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From: Becky Luening [mailto:becky.pdx@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 10:15 AM
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>
Subject: PSC Mixed Use Zones Testimony

Date: May 17, 2016
Attn: Planning and Sustainability Chair, Katherine Schultz

Dear Ms. Schultz,

I support of the proposal to downzone specific sections of SE Woodstock Boulevard from CM-2 to CM-1. When I participated in the Woodstock Charrette held in November 2014, I came away from that first large public meeting with the feeling that many people in our neighborhood (including myself) prefer to keep Woodstock low profile, i.e., retaining the feeling of a small-town neighborhood center, and for that reason I believe our main street is a good fit for "Low-Rise Commercial Storefront."

To be fair, when development experts presented the pros and cons of various development options to the neighborhood, making a case for taller commercial buildings, neighbors were not entirely opposed, but weighed in strongly for mitigations such as setbacks and stepbacks, to minimize the impacts of taller developments. In my opinion, it's especially important to require such mitigations for any proposed new construction that will reach or surpass the height of the recently developed New Seasons market, for example.

Commercial property owners may make the case that down zoning will take away the rights they have to build to a certain height dictated by current zoning, but it seems to me that, in order to give sufficient "loft" to the ground floor commercial spaces that we are told is best for creating vibrancy, a three-story building may still reach considerable height.

Depending on orientation of new commercial buildings on Woodstock, the city should also have in place required mitigations (i.e. stepbacks) to minimize shade being thrown on residences that may exist on the back sides of those blocks. I would also encourage the city to institute basic usage restrictions, depending on a building's proximity to a residential zone, to minimize the noise and smoke nuisance that often accompany late-night eating and drinking establishments.

I should also mention that in conversations about projected new commercial development on Woodstock, concerns that get raised again and again relate to increased traffic, parking, and the numerous unimproved roads close-in to our main street -- all of which are contributors to increased congestion on our boulevard.

Finally, I believe it important to give neighbors the opportunity to comment on any planned major commercial development in their neighborhood.

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