

From: John Koenig [mailto:john@waterclosetmedia.com]
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2016 10:45 AM
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>
Subject: "PSC Mixed Use Zones Testimony"

I'm writing to express my concern that the proposed Mixed Use Zones Project for my family's small retail buildings and store fronts is unfair.

My wife and I own two side by side properties on NE Alberta and 18th where we also operate our two neighborhood stores. We're not developers and are good stewards of the neighborhood and have been since 2000.

We're finding our investments and our future opportunity limited by your zoning our small block and a half as CM1, whereas the rest of Alberta is CM2.

If the goal is to set aside some history, and maintain that history on the street, there are several blocks with the same history on Alberta, and those owners may benefit from their greater opportunities in the future, while we are being singled out to save some 'history'. It's unfair.

When our neighborhood association director (Sara Wittenberg-Alberta Main Street) questioned Nan Stark, a City project planner from your Portland Planning, on the rationale for the zoning change for our small section on Alberta, she responded:

"We are looking at ways to dis-incentivize redevelopment of our early 20th century commercial development on main streets throughout the city – preservation tools to retain the character that these buildings bring to our neighborhood commercial districts. At this time, the proposal is to zone those areas (specific blocks that contain the oldest development) CM1. That will be the case on Alberta around 18th for one to two blocks."

As for this section of Alberta, much of the square footage has already been developed (the North side specifically), and the other properties including ours, are indeed older structures.

But if the goal is to maintain the 'character' of this area, shouldn't the plan consider offering 'historical' incentives to the property owners to maintain some integrity?

For example, neither of our structures are 'earthquake ready', wouldn't a 'grant program' be in order to help owners keep building status historically accurate?

Shouldn't a reduced "Property Tax" be given to building owners in these 'preservation' areas to keep and maintain the history, the same incentive offered to other properties we deem 'historic' in our city?

It's more than frustrating to build a business, have an asset you hope to pass on to your kid, or preserve, be limited in our use

Its not fair and is a taking of a future opportunity that just cherry picks from a street with shared history and other owners.

As someone else asked, why our block? Which really means, why the entire south side of 17-19th which is the segment of the plan that it effects the most?

I've spoken to a few property owners on our block who have also no idea the zoning changes would effect their properties. *What outreach has gone to those who've been historic owners but are unaware?* We're on a street that has been 'gentrified' and a some of these stakeholders are minorities, long term owners of properties on these blocks, but when I asked a minority building owner neighbor if his family had information the proposal, they were shocked and had no idea. They have hopes to handle their investments as good neighbors, but also be afforded the same opportunities as 95% of the remaining commercial spaces on Alberta. Again, we're small business owners, we've build our business, had the foresight to take a bit and invest in our properties as part of our future retirement, and now finding we can't do what 95% of the rest of the Alberta Street area from MLK to 33rd would be allowed to do with their assets in the future.

It's not fair. Please reconsider and either treat our entire 'rezoned' street with the same Zoning overlay, and offer building owners a reason and incentive to offset their change in designation such as reduced property taxes and grants to maintain their status as 'historical' properties.

Sincerely Concerned,

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