



October 9, 2014

Planning and Sustainability Commission
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

ROSE Community Development supports the Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association's request to re-designate and rezone the Green Thumb/Learning Gardens Lab site from Low Density Multifamily Residential (R2A) to Open Space (OS).

ROSE is a community-based nonprofit that has been working to revitalize Brentwood-Darlington and other outer southeast Portland neighborhoods for the last 22 years. We were created by a group of neighborhood leaders who were concerned about poverty, poor housing conditions, lack of infrastructure and other livability concerns. We work closely with neighborhood members, business owners, the City, and other nonprofits to improve outer southeast as a place to live, work, and play.

One way to do this is to preserve important community assets, and the proposal to re-designate and then rezone the Green Thumb/Learning Gardens Lab site to Open Space would preserve this vital resource for future generations. ROSE sees the need for community action around youth education and food security. From educating Lane Middle School's socio-economically and ethnically diverse students about science in the garden to selling affordable, organic produce at the farm stand and donating hundreds of pounds of produce to charity each year, the diverse activities that take place at the Learning Gardens Lab increase the availability of fresh, healthy food to a lower income community, while also preparing adolescents for success in high school and life after graduation. Furthermore, the Green Thumb site also functions as an important community gathering place, a site that enhanced livability by providing space for people from the neighborhood and across the city to enjoy the outdoor setting. As a community, we should make sure that these types of community benefits are not only available today, but are also readily available in 2035.

ROSE is a member of the Brentwood-Darlington community, where ROSE has developed 20 affordable rental and homeownership properties. These include Country Squire, Johnson Creek Commons, and Woodmere Commons apartments as well as the Cooper Street Bungalows and Woodmere condominiums. While we are an affordable housing developer, we believe that healthy neighborhoods also include open space, urban agriculture and educational programs.

ROSE believes the Planning and Sustainability Commission should recommend the preservation of the Green Thumb/Learning Gardens Lab by a re-designation and then rezoning the property from Low Density Multifamily Residential (R2A) to Open Space (OS).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nick Sauvie".

Nick Sauvie
Executive Director