

Testimony at Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing  
Parkrose High School  
October 14, 2014

Dear Commission members,

We would like to provide testimony regarding the proposed rezoning of the former Whitaker School site on NE 42nd Ave.

The "What We Heard From the Public" memo dated February 19, 2014, regarding the community feedback received by the Comprehensive Plan Team, noted, "Transitions and neighborhood context are important between the zoning on the main streets and development elsewhere. Stepdowns and setbacks are important to mitigate impacts on livability."

That comment is especially relevant to the proposed rezoning and future redevelopment of the Whitaker School site. Stepdowns and setbacks should be utilized to maintain the residential character of the neighborhood and preserve the livability of the houses on NE 39th Ave and NE Simpson St, including our home directly adjacent to the site on Simpson. Open space should be maintained as much as possible, in keeping with the character of Fernhill Park and the surrounding neighborhood. Appropriate transitions from any commercial development along 42nd Ave to the residential neighborhood behind the parcel are essential to maintaining the character of the neighborhood. The community, including the Concordia Neighborhood Association, will likely advocate for a development of the land that includes a usage that is beneficial to the neighborhood, such as a community center.

If possible, the Comprehensive Plan should indicate that the guiding objectives for the transition from the redeveloped Whitaker School site to adjacent residential zones should be drawn from the residential zones themselves. Height, setbacks, and allowable uses in the areas adjacent to residential zones should ensure an orderly and harmonious transition, and avoid negative impacts on solar access, peace and quiet, and odors. In particular, parking, loading, and dumpster access should be specifically prohibited as transition area uses.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

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