

From: [Phyllis "Booth](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Comp Plan Revisions
Date: Monday, August 02, 2021 5:30:23 PM

External Email Alert!

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August 2, 2021

Dear Olympia Planning Commission:

I am interested in the definition of neighborhood character because I based my decision on where I wanted to live on how the neighborhood was designed. I wanted to have space to have a flower garden and grow some vegetables. I wanted a quiet place for our children to ride their bikes and use chalk on the street or play with neighborhood children. I did not want on street parking as little children hide behind cars and sometimes get run over and I have had two friends that that happened too.

Furthermore, I am interested in neighborhoods where more trees are allowed. When I ran for Olympia City Council in 2005, I listened to a local developer tell me that he wanted to keep more trees in the neighborhood but the Growth Management Act interfered with that happening with its one size fits all density requirements. I think the Ken Lake neighborhood is a terrific design for keeping trees and should be encouraged more.

Thank you for considering my comments. I have testified for nearly 30 years and no one has really listened, but at least these comments are on public record.

Phyllis Booth
2509 Caitlin Ct SE
Olympia, WA 98501
360 753 3736

From: [Phyllis "Booth](#)
To: [Phyllis "Booth](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Stop the Road Planning to Cut Through LBA Park
Date: Monday, August 02, 2021 5:41:36 PM

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August 2, 2021

Dear Olympia Planning Commission:

Please protect a jewel of Olympia called LBA Park. I live near the park and it has provided so much pleasure with its numerous much needed baseball fields, shady trees, and walking paths. It is the most walkable park in the Southeast neighborhood that hundreds of neighbors walk to without a car. I walk about 2 miles to get to the park and it is safe to walk because of the current landscape.

For many years, I thought the goal of our city was to REDUCE traffic. My family has used the bus, walked and used one car during our 26 years living within the city limits and that is among mostly four people. Our sons ages 31 and 23 have never owned a car. So good conservation and good planning can be implemented in today's society.

Please consider global warming and implement good city policies that encourage less consumption, simple living and respect for our environment. Keep our jewel LBA Park free from more traffic.

Phyllis Booth
2509 Caitlin Ct SE
Olympia, WA 98501
360 753 3736

From: [Anna Schlecht](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Tracey Carlos](#)
Cc: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Strong Support for Olympia Planning Commission
Date: Tuesday, August 03, 2021 1:20:42 PM

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Greetings!

I write to express my strong support for the proposed changes to our Comprehensive Plan. As a long time - as in 44 year resident of the Eastside Neighborhood - these proposed changes will support the kind of community I want to grow old in. Your work reflects a depth of insight on DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) and offers a framework for the sort of neighborhood character that is important to me. I received an email summarizing these proposed changes as follows:

- Removed references to "single family zoning" and swapped for "low density residential"
- Removed "established" where it occurs in front of neighborhood
- Defined "neighborhood character" to include accessibility, sustainability, and culturally inclusivity
- Where it said "walkable" they added "walkable and accessible"
- Change "citizen" to "community member"
- Added an equity statement and values in support of equity
- Added a land acknowledgement for Squaxin
- Added the text that physical characteristics of neighborhoods are not static over time
- Added an acknowledgment of racist land use practices in the past.

Please proceed with your proposed changes & keep up the most excellent work!

Sincere regards,

Anna Schlecht
annaschlecht@gmail.com
(360) 402-0170

From: [Mike McCormick](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#)
Cc: [Joyce Phillips](#); [CityCouncil](#); [Leonard Bauer](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Updates
Date: Tuesday, August 03, 2021 3:07:34 PM

External Email Alert!

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I am writing to you to encourage you to adopt the proposed changes to the Olympia's Comprehensive Plan.

I have had a chance to review all the proposed language. As a retired professional planner and a 50-year resident of Olympia I strongly support these timely changes. We are faced with any number of challenges—both as residents and as community members. These changes acknowledge some of these, as difficult, controversial and unpleasant as they are. Racism, NIMBYism and equity are important issues to be included. Recognizing that things don't stay static and change over time—and that we can direct that change in a positive direction. The acknowledgement of our connection to the Squaxin Tribe is most welcome.

Please move forward quickly and forward the plan with its proposed changes to the Council for adoption.

Thank you.

Michael J. McCormick, FAICP
2420 Columbia St. SW
Olympia, WA 98501
360.754.2916

From: [Janae Huber](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Tracey Carlos](#)
Cc: [Joyce Phillips](#); [CityCouncil](#)
Subject: Support for Comprehensive Plan Updates
Date: Tuesday, August 03, 2021 9:23:35 PM

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission -

I am writing with enthusiastic support for the proposed updates to the Comprehensive Plan. I particularly want to highlight my strong support for:

- Changing references to "citizens" to "community members/residents"
- Including a land acknowledgement for the Squaxin Island Tribe, as well as a stated goal of improving government-to-government relations.
- Acknowledging that housing discrimination in the form of red-lining, racially restrictive covenants, and forced displacement happened here.
- Providing a definition for neighborhood character AND the proposed definition itself.
- Focusing on capacity through concurrency and network completeness in transportation.

These are exactly the changes we need now. And, I look forward to additional changes to come through the work of the Social Justice and Equity Commission, including an Equity Framework.

My thanks to you for the opportunity to comment and for the work you are doing to align our Comprehensive Plan with our aspirations of being an inclusive and welcoming community.

Janae Huber

JANAE HUBER
janae.huber@gmail.com

From: [Jo-Anne Huber](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Tracey Carlos](#)
Cc: [Joyce Phillips](#); [CityCouncil](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan
Date: Wednesday, August 04, 2021 3:21:49 PM

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The proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan are fully supported by my husband, John C Huber and myself, Jo-Anne B Huber.

We applaud the effort to make sure that everyone is included in the plan.

Regards,

Jo-Anne B Huber

1009 Eskridge Blvd SE

Olympia, 98501

360-943-1947

From: [Jordan Bell](#)
To: [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Ouetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejati](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: *preservation* of LBA Woods
Date: Thursday, August 05, 2021 3:14:52 PM

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hi all!

I am sorry that I was unavailable for the August 2nd Planning Commission public meeting. I am writing to encourage y'all to conserve this wonderful local wooded park and to please dismiss any city plans to build a road through this precious habitat. I have attended past meetings and have spoken out then. I have also participated in work parties at the park. I live in the Wilderness neighborhood and walk through these woods as often as I can. I have taken many friends & family members to the park and they are so glad for the experience, and jealous of my proximity to LBA. I hold a Master's degree in Wildlife Biology; I am passionate about wildlife. I teach yoga at the YMCA; I am passionate about the (huge!) role that Nature plays in one's wellbeing.

thank you for your time, and for all the good work that you do for our lovely city.

be well,

Jordan Bell
206.890.8327

From: [Glen Anderson](#)
To: [Glen Anderson](#)
Subject: I implore you to FULLY PROTECT the LBA Woods Park area.
Date: Thursday, August 05, 2021 3:41:07 PM

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I learned about this a few years ago.
I walked through the LBA Woods to get a "feel" for the place.
WE ABSOLUTELY MUST FULLY PROTECT this area!!!
I implore you to FULLY PROTECT it!!!

Thank you.

"Is there a spiritual reality, inconceivable to us today, which corresponds in history to the physical reality which Einstein discovered and which led to the atomic bomb? Einstein discovered a law of physical change: the way to convert a single particle of matter into enormous physical energy. Might there not also be, as Gandhi suggested, an equally incredible and undiscovered law of spiritual change, whereby a single person or a small community of persons could be converted into an enormous spiritual energy capable of transforming a society and a world?"
—James W. Douglass, *Lightning East to West*

Glen Anderson (360) 491-9093 glenanderson@integra.net
See information and resources on a wide variety of topics at my blog, www.parallaxperspectives.org



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

From: [CityCouncil](#)
To: oly43515@gmail.com
Cc: [Councilmembers](#); [Jay Burney](#); [Keith Stahley](#); [Debbie Sullivan](#); [Kellie Braseth](#); [Leonard Bauer](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: RE: Comp Plan update
Date: Thursday, August 05, 2021 3:54:30 PM

Thank you for your comments. I will forward them on to all Councilmembers and appropriate staff.

Susan Grisham, Assistant to the City Manager
City of Olympia | P.O. Box 1967 | Olympia WA 98507
360-753-8244 sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us

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Please note all correspondence is subject to public disclosure.

-----Original Message-----

From: oly43515@gmail.com <oly43515@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Aaron Sauerhoff <asauerho@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Candi Millar <cmillar@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Carole Richmond <crichmon@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Gregory Quetin <gquetin@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Paula Ehlers <pehlers@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Rad Cunningham <rcunning@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Tammy Adams <tadams@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Zainab Nejati <znejati@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Tracey Carlos <tcarlos@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Cc: CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Comp Plan update

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the following changes to the Comp Plan:

- Changing references to "citizens" to "community members/residents"
- Including a land acknowledgement for the Squaxin Island Tribe.
- Acknowledging that housing discrimination in the form of red-lining, racially restrictive covenants, and forced displacement happened here.
- Providing a definition for neighborhood character AND the proposed definition itself.
- Focusing on capacity through concurrency and network completeness in transportation.

While I acknowledge there are widely divergent opinions on this Comp Plan update I continue to believe that Olympia at its core is an inclusive and fair-minded place to live. These updates reflect that. The voices opposing the update may be loud, but I do not believe they represent the majority of Olympians.

Thank you for your good work on this and your service to our community.

Sincerely,
Darren Mills

From: [M. Taylor Goforth](#)
To: [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Ouetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejati](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Stop the Road, Leave LBA "the Woods"
Date: Friday, August 06, 2021 7:33:55 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

I have written my thoughts about the proposed road through LBA woods before and have heard all of them plus others voiced during the recent public hearing session. There is nothing more substance to say, I feel, except, Please Remove the Road from the Comprehensive Plan! The citizens of Olympia have spoken, and spoken clearly and well.

In these days of such divisiveness and derision, it must be wonderful to have such clarity and unified purpose behind your decision to remove the road from the Plan. What a pleasure!

Seize the day!!

Thank you,
Taylor Goforth

From: [Emmett O'Connell](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Tracey Carlos](#)
Cc: [Joyce Phillips](#); [CityCouncil](#)
Subject: Thank you for making "neighborhood character" more inclusive
Date: Sunday, August 08, 2021 3:01:09 PM

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I wanted to send you a note to let you know I appreciate the work you have done to make references to "neighborhood character" in the comprehensive plan more inclusive. For far too long, we have allowed these values of defending neighborhood character and "established" neighborhoods get in the way of making Olympia a home for everyone. I especially appreciate the change from referring to "single-family" neighborhoods to "low density" residential to reflect the changes we have made to allow more housing options in our city.

For the past 40 year, too much of our expectations in planning and growth management in Olympia have led with the expectations that some neighborhoods will not change and will not need to grow or accept new residents. This has led to racial segregation in our city and "protecting" established, wealthy and predominantly white neighborhoods. These changes you are now considering are a small step to correct these wrongs.

Thanks,
Emmett

--

[twitter.com/emmettoconnell](#)
[olympiatime.com](#)

From: [ROBERT VADAS](#)
To: [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Ouetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FYI re: neighborhood character from an East Olympia citizen
Date: Saturday, August 14, 2021 5:10:06 PM

Dear Olympia Planning Commission (8/14/21);

I must comment further on Joyce Phillip's call to eliminate citizens (who pay taxes for your services) from being able to preserve their neighborhood character at the last OPC meeting. Her rationale that neighborhoods are inherently "racist" was offensive, misleading, and cynical. Rather, neighborhood associations are inclusive of everyone who wants to join and help with activities, including keeping our living spaces comfortable and safe for us.

I believe that Joyce is playing the "racism card", much like happened to force the unconstitutional Missing Middle through in the guise of "helping" poorer folks find housing. Instead, that has led to continued gentrification in Olympia (Vadas 2020), which ironically is the real racism. Think about how hard that African Americans have had to work to recover their home district in Seattle after similar gentrification.

Hence, I can only conclude that Joyce's proposal is similar to what we got from Donald Trump as president, i.e., less citizen input into political decisions via a top-down approach. But this is taxation without representation. Frankly, many of us citizens don't want party rentals in our neighborhoods that bring loud music (into the night) and increased Covid-19 risks, especially likely to be a problem with absentee landlords who likely won't handle mold (health) problems well either (cf. Vadas 2020).

In sum, Joyce should curtail this attempted "end run" around citizen participation, respecting that people around LBA Woods and other undeveloped areas really do like their neighborhoods as is, without some dictator coming into to "put us in our place". Thanks in advance for considering my concerns, as a long-time Thurston County (especially Olympia) resident, aquatic ecologist, and social and environmental activist.

Dr. Robert L. Vadas, Jr. (Bob)
East Olympia

Vadas, B. Jr. 2020. The future of Olympia's urban zoning in the face of covid-19 and climate change. Works In Progress (Olympia, WA) 31(3): 14 (<https://olywip.org/the-future-of-olympias-urban-zoning>).

From: [ROBERT VADAS](#)
To: [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Quetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejati](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Re: FYI re: neighborhood character from an East Olympia citizen (2 corrections)
Date: Saturday, August 14, 2021 6:11:18 PM

From the transcript, this was my statement (my last name is Vadas, not Davis; who's got dyslexia?):

Robert Davis

Um, yeah, I did speak before but I just wanted to want to add, add one comment, based on what was presented that I hadn't heard before and yeah I think it's a slippery road to change neighborhood character and assume that you know that it becomes a top down rather than a bottom up approach and. And so that that change, and I and other people make suggestions constructive suggestions on how to fix that to a more, put it in a better place and I agree with that. So thanks.

And I've made some revisions (in color) to my letter below, to spread the blame more equitably (now that I've got the transcript from the online mtg.):

On 08/14/2021 5:09 PM ROBERT VADAS <bobesan@comcast.net> wrote:

Dear Olympia Planning Commission (8/14/21);

I must comment further on **Joyce Phillips and 2 commissioners' (Carlos and Najini) collective call** to eliminate citizens (who pay taxes for your services) from being able to preserve their neighborhood character at the last OPC meeting. **The** rationale that neighborhoods are inherently **"non-inclusive"** and "racist" was offensive, misleading, and cynical. Rather, neighborhood associations are inclusive of everyone who wants to join and help with activities, including keeping our living spaces comfortable and safe for us.

I believe that **Carlos, etc. are** playing the "racism card", much like happened to force the unconstitutional Missing Middle through in the guise of "helping" poorer folks find housing. Instead, that has led to continued gentrification in Olympia (Vadas 2020), which ironically is the real racism. Think about how hard that African Americans have had to work to recover their home district in Seattle after similar gentrification.

Hence, I can only conclude that this **"inclusion by non-inclusion"** proposal is similar to what we got from Donald Trump as president, i.e., less citizen input into political decisions via a top-down approach. But this is taxation without representation. Frankly, many of us citizens don't want party rentals in our neighborhoods that bring loud music (into the night) and increased Covid-19 risks, especially likely to be a problem with absentee landlords who likely won't handle mold (health) problems well either (cf. Vadas 2020).

In sum, **Carlos, etc.** should curtail this attempted "end run" around citizen participation, respecting that people around LBA Woods and other undeveloped areas really do like their neighborhoods as is, without some dictator coming **in** to "put us in our place". Thanks in advance for considering my concerns, as a long-time Thurston County (especially Olympia) resident, aquatic ecologist, social and environmental activist, **and minority.**

Dr. Robert L. Vadas, Jr. (Bob)
East Olympia

Vadas, B. Jr. 2020. The future of Olympia's urban zoning in the face of covid-19 and climate change. Works In Progress (Olympia, WA) 31(3): 14 (<https://olywip.org/the-future-of-olympias-urban-zoning>).

From: [Karly Jones](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Please No Road - Preserve and Protect LBA Woods
Date: Monday, August 16, 2021 8:34:09 AM

Good morning,

We live in Olympia and the PNW because of the beautiful natural surroundings. These beloved woods are special to our family - I run through there almost every morning, and we take my dog for a walk through there every evening. The neighborhood children spend countless hours there. Our community needs natural spaces like LBA woods for us to thrive as human beings - nature is key to our happiness and well being. PLEASE protect LBA woods and the last remaining public outdoor spaces of Olympia that have not been developed. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Karly Jones and Jerrod Einerwold

From: [Jake Meulink](#)
To: [Tammy Adams](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Carole Richmond](#); [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Candi Millar](#); [Gregory Ouetin](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Zainab Nejati](#); [Cari Hornbein](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Log Cabin Connection
Date: Monday, August 16, 2021 11:17:20 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a frequent user of the LBA woods. I couldn't believe it when I found it. A trail system and park so nice in a developed area. I take my daughter on walks to the park to the north. I walk my dog frequently. I see others enjoying it just the way I do. WTA has been doing so much good work in the park. The road connection would change all of this. This would increase traffic noise, and road lock the baseball fields. Let's keep this place special, and keep the kids safe in the meantime.

Sincerely,

Jake Meulink

From: [Holly Gadbow](#)
To: [Aaron Sauerhoff](#); [Carole Richmond](#)
Cc: [Greg Quetin](#); [Paula Ehlers](#); [Rad Cunningham](#); [Tammy Adams](#); [Zainab Nejadi](#); [Tracey Carlos](#); [Leonard Bauer](#); [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Aendments
Date: Monday, August 16, 2021 5:20:01 PM

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to support the comprehensive plan amendments that support the policies for the missing middle regulations. You recommended these regulations and the council have adopted them to allow a diversity of housing choices to single-family neighborhoods and hopefully will make more housing affordable. Now it is necessary to incorporate policy language in the comprehensive plan to support them. I also like the proposed policies on equity and acknowledge past racist land use practices. The Heritage Commission and the WA Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation have reviewed the changes and attest that they will not detract from the historic character of Olympia's neighborhoods.

Here is summary of the changes I support:

- Removed references to "single family zoning" and swapped for "low density residential"
- Removed "established" where it occurs in front of neighborhood
- Defined "neighborhood character" to include accessibility, sustainability, and culturally inclusivity
- Where it said "walkable" they added "walkable and accessible"
- Change "citizen" to "community member"
- Added an equity statement and values in support of equity
- Added a land acknowledgement for Squaxin
- Added the text that physical characteristics of neighborhoods are not static over time
- Added an acknowledgment of racist land use practices in the past.

Thank you for considering my comments. Thank you for serving on the Planning Commission, an important and difficult job. Thanks too to the staff for their hard work,

Best regards,

Holly Gadbow

1625 Sylvester St. SW

Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 789-3616

hollygadbow@comcast.net

From: [Cari Hornbein](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: TO: Planning Commission: Please Approve Comp Plan Amendment Proposal B to Remove Log Cabin Extension Road from Comprehensive Plan
Date: Monday, August 16, 2021 5:55:46 PM

FYI

From: Mike Ruth <mikeruthgis@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 16, 2021 5:55 PM
To: Cari Hornbein <chornbei@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: TO: Planning Commission: Please Approve Comp Plan Amendment Proposal B to Remove Log Cabin Extension Road from Comprehensive Plan

Hello, to Cari Hornbein and the Planning Commission,

I was a speaker at the recent planning commission meeting of August 2nd, where you considered comprehensive plan amendments.

Along with every other resident who spoke during the public comments period, I also urge the Planning Commission to accept the Comprehensive Plan amendment (Proposal B) that removes the Log Cabin Extension road from the Comprehensive Plan. Please take action tonight to prevent the damage – significant and irreparable – which this road would cause, to the detriment of the LBA Woods Park.

You do not need a reiteration of the points which many other speakers presented during last week's hearing. Specific arguments have been heard many times before, in many community and government meetings over the past two years of community objection to the Log Cabin Extension road. There are clearly valid technical, financial, environmental, and quality-of-life objections to this road which cannot be ignored.

For my part, I want to highlight:

- The City Staff presented their opinion that the amendment is compatible with City of Olympia development goals
- The removal of the road is in accordance with the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan in several ways, by preventing destruction of mature tree canopy cover and avoidance of asphalt and automobiles, and their effects.
- The amendment to take out the road makes a statement that “business as usual” need not be the over-riding concern when a plan leads to destruction of park lands.
- Open park lands will become ever more valuable as the population of urban Olympia grows in coming decades, as projected.
- The road was planned in the early 1990's. Much has changed since that line was drawn on a planning map. In practical terms, the 900 homes that were to be built on the adjacent parcels were not built and are off the plan. Thus the local demand for the road extension is no longer a concern. Today we are more aware of the dangers of human degradation of natural assets - in ways that were almost unheard of when the road was planned.

I teach Geographic Information Systems (at Evergreen) and I am familiar with the power of a “line on the map”. I have seen how difficult it can be for organizations to remove a line from a published map. Your choice to accept the amendment to remove the Log Cabin Extension road will demonstrate that Thurston’s cities and county governments are capable of implementing climate mitigation priorities, even when this means changing a planned development. Your decision to accept this amendment will provide encouragement for other climate mitigation actions. You are demonstrating to residents your leadership for climate mitigation by taking a concrete action that conforms with your visionary document (the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan).

By removing this road from the Comp Plan, you will also be preserving the recreational and habitat asset value of LBA Woods and supporting the quality-of-life that so many Olympia residents clearly cherish.

Thanks for your consideration, willingness to hear citizen comments, and, hopefully, your decision to remove the Log Cabin Extension from the Comprehensive Plan.

-Mike Ruth (2520 Wedgewood Ct, Olympia WA 98501)

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I'm writing about your consideration of a proposal to eliminate or redefine "neighborhood character" in the Olympia Comprehensive Plan.

"Neighborhood Character" (NC) has never clearly been defined in the Comp Plan, except by implied association with quality-of-life standards, like design review, unit density, parking, compatible uses, traffic, noise and light pollution, views, green space, local amenities, etc. So this term does need to be better-defined, and not just made meaningless.

By meaningless, I mean the Council's suggestion that NC should mean only "Accessible, Sustainable, and Culturally Inclusive". Although these essential principles should characterize all of our neighborhoods and City policies, they don't deal with quality-of-life issues that benefit everyone in every neighborhood.

I think the context of the past few years is what makes this new proposed redefinition significant. The trend in the past 5 years, locally, and at the State level, has been to eliminate any power the general public has to influence how its living areas will be developed.

Citizens can no longer appeal Council development decisions, which purport to follow State laws 1023 and 2343. Design review for anything under a 5-plex is now left to the Planning Department. The Council directs who can/can not be on the citizen-volunteer Commissions. City Code Enforcement has become increasingly unwilling to legally confront egregious repeat offenders (at the direction of the City Attorney). Council members generally don't question the Planning Department's decrees about Missing Middle, Housing Options, and other plans that contradict the Comp Plan, but they instead rubber-stamp them. Vacation air BnB proposals will allow up to 20 unrelated people to live on a 1/8 acre lot in neighborhoods, with only 1 off-street parking spot, while eliminating permanent housing inventory. And now, the Comp Plan itself is being sanitized to remove any grounds for protest that citizens might have to police their City's actions.

So, emasculating the definition of neighborhood character, by making it mean nothing, is one of the final steps to remove any legal standing for any citizen or group trying to stop damaging or illegal actions by the Planning Department. Instead, increasing the tax base by turning our neighborhoods into profit engines, instead of livable respites, is an explicit announcement to the public, that the City will support developers instead of the living conditions of Olympia residents.

The fact that real estate investment firms have changed their focus from commercial to residential real estate since 2007, coupled with the dearth of new house construction until 2016, is a driving force behind the nationwide trend to open neighborhoods to big investors. Up to 15% of residential homes were bought by corporate investment

groups this year (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/if-you-sell-a-house-these-days-the-buyer-might-be-a-pension-fund-11617544801>). Why make it any easier for them to skimp as they redevelop residential properties?

But what's wrong with this trend? Don't we need more rental properties, and aren't investors with big pockets the fastest way to accomplish this? Yes, if you want apartments that rent for more than half of current Olympians can afford. Yes, if you are planning to accommodate commuters from Tacoma and Seattle, who can't afford housing there. Yes, if you stop caring about eliminating assets in neighborhoods that keep people wanting to stay in our neighborhoods. No, if you are attempting to accommodate the needs of Olympia's population.

As every real estate survey will tell you, most Americans still want single-family housing, not because they want to exclude the poor, renters or certain races, but because it's a lifestyle they enjoy, and it's one of the only ways they can build equity, instead of paying rent to create profit for LLCs, which have actively eliminated single-family house inventory.

But isn't single-family housing with green space very inefficient, increasing car travel and contributing to global warming? Yes, but it doesn't stop people from wanting or needing it. Instead of either-or, how about both-and. It's possible to dramatically increase density along arterials, without sacrificing neighborhood assets. As former Council member Julie Hankins said: "Don't destroy one kind of housing to create another".

Olympia still has a large amount of under-utilized land along its arterials, where compact development should happen. COVID has broken the tradition of people working away from home in designated offices. How many large, obsolete office buildings could be converted to housing? As the Comp Plan suggests, increased density should come through densification of commercial and under-utilized properties along these corridors and in urban centers, along with compatible development in neighborhoods.

Does "compatible development" mean eliminating the cheapest single-family housing from our inventory to replace it with large 4-plex or 6-plex buildings, or turning them into rentals that most Olympians can't afford? Of course not. That's killing the golden goose: the assets that make Olympia neighborhoods healthy. I am all in favor of rentals. We need them. My neighborhood is 75% rentals. But trading green space and quiet for large, multi-family buildings in our neighborhoods is not smart. Does everyplace have to be the same to achieve equity?

So what should our definition for neighborhood character be? I think explicitly tying it to those quality-of-life characteristics that draw people to continue to want to live in neighborhoods is important.

- **Adhere to low-density limits of 12 units per acre in neighborhoods**
- **Limit the maximum size of multi-family buildings in neighborhoods to 2 units, and require larger set-backs when they are built**
- **For vacation short-term rentals, significantly reduce the maximum number of occupants, and increase off-street parking spots**
- **Prioritize compact development on arterials, not in neighborhoods.**
- **Require a certain percentage of affordable housing for any development receiving a City property tax break**
- **Just as roof-top solar power for each home is the simplest way to reduce greenhouse gases associated with heating, cooling and lighting, green space associated with each home is the simplest way to prevent runoff and resulting waterway pollution. We should not be trying to eliminate green space in neighborhoods**
- **Explicitly protect qualities of neighborhoods that give them unique personality: architecture, mass, scale, setbacks, visual resources, parking.**
- **Incentivize architecturally-appropriate ADUs, duplex conversions, and other lower-cost living options in neighborhoods.**

Although I probably just sound like someone who is merely afraid of change, I am concerned with preserving the assets of existing near-town low-density neighborhoods, which make Olympia a desirable place to live, and actually prevent suburban sprawl by preserving these assets in-town.

The history of redefining, rezoning, tax breaks and “urban renewal” in the US over the last century reveals countless mistakes that incentivized the destruction of unique neighborhoods, and damaged or displaced the established residents to the benefit of investors. Do not dismiss the importance of neighborhood character.

Jay Elder