

## Notes - Rosewood/Glenfair Multi-Dwelling Residential Area Walk

November 1, 2016

The purpose of this walk with community stakeholders was to explore how zoning code development regulations can be improved to help achieve better multi-family development outcomes and street connections, using the Rosewood/Glenfair multi-family residential area as a case study.

### Community Participants:

Jenny Glass (Rosewood Initiative)  
Kristen Ross (Rosewood Initiative)  
Yoana Molina (Rosewood Initiative and area resident)  
Tom Martin (Rosewood Bikes)  
Mary-Rain O'Meara (Human Solutions)  
Bob Rosholt (area resident and developer)



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### Summary of ideas from the walk:

- Regulations should allow for some ground-floor commercial uses as part of multi-dwelling zone development near light rail stations and on major street corridors.
- Along street frontages, providing landscaped setbacks in front of residential units is good, providing residents with more privacy (buildings with raised stoops are another way of providing for privacy, while also supporting a pedestrian-friendly street environment).
- Providing outdoor spaces for residents is important, especially with the large number of families in the area.
- Parking is important to residents, as many people need to drive to reach their jobs.
- Would be best if projects could include off-street parking and also play spaces/gardens.
- Indoor community spaces can be useful for residents, but there can be safety/crime issues with unsupervised community rooms.
- Pedestrian connections can be useful, but they need to be accessible and have lighting for safety at night.
- It is good for multi-dwelling zoning to provide allowances for a variety of housing types (ownership-type housing, such as houses and townhouses, as well as multi-family development), providing opportunities for a range of different types of households and incomes. Single-level units without stairs should be part of the housing mix to support the aging population and mobility needs.

### NOTES:

#### **Stop 1 (NE 147<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Burnside, RH zone: Hazelwood Station, 4-story apartment complex)**

Affordable housing development with accessible units, play area, Head Start program (walking along 147<sup>th</sup>, note play area behind buildings).

- The RH zone allows buildings to be built up next to sidewalks, but this raises questions about privacy for residents in ground-level units. Do you think it is important to have landscaping between buildings and the street?

- What are your thoughts about allowances for small commercial spaces or live/work units along major street corridors or near light rail stations?

Comments:

- Allowing ground-floor commercial would be good. Our model is mixed-use. Having commercial activates the area.
- This area lacks commercial services. We need commercial allowances for community needs and services.
- Yes, landscaped setbacks are needed.
- Lots of pedestrian traffic going by on way to Max stop, so setbacks for privacy would be good. Ground floor commercial could also help. Not just concerns about privacy, but also security.
- Yes, ground floor commercial would help, but I like additional landscaping.
- Look at East Coast approaches, with stoops and buildings lifted up creating privacy.
- This development's shared area is gated and is a reflection of lack of public parks. Area is gated to keep people out, likely other kids from surrounding area.
- As a mom, safety is important.
- Shared outdoor spaces build community, which helps reduce turnover and stabilizes the property.



**Stop 2 (NE Couch & 147<sup>th</sup> Ave., RH zone: rowhouses with front garages)**

Concerns have been raised about front garages and their impacts on the pedestrian environment of street frontages and the loss of on-street parking. Because of this, front garages are limited in other zones (garages cannot occupy more than 50% of building facades in the single-dwelling zones).

- Should front garages be limited in the multi-dwelling zones?
- Some of the trade-offs with other parking arrangements, include loss of backyards in the case of rear parking arrangements, and concerns about competition for on-street parking if no parking is provided. What are your thoughts on such tradeoffs?

Comments:

- I don't like the front garages.
- It is better than a parking lot, and the garages are more secure.
- Many of these garages are likely used as storage.
- I see the garages as being an appealing feature to the market.



### Stop 3 (141 & 177 NE 147<sup>th</sup> Ave., RH zone: apartment developments)

Many apartment developments tend to include surface parking lots, but often have little usable outdoor space for residents.

- No outdoor space is required in the RH zone - should this be reconsidered?

#### Comments:

- Private sector market demands parking, but as non-profit developers we think about the quality of space and provide outdoor areas for residents.
- Don't choose between parking and outdoor space. I would do underground parking then cover it with a play area and courtyard on top. I would do both.
- Activity is important. Have units facing courtyard.
- We have used tuck-under parking to free up space.
- We are close to transit here, so there may be less need for so much parking.
- I might push back on that just a little. People in this neighborhood do drive to work. Transit does not always go where people work. For many lower-income people here, their car is their most valuable possession, so it is important to have a secure place to park. We will have a car culture in East Portland for some time.



### Stop 4 (End of roadway on NE 147<sup>th</sup>)

NE 147<sup>th</sup> dead ends at this location, but the street right-of-way and pedestrian access continues north to NE Everett. What would you prioritize if this street, or similar connections, were to be improved for pedestrians?

- Is the preservation of Douglas fir trees important?
- Is a paved surface important?
- Would a narrower, less open pedestrian connection be acceptable?
- How important is lighting?
- If you had to prioritize pavement, lighting, and width, what would be at the top of the list? What would be least important?

#### Comments:

- Douglas firs create shade deserts, where you can't grow anything.
- Plant new trees. Sometimes you just have to start over. The new trees will get large over time.
- People will still walk through regardless.
- I've gone on some ride-alongs with the police and lack of connectivity hinders their work.
- Also think about safety, these streets are very dark at night. I wouldn't feel comfortable walking through here. I would like to see some pedestrian scale lighting.
- I like pedestrian scale lighting, not ones 25 feet up in the sky.
- What about accessibility? A wheelchair or stroller can't get through here.





**Stop 5 (247 NE 146<sup>th</sup>, R1 zone: Glendoveer Woods, 4-story apartment buildings with open spaces)**

This is an example of a development on a relatively large site. The large site makes it easier to include substantial outdoor space, compared to development on smaller sites (see project to south), and could make it easier to include street connections.

- What do you think about the idea of requiring small sites to be combined into larger sites for these reasons, before development can occur?

Comments:

- The outdoor space is large, but how well used is it?
- Is this a family serving outdoor space? I suppose it depends on the programming of the units.
- It looks attractive.
- Feels like a facility or institution.



**Stop 6 (217 NE 146<sup>th</sup>, RH zone: apartments/condominiums)**

Nearly half of this site is devoted to paved vehicle areas, with very little outdoor space for residents (the RH zone has no requirements for residential outdoor space).

- Do you think it is important for development to include outdoor space for things like play areas, growing food, and trees? Should outdoor space be required?
- Given policy objectives for minimizing impervious surfaces and urban heat island effects, should there be limitations on the amount of area that can be devoted to paved surfaces?
- Should small sites like this be required to be combined into larger sites to provide more opportunities for residential open spaces and street connections?
- Should regulations try to address privacy issues, such as the situation here of the windows of apartment buildings facing each other with little separation?

Comments:

- Kids play in the parking lot, as there is no other place. Won't open windows if there is no privacy.
- This arrangement is pretty bad. Need outdoor space.
- Being so close to the sidewalk, the units on the street have to deal with street noise.
- Thinking back to your question about consolidating lots – I'm not a developer but I can see the appeal from a broader planning perspective.



### Stop 7 (NE 146<sup>th</sup> north of Burnside, RH zone)

These properties have single-family houses, but their RH zoning allows substantial additional housing and change.

- When these properties develop, how might they be designed so that the future development reinforces the positive characteristics of the Rosewood/Glenfair area and East Portland?
- Is it important to preserve the Douglas Firs as part of more urban development or street improvements?

#### Comments:

- This would be a good area for duplexes, smaller buildings.
- Multi-family development should include kid play spaces.
- Courtyards make great play spaces.
- In Human Solution's projects, we incorporate garden spaces for residents.
- Maybe not every development needs their own outdoor space – what if we had little pocket parks for all the kids in the neighborhood?
- More public space, less private spaces.
- Consider alternative models like eco-villages or some of what Eli Spevak is doing in Cully. There is room for parking and a shop for bike repair, but also green space and gardens. They have all types of spaces and good amenities.
- LIHTCs require indoor residential community space. These spaces are used for birthdays or yoga classes. They are maybe around 1,000 square feet.
- It's a good idea to encourage those types of community spaces. We have a lot of families in East Portland that need space. Also need places to go.
- There are sometimes security or crime issues with indoor community spaces, when they are not monitored. Need to be careful to avoid abuses and make sure they are safe spaces.



**West of SE 146<sup>th</sup>: R2 zone, backyard development** – what are your thoughts about backyard infill development (common on the deep lots of East Portland)?

#### Comments:

- This looks like it's home ownership. It's good to have a variety of options to promote a range of different household incomes.

**Burnside & SE 143rd: R2 zone, Fern Grove Apartments** (accessible ground-level units, courtyard) – what works well or not so well about the design of this project? What are your thoughts about stacked-unit housing (such as here), versus townhouses or detached houses? Should multi-family housing be prioritized over single-family housing types in the multi-dwelling zones?

#### Comments:

- This project in particular could use more physical separation from the street.

- Consider single-level units for those who are not very mobile. We should consider aging populations.

**Burnside & SE 141<sup>st</sup>: R2 zone, Irish Moss Apartments** (accessible ground-level units, courtyard) – what works well or not so well about the design of this project? Is physically accessible housing something that should be incentivized?

Comments:

- The bike parking here is not correct. It's not covered, it's out in the open.
- Courtyard can double as stormwater facility, but then what do you do about kid safety?



