. I have provided a list of those grocers.

			. –	-
Strohecker's	2855 SW Patton Rd	97201	OR 19,776	6 O
Zupan's	2340 W Burnside St	97210	OR	1.8
Green Zebra	1704 SW Broadway	97201	OR 4200	1.9
Green Zebra	808 NE Multnomah	97232	OR 8200	2.2
Safeway/Albertsons	1010 SW Jefferson St	72901	OR	2.2
Whole Foods	1210 NW Couch St	97209	OR 158,333	2.6
New Seasons	2170 NW Raleigh St	97210	OR 39,100	2.7
World Foods	830 NW Everett St	97209	OR 10,000	2.7
Food Front Cooperative Grocery	6344 SW Capitol Hwy	97239	OR	2.7
Safeway/Albertsons	1303 NW Lovejoy St	97209	OR	2.8
New Seasons	7300 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy	97225	OR 23,990	2.9
Fred Meyer	2011 W Burnside St	97209	OR 105,863	3.1

The brokers hired may have only considered a traditional grocery marketing approach regardless of grocer audience because of the ordinance restriction. Using traditional grocery marketing when presenting to small format, single unit and co-ops would prevent them from considering the site viable. Marcus and Millichap do not support their letter with evidence such as a site overview, terms or market

analysis to determine grocery store viability that would allow me to come to the same conclusion as their approach findings. I have provided a list of those grocers.

Green Zebra	1704 SW Broadway	97201 OR	4200	1.9
World Foods	830 NW Everett St	97209 OR	10,000	2.7
People's Food Co-op	3029 SE 21st Ave	97202 OR	5,257	4
Providore	2340 NE Sandy Blvd	97232 OR	9,260	4.6

If I may take a moment to specifically address a couple other grocers listed,

**Trader Joes** faced neighborhood opposition from Portland residents in 2014; their new store announcement was met with gentrification concerns and protests and they withdrew. I am not certain we are the ripe trade market they are looking to open their next new store in when there is high demand for their brand nationally.

Thriftway (Lamb's) was the last tenant that a number of conditions prevented its success **Providore** is a stand-alone, multi-tenant store that opened February 2016 and the approach timing was likely not a good fit to grow a new location while still perfecting the current one.

Market of Choice has a small format store in South Burlingame and it is not their core competency so would likely not venture into a similar footprint.

**Natural Grocers** was a likely candidate based on demographics, growth strategy and site specifications. They seek underserved areas especially for those seeking healthy options and often act as an anchor to community shopping areas and are considered a national small format grocer.

The applicant is asking the City to accept that a "traditional grocery" is no longer tenable and restrictions protecting for that use must be removed. While we can accept that the grocery format is changing it does not make the case that the grocery ordinance should be removed but rather updated to retain the resource for the neighborhood. They are not mutually exclusive. The neighborhood has proven support for a grocer at this location for over a century and it is an entirely short-sighted to conjecture a grocery is not needed. The conclusion that the Strohecker Site could not support a grocery store is not supported by critical, independent analysis and merely shows an inquiry was made. I agree that all of the conditions listed could prevent a new model grocer from going into the building but with an updated mixed use retail/grocery provision viability increases.

The applicants attorney claims in letter dated June 2018, "the current owner (applicant) owns and operates grocery sites..." which begs the question why more industry supporting documentation of a good faith effort was not provided, given industry landlord expertise ie demographic data, trade area specification/forecasts, demographic studies for 1 mile and 2 mile rings, competitive studies, daily trips, etc...

The companies I work with determine that education level, population density and average household income are the 3 main demographic indicators. College education levels above 60% and household income above 45k determine best fit.

Grocers of all formats are often looked at as anchor stores, are resilient to down economies and create retail synergies with other small, local retail and service businesses.

Small format grocers still have unique needs that most commercial land cannot satisfy due to the nature of the business. Parking is necessary though 10-20 spaces could suit a SFS (Small Format Store), ingress/egress is essential and preferably signalized with high visibility along with good daily traffic counts. The site is better suited to a neighborhood oriented smaller format store and as an anchor tenant will entice other complimentary businesses to make it a thriving mixed use project as these model stores focus on the daily "fresh shop" that includes produce, meats, and prepared foods.

With revised mixed-use/grocery favorable conditions and the current grocery market landscape, re-

approaching the small format grocer with trade area specifications and a tailored marketing approach to their model, securing a smaller grocer may be fruitful.

Sincerely,

Shannon Hiller-Webb

Annotated:

Amazon Acquires Whole Foods June 16, 2017 <u>https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-06-16/amazon-to-acquire-whole-foods-in-13-7-billion-bet-on-groceries</u> Amazon Go July 3, 2018 <u>http://fortune.com/2018/07/03/amazon-will-supersize-its-second-grab-and-go-grocery-in-seattle/</u>

Amazon Go July 3, 2018 <u>http://fortune.com/2018/07/03/amazon-will-supersize-its-second-grab-and-go-grocery-in-seattle/</u>

Small Grocery Stores Ripe July 31, 2018 <u>https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/31/dining/grocery-</u> store.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=second-columnregion&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news

Trader Joes – 2014 The retailer had pulled out of the project after facing neighborhood opposition. https://www.bizjournals.com/portland/blog/2014/04/trader-joes-rejects-mayor-hales-plea-toreconsider.html

Natural Grocer opened 16,550 square foot in the location of TJ April/2018 https://www.oregonlive.com/business/index.ssf/2018/04/natural\_grocers\_to\_open\_on\_sit.html

Grocery Anchored Retail <u>https://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/grocery-anchored-retail-</u>still-safe-bet/

GZG fundraising to open 300 stores – current square footage of stores = 4200, 5600, 7000, 8200 Amazon Go 2 locations with more coming soon – current square footage of beta store = 3000 NSM Hawthorne/Sellwood = 17,000 New Seasons opening store in Puget Sound late 2018 – 18,000 **DWIGHT STEGNER** 

2120 SW Nevada Ct Portland, OR 97219 Your Phone: 503-929-3149 Dwight.Stegner@gmail.com August 08, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Strohecker's Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Dwight Stegner, a resident of southwest Portland. I grew up less than a mile from Strohecker's, and remember visiting the store with my family as a young child and, as I got older, making trips to Strohecker's on my own to meet friends for snacks during school breaks.

A grocery store and ancillary services on this site made a critical contribution to the character and livability of the neighborhood, functioning as a community gathering place, at a scale sized to fit the surrounding residential neighborhood.

In responding to Plan policies 5.6 requiring that the City "promote and enhance the special character and identity of Portland's designated commercial areas," the applicant gives no significance to the 114 years that a grocery store contributed to this neighborhood. Instead he has focused on the past two plus years of building vacancy as a means to erase that history. A grocery store contributes mightily to the character of this neighborhood, as evidenced by all of the people who support it, and regardless of whether that property is vacant for a period of time before a new grocery store user is identified, does not change the fact that this special character may be lost forever. In many places, the applicant states that the health and social benefits resulting from the grocery store are no longer realistic because the market use is "no longer economically viable." However, economic viability of the use is not a recognized Comprehensive Plan policy or a value, for guiding planning decisions. Land use planning is about making decisions that further the health, safety and welfare of communities.

Our nearest neighborhood commercial services are 1.7 miles away at 23rd and Burnside and over 500 vertical feet down the hill.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan includes a number of topics favoring grocery – local access to food, healthy neighborhoods, community identity, social value and economic benefit.

Sincerely,

**Dwight Stegner** 

LAUREN DANAHY, RN

## 5112 SW Hewett Blvd Portland, OR 97221

August 8, 2018

## City Council

City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 **Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov** 

### Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

#### Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Lauren and I am a Registered Nurse who works with senior citizens as the Director of Nursing within a local assisted living and memory care community. I am aware of how important it is for senior citizens to walk to a local grocery store for their weekly groceries. Many seniors lose their ability to drive and the layout of our neighborhood with its many hills is arduous to walk safely further than their neighborhood grocer. The elevation gain of nearly 500 ft is also problematic for access to the next available grocer, Zupans. An article from the AARP, states" the average length of time that people (live) after they give up driving is, for men, seven years and for women, ten." Our bus service is limited to commuter hours in early morning and evening and not frequent enough to provide adequate travel options for seniors. The grocery provided fresh prepared foods and the opportunity to socialize and connect with community. Socialization is an important factor for our seniors as they often become exceptionally depressed due to lack of interaction with others.

The city has crafted thoughtful guides to safeguard this at-risk community, the Comp Plan Guiding Principles provide:

### Increase access to complete neighborhoods

Complete neighborhoods are places where people of all ages and abilities have safe and convenient access to more of the goods and services needed in daily life. These are places where they can get to grocery stores, schools, libraries, parks, cultural experiences and gathering places safely on foot or by bike....and make it easier for people to have active lifestyles and integrate exercise into their daily lives.

#### **Build City Greenways**

A network of safe, accessible, and attractive streets, trails, parks, and open spaces can make it easier to make healthier lifestyle choices. This network compliments complete communities by encouraging active living, community interaction and nature in neighborhoods. Walking, biking and using public transit become the easy choice.

### 3.44 Growth and mobility.

Coordinate transportation and land use strategies along corridors to accommodate growth and mobility needs for people of all ages and abilities.

I hope you will take our senior population into consideration when evaluating removing the condition for access to healthy, fresh food and community hub.

Sincerely,

Annotated evidence:

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/552037 Portland Plan 5 Guiding Principles

DAVID C. OLSON

5220 SW 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave Portland, OR 97221 Phone: 503-422-7551 E-mail: cableczar1@gmail.com August 8, 2018

Mayor & City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Attn. Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

## Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

I am David Olson. I served as your Cable Director for nearly 30 years and stepped down in 2012 to teach at Lewis & Clark Law School and consult in telecommunications matters on behalf of local governments and the public interest. This property has special meaning to me because I resided in Portland Heights (in an apartment previously occupied by former Mayor Bud Clark) in the 1970s and 1980s while finishing law school and staring my career. I regularly shopped at Strohecker's and was active in the neighborhood both as a resident and Precinct Committeeperson. Portland Heights remains one of my favorite Portland neighborhoods, with a history and ambiance that is distinct and memorable, bound up with the history of the City of Portland itself from its earliest days.

My testimony is to point out that the Hearings Officer findings do not satisfy ZC 33.810.050(A)(1), which requires that the proposal be equally or better supportive of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan enumerates:

### 3.31 Role of Town Centers.

Enhance Town Centers as successful places that serve the needs of surrounding neighborhoods as well as a wider area, and contain higher concentrations of employment, institutions, commercial and community services, and a wide range of housing options.

### 3.35 Role of Neighborhood Centers.

Enhance Neighborhood Centers as successful places that serve the needs of surrounding neighborhoods. In Neighborhood Centers, provide for higher concentrations of development, employment, commercial and community services, and a wider range of housing options than the surrounding neighborhoods, and

### • 4.26 Active gathering places.

Locate public squares, plazas, and other gathering places in centers and corridors to provide places for community activity and social connections. Encourage location of businesses, services, and arts adjacent to these spaces that relate to and promote the use of the space.

The comprehensive policy here references "other gathering places" indicating an intent to include places where people gather. It is widely recognized the corner groceries are de facto community centers – a function served by the original Strohecker's for many years.

I understand that the applicant and staff have responded that there are no landmarks, natural features or cultural resources on the site. Anyone familiar with Strohecker's or the neighborhood knows this is nonsense – the site has served as the de facto neighborhood center for decades, and Portland Heights is one of the City's most historic neighborhoods – where the Council Crest streetcar ran in days of yore.

Two other provisions of the Comprehensive Plan deserve mention:

## Annotated evidence:

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/53297

### 33.130.050 Neighborhood Contact

**A. Purpose.** Neighborhood contact is required for larger projects in the commercial/mixed use zones because of the impacts that large projects can have on the surrounding community. The neighborhood contact requirement provides an opportunity for community input on the design of these projects by providing a setting for the applicant and neighborhood residents to discuss a proposal in an informal manner. By sharing information and concerns early, all involved have the opportunity to identify ways to improve a proposal and to resolve conflicts.

**B. Neighborhood contact requirement.** Proposals meeting the following conditions are subject to the neighborhood contact requirement as specified in Section 33.700.025, Neighborhood Contact. All of the steps in 33.700.025 must be completed before a building permit is requested:

1. The proposed development has not been subject to a land use review; and

2. The proposed development will add at least 10,000 square feet of net building area on the site, or will create five or more new dwelling units. Dwelling units are created:

a. As part of new development;

b. By adding net building area to existing development that increases the number of dwelling units; or c. By conversion of existing net building area from non-residential to residential uses.

If the CM1 zoning is left intact residential only or commercial without retail is the likely development option which does not serve the Comprehensive Plan Goals. The applicant has shared that he does not intend to be the developer and therefore community considerations are not his priority. A development review can ensure the neighbors participate in the success of the addition to the neighborhood. **BLYTHE OLSON** 

## 2719 SW Old Orchard Portland, OR 97201

August 8, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

## Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

## Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Blythe Olson and I am a longtime resident of the Southwest Hills neighborhood. I have been deeply involved in the changes with the Strohecker site as I know neighbors decades before me have worked to preserve this site for the community; many of whom are here today. I circulated a petition in the early stages of the Stroheckers condition request to determine neighborhood support for retaining our voice in the process of the site changes. The petition has had overwhelming support from neighbors with 1150 signers as of yesterday which is why we are here today with buttons we are 1000(+) strong. The statement that unifies us all is:

## PDX Heights Petition Statement

Southwest Hills

We, as residents of the Portland Heights neighborhood and nearby, respectfully request the following:

Any modification of allowances/restrictions on development of the historical Strohecker's Grocery property should not be approved by the Portland City Council until Portland Heights neighbors have been consulted and allowed a meaningful opportunity to review any development proposal.

Such proposal should recognize the distinctive character of the neighborhood, address the need to restore a retail grocery and community space, mitigate possible parking and traffic impacts and preserve the integrity of the adjacent Portland Heights Park.

The Hearings Officer was placed in a position to speculate findings without having a meaningful development to respond to and analyze thoughtfully. A conclusion void a plan compromises the city's goals being applied appropriately. The City should consider some conceptual development proposal to make this analysis meaningful and weigh which goals apply to this valuable resource. In absence of which a decision should not be made. Should there be a decision, we hope code 33.130.050a and 33.130.050b will provide a voice for us in the process.

To show our good faith effort to work with the owner, we commissioned Winterbrook Planning to draft scenarios for viable use at the site given the CM1 designation. He provides 5 scenarios, most that include mixed-use retail/grocery combinations with housing. He has included affordable housing options in some. For comparison, his final scenario more closely aligns with an option the owner discussed with us early on that would be more high end condos, less than 20. Mixed-use was not included in that scenario.

We look forward to the opportunity to inform and shape a valued community resource and welcome new neighbors to a thriving, engaged neighborhood.

Sincerely,

NANCY SETON

## 2020 SW Edgewood Rd Portland, OR 97201

503-224-3840 president@swhrl.org August 8, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

## Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

I'm SWHRL Neighborhood Association Co-President and Land Use Chair. I'm one of those stubborn people who hates to drive if I can walk somewhere, and I always walked to Strohecker's – for groceries, for the post office, pharmacy, liquor store, and to meet friends for coffee. It's extremely inconvenient to have to drive to multiple places for those services now, and I'd be so happy to have them back in the heart of our neighborhood.

I'm going to talk about commercial scarcity in our neighborhood. The city's comprehensive goals should be applied with sensitivity to each neighborhoods' unique assets and deficits without bias. Portland Heights greatest deficit individually and comparatively is lack of commercial property to support the livability of the neighborhood.

The applicants' attorney, Radler, White Parks, states in their letter dated June 7<sup>th</sup> that "While the neighborhood believes that this commercial site is unique, there is not a compelling reason to treat it differently than other similarly situated CM1 zones elsewhere in the city."

In fact, this property is one of only two commercially-zoned CM1 sites within the neighborhood, which does make it unique compared to the rest of the city. As you can see, the data shows that Southwest Hills, when compared to other neighborhoods in the city, has one of the smallest percentages of commercial property within its boundaries – only 1%, to provide for goods and services per the 12.2 goal. It ranks 13<sup>th</sup> out of 95 neighborhoods for commercial property. (Reference Map Attached)

The Hearings Officer refers to Goal 12.2 Enhancing Variety, which preserves easily accessible neighborhood commercial nodes, and states that the "site serves as a commercial node within an otherwise relatively homogenous residential neighborhood". What he fails to state that it is the ONLY commercial node **that could accommodate this development**.

The stated purpose of the Commercial/Mixed Use zones is to support access to food and services in a healthy walkable neighborhood. There's a good chance these goals would not be met without protection for retail use at the Site.

City Council's predecessors acknowledged the value of neighborhood-serving retail and the

limitations this neighborhood faces. To ensure this scarce resource is preserved in this neighborhood, we recommend that new condition(s) of approval be crafted to allow for a reasonable amount of retail space as part future development, to include a small format grocery plus shops and services.

Sincerely,

Nancy Seton

SWHRL Co-President/Land Use Chair

https://public.tableau.com/profile/portland.bps#!/vizhome/BPS\_Business\_District\_Data\_20 17/BPSBusinessDistrictData

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/59265

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/59267

RANDY MILLER

4100 SW Arthur Way Portland, OR 97221 randy@producerowllc.com

August 8, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: StroHeckers Conditions - Comment for Record

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS,

I AM RANDY MILLER, A LOCAL BUSINESSMAN AND DIPLOMATIC CONSUL, AND HAVE LIVED WITHIN ONE MILE OF THE STROHECKER PROPERTY FOR ALL BUT 5 YEARS OF MY LIFE. I AM HERE BECAUSE I FEEL WE HAVE A VERY REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THE FUTURE OF THIS PROPERTY, WHICH YOU ARE HEARING FROM OUR VERY ENGAGED NEIGHBORHOOD

I WILL SPEND A FEW MINUTES CITING SOME TECHNICAL ARGUMENTS THAT ALIGN WITH THE CITY'S INTENT, THEN SPEND A MINUTE WITH OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY AS IT APPLIES TO THIS:

IN 1984, A FORMAL AGREEMENT WAS MADE BETWEEN THE CITY, OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE PROPERTY OWNER. AS A CONCESSION FOR REZONING AND SUBSTANTIAL REDEVELOPMENT, A SIMPLE PROTECTION WAS PUT IN PLACE TO PERMANENTLY MAINTAIN THE HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT OF THE PROPERTY. ORDINANCE NO 155609 REPRESENTS THE INTENT THAT THE HEART OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THE MOST BASIC AMENITIES: FOOD AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES. IN THE TWO YEARS SINCE THE CLOSING OF STROHECKER'S GROCERY, THE COMMUNITY IS MORE AWARE THAN EVER HOW IMPORTANT AND CRITICAL ACCESS TO BASIC AMENITIES AND SERVICES ARE FOR US.

THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN'S AREA-SPECIFIC CONCEPT PLAN, THE SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY PLAN APPLIES AND PROVIDES:

LAND USE AND URBAN FORM STATES "ENHANCE SOUTHWEST PORTLAND'S SENSE OF PLACE AS A COMMUNITY AND IS A COLLECTION OF DISTINCT NEIGHBORHOODS... ENCOURAGE THE REALIZATION OF COMPACT, TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY, MIXED-USE CENTERS. AND THE COMMUNITY WIDE OBJECTIVES STATE: (B) ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT THAT <u>HAS CLEAR PUBLIC BENEFIT</u>, FEWER ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES, MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITATIONS AND ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE.

(C) ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF MIXED-USE AREAS RESPECTS THE SCALE AND THE DESIRED NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER IDENTIFIED IN INDIVIDUAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS.

THESE SOUTHWEST AREA-SPECIFIC COMMUNITY PLAN POLICIES PLACE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE ON PRESERVING THOSE AREAS THAT GIVE A COMMUNITY A SENSE OF PLACE. AGAIN, THIS IS AN AREA-SPECIFIC PLAN POLICY THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN GREATER WEIGHT THAN OTHER MORE GENERAL CITY-WIDE POLICIES.

MOST OF YOU KNOW THAT I HAVE LEAD BEST PRACTICES TRIPS FOR PORTLAND AREA GOVT, BIZ, NONPROFIT AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERS ALL OVER THE US AND GLOBALLY OBSERVING SUCCESSES AND FAILURES OF OTHER REGIONS, SO AS TO ENGAGE DISCUSSION ABOUT PORTLAND'S FUTURE IN PUBLIC POLICY.

INTERESTINGLY, OTHER AREAS HAVE SUCH RESPECT FOR OUR PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP IN MANY AREAS, THAT OTHER CITIES LEADERS ARE WELL INFORMED ABOUT POLICY HERE WHEN WE ARRIVE. ONE OF THE CONSTANT THEMES WITH WHICH THEY ARE MOST CURIOUS AND ADMIRE IS THE 20 MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPT WE HAVE HERE!

AND FRANKLY, WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE HERE IS EXACTLY THAT FOR THE ONE ITEM THAT PEOPLE NEED THE MOST: FOOD!

MORE THAN THAT, HOWEVER, IS THAT THIS PROPERTY HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE VENUE OF OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY...A GATHERING PLACE FOR NEIGHBORS. PORTLAND IS ALSO ADMIRED FOR THIS SENSE OF COMMUNITY, AND AS THE GREAT SOCIOLOGIST AND AUTHOR ROBT PUTMAN WRITES, WE ARE AT THE TOP OF THE HEAP FOR THIS ESSENTIAL QUALITY, AS IT FRAMES THE ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS IN ANY GIVEN COMMUNITY. OUR REASONABLE APPROACH TO THIS PROPERTY UNDERSCORES THIS QUALITY WHILE ALSO SUPPORTING ADOPTED CITY GOALS.

SINCERELY,

RANDY MILLER

ADAM LAMOTTE

4068 SW Hewett Blvd Portland, OR 97221 Your Phone: 503-730-8809 calcanius@gmail.com

August 7, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Adam LaMotte, at 4068 SW Hewett Blvd. I have lived in Council Crest for 4 years. One of the reasons my wife and I were attracted to this neighborhood was the Strohecker's store.

The concerned neighbors surrounding Strohecker's grocery collectively launched an online survey to solicit the thoughts and feelings of the neighbors most impacted by development of the Strohecker's site. The response was overwhelming, with 516 households taking the survey. (Each household entered their name, zip code and contact information to verify residency.)

We provided an introduction and background including

- The current "Strohecker's" property owner will not be the developer. He intends to sell the property.
- The property owner has stated he has been unable to lease the property to a grocery store and requests removal of a series of development conditions restricting the use and redevelopment

options as the conditions strictly limit the use of the property to a grocery store.

- If the conditions are removed, the only limit on redevelopment will be the existing CM1 zoning, which would allow single family, multi-family, office or commercial retail or service use or any combination of these uses allocated amid two or three stories on a bigger building footprint, with more or less parking.
- The City staff and Hearings Officer support the property owner's request to remove 1984 ordinances
- The reuse of the existing single-use grocery building is unlikely. Under most, if not all development scenarios, the building will likely be demolished and replaced by either a mixed-use or residential only development.

The results show that the majority of neighbors would like a retail-only or mixed-use development that ensures a grocery component. Retail services and community-focused use for the development is preferred, and safety, with access by foot and by bike are important. Increased traffic congestion resulting from the new use development is also a concern.

### QUOTES from the survey:

"Stroh's was a place we could all walk to. Losing it means getting in our cars to do any little thing. For this reason, loss of retail services is a major step backwards for the many people's health, for the neighborhood, and for the city." **Anonymous** 

"I am just really hoping that we can make this space truly benefit our community in the future, and provide a grocery store for our neighborhood (especially during the snow/ice!). Walking four miles round trip to overpriced Zupan's simply isn't sustainable". Anna

"Increased traffic into this site would be acceptable if there is something for the community in the space such as grocery and/or retail. The neighborhood is currently a "food desert" and forces more people to drive to get food or go to restaurants. If the space is only adding more housing, then it will aggravate the traffic two fold by adding more people/vehicles and do nothing to add local services to the neighborhood. This would be a win for the developer and a significant loss to the entire neighborhood and the new tenants". **Michael** 

"It's damn near impossible to get downtown and back to get groceries during the worst parts of the winter. I had no idea how good we had it with Strohecker's." **Smitty** 

"I have lived in the Portland Heights neighborhood since 1972 and am very familiar with the happenings at Stroheckers over the years. It is very important to me and my family that we have access to a grocery store or market and ideally other retail including but not limited to a postal annex, pharmacy, liquor store, etc. In addition, I am in favor of increasing diversity in the neighborhood and offering more apartments or condos in addition to retail is very attractive. I am less concerned about increased traffic and parking challenges---however we will soon need to fight with the city and Trimet in order to get public transportation back to the neighborhood again." - **Ann** 

"Hoping for a place to walk to... To buy something (coffee, ice cream, baked goods, drinks in evening), to eat, to meet others. A "reason" to take a walk!" **Mimi** 

"I have deep experience in commercial real estate private equity and would be happy to provide a balanced opinion as someone who lives two blocks from Stroheckers yet also fully understands the obsolete zoning that is currently in place for the site. In my opinion, a mixed use plan that activates retail along Patton while enabling the owner to build multifamily apartments or condos (which would provide demand for the onsite retail and possibly provide for additional community amenities is our best bet." **Ian** 

"I'm most interested in having some kind of grocery store in the neighborhood within a reasonable walking distance. We are so isolated geographically, especially in the foul weather, when the buses won't run and Uber drivers and taxis won't come up the hill." **Amy** 

"I believe it is imperative that we have a grocery store as part of any new footprint. Going up and down from Council Crest to Burnside every day for essentials is an economic waste of time and resources." **Karen** 

Sincerely,

Adam LaMotte

YOUR NAME

## Your Address Portland, OR 972

Your Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx Your E-mail: xxxxxx

August ##, 2018

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

We believe the Hearings Officer recommendation that a trip cap be imposed

Trip cap should be determined around how to fulfill the mixed-use objective and doing so prior to is premature. A reasoned traffic plan can only be crafted with informed plan.

Trip cap Self destruct alternative this condition becomes invalid when the alternative

Owner hypocritical in that wants limitations removed and then asking for a limitation to be imposed with trip cap that plays to his narrative of wanting to build residential potentially exclusively - could be the lens that is offering best insight about his intended development Applicant removing one condition and applying another limits development options to fit investor narrative and desired residential exclusive use

Measuring Apartments by number of units, not square footage. So 19 units at 1,000 sf each and 19 units at 1,500 sf each will generate the same amount of trips. FAR number needs to be run to determine what BDS would allow as far as size of building. This proves that a grocery store of about 10,000 square feet plus something between 19- 45 apartment units could be accomplished without running afoul of the trip cap. So, assuming that we could find a grocer willing to go into a 10,000 square foot area, the trip cap amendment works. If we cannot find a store that could live in a 10,000 square foot area, we will need to lobby for removal of the trip cap for the policy reasons that Kurt has identified. Second, retail demands fewer trips than grocery so I am assuming that 6,000 square feet of grocery coupled with 4,000 square feet of retail will also fall within the trip cap limitation.

Trip cap cannot go away. There are statewide rules that prohibit land use approvals that increase the overall traffic generation from a proposed use in circumstances where the roadways are already over capacity. Patton Road is over capacity and the City cannot afford to fix it and cannot obligate the applicant to fix it. Therefore, whatever uses are approved with this request cannot generate any more traffic than would be projected to occur if a grocery existed in the format prescribed by the current conditions. We could argue about whether the trip cap number proposed is correctly calculated i.e. whether an actual grocery on that site would generate the amount of traffic identified by the applicant (or whether the applicant erred by being too conservative in its projected number) but we will have a trip cap.

or

PBOT is moving forward with adopting new standards, called alternative mobility standards, that would eliminate the need for the trip cap. The projected completion date for these efforts is somewhere around 18 months so PBOT would prefer not to adopt land use decisions that include trip caps, when

these trip caps likely won't be necessary 18 months from now. The alternative mobility measures will allow the City to identify smaller cost pedestrian or bicycle improvements that will make up for the additional congestion caused by the proposed use.

Sincerely,

Annotated evidence:

3610 SW Grover Street Portland, OR 97221 (503) 227-6995 elawrence@tenbridgepartners.com

City Council City of Portland 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 140 Portland, OR 97204 Council Clerk: Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Case File: LU 18-112666 CP ZC Subject: Stroheckers Conditions - Comment for Record

Mayor and City Council Members,

Our thanks to each of you for your dedication, time and service to our City. We have important issues in the City of Portland and the work you do is invaluable. My name is Erik Lawrence. I am a Portland Metro native, husband and father of three, business owner and a resident of the SW Hills.

On the surface, this issue is a small thing. It is just another development project in a City besieged by development. But in our neighborhood, it is so much more. There are only two zones commercial properties within our neighborhood serving over 2000 households. It is a scarcity we cannot afford to lose. And the City, in support of the Comprehensive plan and strategic goals, cannot afford to let slip away.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan contains specific provisions to protect lands suitable for grocery stores and for local neighborhood commercial nodes which keep communities connected. In 1984, our neighborhood ceded an existing residential limitation in favor of a limited retail grocery limitation to ensure a valued community-connector, and scarce resource, remain in perpetuity. The City reaffirmed that commitment to this neighborhood in 2016 with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and subsequent zoning designations.

The Hearings Officer was unduly positioned in their report to conjecture, applying City code in the absence of a development proposal by the owner they could thoughtfully respond to. The report leaned too heavily on the only expert testimony provided, which we have shown to be fundamentally flawed. The report simply did not weigh the importance of the site as a scarce resource to the City and the neighborhood. There is no scenario where these policies, which encourage local access to a grocery store, will be met to an equal or greater degree if these restrictions are removed.

One of the most important takeaways today in many regards is having a voice. If the council votes to support the property owner's request to remove all development conditions on the site, the neighborhood could lose its voice. We could lose an essential tool available to negotiate responsible development of the site which matches with the community's needs and reflects the strategic vision of our City's leaders.

We support the removal of the grocery-only zoning and 24 related conditions, however, subject to a new mixed-use, grocery condition so we can maintain neighborhood retail space. Such a condition should include square footage dedicated to a mixed use/grocery condition to include a small format grocery store with additional square footage dedicated to businesses that sell goods and services.

We have been and continue to be willing to discuss reasonable, new conditions which would be mutually beneficial to the neighborhood, the City, and the owner. We ask for a chance to have a voice, and we remain 1000 (plus) strong.

August 08, 2018

# Portland Tribune

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# Sources Say: Seattle columnist questions rezoning

🛓 Jim Redden f Thursday, July 12, 2018

**3 Comments** 

Plus, affordable housing bong fundraising increases and Wyden says Merkley helpful where he is.

PORTLAND TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO - Some Portlanders oppose increasing residential densities.



New York Times columnist Timothy Egan has a warning for those who think the zoning changes in the Residential Infill Project will lower overall home prices in Portland.

**₽** -

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability recommends rezoning around 60 percent of Portland's single-family neighborhoods to allow relatively small multifamily projects. Writing in the July 7 issue of The Times, Egan, who lives in Seattle, says a comparable change there hasn't reduced home prices.

"An unholy alliance of socialists and developers threatens to destroy the city's single-family neighborhoods with a major upzoning — further disrupting trust between residents and politicians. If the intent is to make Seattle more affordable, this approach has failed. The city has built more new units of housing over the last five years than in the prior half-century. And yet Seattle continues to lead the nation in home price increases," Egan wrote in a column about increasing home prices and homelessness in all large West Coast cities headlined, "Down and Out in San Francisco, on \$117,000 a Year."

The Portland City Council is expected to vote on the project's recommendation later this year.

## Housing bond fundraising increases

Affordable-housing developers and operators are among the largest contributors to the campaign to pass Metro's proposed \$652.8 million affordable-housing bond at the November general election.

Yes for Affordable Housing reported raising nearly \$112,000 by press time. The largest contributions include \$12,500 from Walsh Construction, \$10,000 each from Bridge Housing and Northwest Housing Alternatives, and \$5,000 each from REACH Development and Hacienda Community Development.

Other large contributions include \$10,000 from Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and the Local 48 Electricians PAC, and \$5,000 each from Metro President Tom Hughes, Portland Commissioner Nick Fish and AFSCME 3580.

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No contributions had been reported by the opposing committee, Affordable Housing for WHO?

## Wyden says Merkley helpful where he is

Although U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley has told U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden he is "exploring" running for president in 2020, the two Oregon Democrats have not yet talked about it at length.

At least that's what Wyden told Pamplin Media Group editors and reporters during a visit last Friday. "He and I have not talked about it specifically," Wyden said in response to a question about whether he is supporting Merkley for president. "I think if he were here he would tell you he's focused on 2018."

At the same time, Wyden argued that Merkley can help the state if he remains in the U.S. Senate, instead of giving up his seat to run for president, as would be required by the Oregon Constitution. Merkley currently is on the Appropriations Committee, a position once held by former Republican Oregon U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield.

"I think we're well-positioned to advocate for Oregon," said Wyden, who also praised Merkley's work to focus attention on family separations along the southern border with Mexico.

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Owner & Neighbor Dr. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr.

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The Washington Post

## **Business**

# In expensive cities, rents fall for the rich — but rise for the poor

by Jeff Stein August 6 at 5:00 AM

U.S. cities struggling with soaring housing costs have found some success in lowering rents this year, but that relief has not reached the renters most at risk of losing their housing.

Nationally, the pace of rent increases is beginning to slow down, with the average rent in at least six cities falling since last summer, according to Zillow data.

But the decline is being driven primarily by decreasing prices for high-end rentals. People in low-end housing, the apartments and other units that house working-class residents, are still paying more than ever.

Since last summer, rents have fallen for the highest earners while increasing for the poorest in San Francisco, Atlanta, Nashville, Chicago, Philadelphia, Denver, Pittsburgh, Washington and Portland, Ore., among other cities. In several other metro areas including Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Houston and Miami — rents have risen for the poor and the rich alike.

The ongoing increase in prices for low-end renters poses a challenge for city officials who have vowed to lower housing costs for working-class residents already struggling with tepid wage growth in the U.S. economy.

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Last Updated:3:49 PM 08/06/2018

City officials have said a boom in luxury housing construction would cause rents to fall for everyone else, arguing that creating new units for those at the top would ease competition for cheaper properties.

In part based on that theory, cities have approved thousands of new luxury units over the past several years, hoping to check high rents that have led more than 20 million American renters to be classified as "cost burdened," defined as spending more than 30 percent of one's income on housing.

But although some advocates say the dividends could still pay off for low-income renters, others say more direct government action is needed to prevent poor residents from being forced out of their cities or into homelessness. They have called for the federal government to help construct more affordable units, or offer greater rental assistance for poor families.

"For-profit developers have predominantly built for the luxury and higher end of the market, leaving a glut of overpriced apartments in some cities," said Diane Yentel, president and chief executive of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, an advocacy group. "Some decision-makers believed this would 'filter down' to the lowest income people, but it clearly will not meet their needs."

Poorer city residents have experienced significant rent increases over the past several years. In Portland, average rents for the poor have risen from about \$1,100 to \$1,600 — or by more than 40 percent — since 2011.

In San Francisco, the average rent at the bottom of the market has soared from \$1,700 to \$2,600, a nearly 50 percent increase. Seattle's poor have also had their rents rise by close to 40 percent. In expensive cities, rents fall for the rich - but rise for the poor - The Washington Post

Nationwide, rents for those at the bottom have increased by 18 percent.

Rising rents for the poor threaten to add to the nation's homeless population, and put an additional severe strain on tens of millions of families, often forcing them to forgo other basic needs to avoid losing their housing.

Construction in most U.S. cities came to a standstill during the Great Recession, amid a broader collapse in the housing market. As the economic recovery took off, its gains were disproportionately concentrated in a handful of cities, leading renters to move in droves to already densely populated urban areas.

There was not enough housing there to greet them. By the early 2010s, rents in major cities were beginning to increase by more than 10 percent annually. Several cities declared emergencies over their rising homeless populations.

In the following years, protracted battles have occurred in city halls nationwide over the size and makeup of urban communities, often pitting longtime homeowners trying to preserve the value of their properties against developers seeking to profit from the high demand.

Mayors have been caught in the middle, aiming to accommodate an influx of new residents who help boost the local economy without displacing those who have lived in their cities for decades. They have also faced intense pressure from influential developers and business groups that have pressed for the ability to develop new homes, as well as from landlords who enjoy high rents and fear seeing those values diluted. The result has been a range of policy measures, including reforming zoning codes to encourage more development, creating new tools to finance affordable housing projects and rules mandating that developers include affordable units in their properties.

These measures have shown some signs of reducing rents, for both the rich and, to a lesser extent, the middle class.

For renters in the middle third of the income distribution, average rental prices have remained virtually unchanged since last summer, according to the Zillow data. Rents over the past year have also fallen slightly for the middle class of renters in Portland, Chicago, Philadelphia and Seattle.

The lack of affordable housing can be particularly pronounced in smaller cities such as Portland, which has struggled to accommodate about 40,000 new residents since 2010.

From 2010 to 2014, the city built only a few hundred affordable housing units, according to a city report. Since 2014, more than 95 percent of private construction in the city has been in "the luxury end of the market," said Nick Fish, a city commissioner.

Private housing construction has exploded in Portland's downtown area, along its south waterfront and in its historically black northeast community. But even as the city's population has ballooned, its black population has decreased since 2014 by an average of 800 people every year, probably pushed out by gentrification, according to a study by Portland State University researchers.

In an email, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler (D) pointed to 948

affordable rental units expected to open in 2018 and an additional 978 units scheduled for 2019. "We are actively creating housing options at every income level in every area of the city," he said, adding that 10,000 more units are coming soon. "Our efforts are beginning to pay off: This will be the largest number of affordable units ever produced by the City of Portland in a single year in modern history."

But for Rakhelya Levitskaya, a 66-year-old home-care aide who works with the elderly and disabled, little help appears to be on the way. A Ukrainian immigrant who has lived in the same Portland housing complex for 18 years, Levitskaya received notice of an approximately 10 percent rent increase this summer that she fears will push her into homelessness.

"I'm afraid of living out on the streets, without a house," she said in an interview. "I'm very worried."

## Jeff Stein



Jeff Stein is a policy reporter on The Washington Post's Wonkblog team. Before joining The Post, Stein was a congressional reporter for Vox, where he wrote primarily about the Democratic Party and the left. In 2014, he founded the local news nonprofit the Ithaca Voice in Upstate New York. Follow **Y** 



BUSINESS

# Portland's Hottest 'Hoods: The priciest neighborhoods

The average for all 99 Portland-area ZIP codes tracked by RMLS, was \$462,238 during the second quarter of 2018. That's a 5 percent increase from the same period during 2017.

Author: Andy Giegerich, Portland Business Journal Published: 10:50 AM PDT August 2, 2018 Updated: 8:49 AM PDT August 3, 2018

Sure, by many markers, Portland's housing market is slowing down. But by one very critical marker, the market remains as bustling as ever.

That metric, as it has so often been in and around the growing Rose City, is price. In analyzing RMLS data for this, the third and final piece of our second quarter 2018 Hottest 'Hoods series, we found the average for all 99 Portland-area ZIP codes the

data service tracks was \$462,238 during the time frame. That's a 5 percent increase from the same period during 2017, when the average price was \$440,155.

\$

The price increase is astronomical, at 14.4 percent, when comparing figures during the same three-month period of 2016 to the quarter that just ended.

A few other nuggets unearthed from the RMLS data:

\$

- Year-to-date through June, the average sales price is 453,400, a 6.2 percent increase from the first half of 2017.
- Seventeen of the top 25 'hoods for highest average sales price are in Portland city limits.
- The same ZIP code has been No. 1 for at least the last three years in Q2. The same top 5 have appeared in the top five, albeit in a different order at various times.

Our Hottest 'Hoods coverage examines three factors that indicate which areas count the most residential real estate activity. Yesterday, we explored the neighborhoods in which <u>homes sold the fastest during 2018's second quarter</u>. On Tuesday, we disclosed <u>the areas in which the most homes sold</u>.