

Todd Stamm

From: Oliver Stormshak <ostormshak@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2015 10:06 PM
To: Todd Stamm
Subject: Opposed to 18.06.100A.6

Dear Members of the Planning Commission -

I am writing to express my concern about proposed amendment vii to 18.06.100 A.6. (Commercial districts' development standards--Specific). The amendment is not in keeping with the intent of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan.

Existing setbacks in the HDC-1 and HDC-2 zones (8 ft for a 4th story) are protective enough of surrounding areas, including historic neighborhoods. While historic neighborhoods are an important reflection of our shared heritage and of the era in which they were constructed, the surrounding areas need not remain static. There is no inherent reason why nearby contemporary development cannot provide a positive contrast or compliment to a historic area. Olympia is not a community of isolated late-19th and early-20th century architecture and single family homes. Our neighborhoods—most importantly in the designated high density areas and transit corridors—need to remain vibrant and affordable through the ongoing development of diverse housing today and into the future.

While the area of impact of this particular amendment is small, the difference between a 3 story residential project and a 4 story project may be the determining factor in its financial feasibility, adding yet another obstacle to the viability of dense, residential development. The result of which is ultimately less housing—and therefore less affordable housing—within walking, biking, or transit distance of the urban core.

Approval of this amendment communicates a lack of dedication to Comprehensive Plan goals, it indicates a lack of serious commitment to the critical goals of Sustainable Thurston, and it limits the potential of multi-family residential in an area where walking, biking, and using transit as an alternative to driving is most viable.

I urge you to reject the proposed amendment and retain the intent of the high density corridors, maximizing opportunities for our residents to live near our beloved downtown.