

Amy Buckler

From: Jim Lazar <jim@jimlazar.com>
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2013 3:52 PM
To: Amy Buckler
Subject: Comment on Tonight's Meeting

Please accept this written comment on tonight's public hearing agenda.

I have two concerns. One is process, the other is substance.

Process: The staff proposed language change was not posted on the Planning Commission agenda, for the public to review before this meeting. I request that you continue the hearing to your next meeting, to allow time for the public posting of the proposed change, so that the public can adequately review the proposal.

Substance: I received a copy of what I understand to be the staff proposal at 3:30 PM on the afternoon of the hearing. It appears to impose limitations to 35' maximum building height if the lot is "*within 100 feet of a lot with a single family home*". 4th Avenue and State Avenue are covered with single-family homes, nearly all being used as Professional Offices. But they are still "single family homes." Even a property in the center of the corridor, between the north side of 4th and the south side of State, is "within 100 feet of a lot with a single family home." It appears to me that the Staff proposal would make it impossible to develop the High Density Corridors in the intended manner: to a high level of density. This would set back our efforts to improve transportation options in Olympia.

Sincerely,

Jim Lazar

--
Jim Lazar, Consulting Economist
Microdesign Northwest
1063 Capitol Way S. #202
Olympia, WA 98501
360-786-1822

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom. Isaac Asimov

RECEIVED
10/21/13

Dear Chairman Parker and Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing in regard to the changes that you are considering making permanent to the zones within the high density corridor. While I am not as concerned about reducing the amount of space for commercial and professional office space on the high density corridors that will result from reducing the allowable heights, I am concerned about the reduction of space allowed for residential housing. The HDC are one of the zones that increased residential density makes sense for the future because of the easy access to transit. Multi-family housing on the corridor is important to Olympia's future because the largest population groups are young people between the ages of 18 and 30 and baby boomers. The groups are looking for smaller places as the younger group begins living on their own and the older group is downsizing. These groups are most likely not to drive as much or own cars. TRPC's urban corridors study emphasizes this.

I would recommend that for buildings that create at least one floor of housing you consider allowing an extra floor.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Holly Gadbow

1625 Sylvester Street SW

Olympia, WA 98501

Submitted by
S. Burboon at
ORC 10/21/13 Hearing

The neighborhood around 301 Bing Street

The sole public access for this six story, 70 foot tall apartment would have been on Bing Street NW, a local access street. Much of this would take Jackson Avenue -- another small local access street -- out to Division.



In an apparent effort to get around traffic limitations on Bing and Jackson, the developer's traffic analysis claimed most of the traffic would choose to use the Desco alley as an access instead of Bing Street. Initially CP&D planners and the traffic engineer agreed with the developer's analysis.



DESIGN COMPARED TO AN UNACCEPTABLE EXAMPLE IN OLYMPIA MUNICIPAL CODE

Illustration in OMC 18.170.110 showing an example of an unacceptable design not meeting code requirements

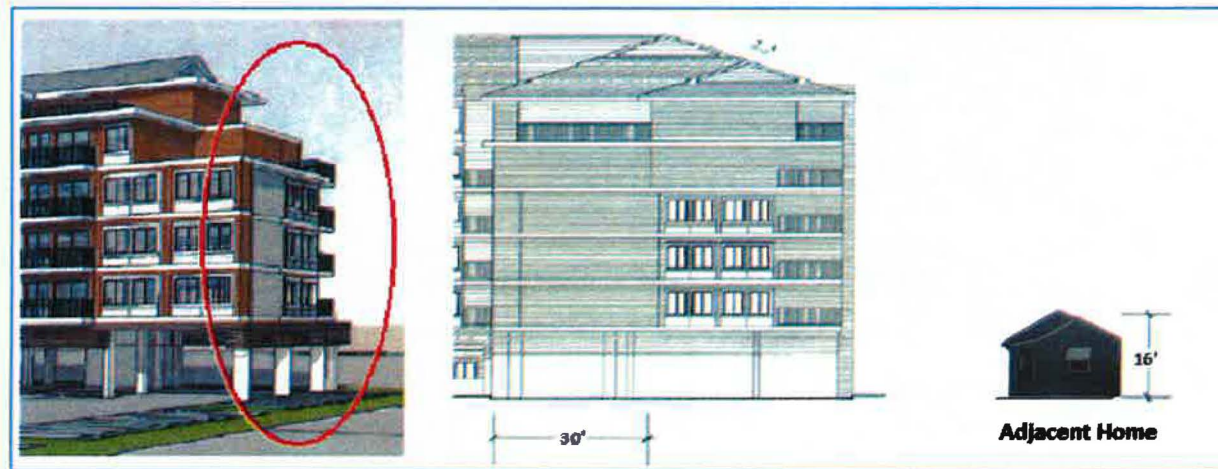


East elevation of the proposed Bing Street Apartments and an adjacent home on the corner of Bing Street and Jackson Avenue, showing the similarity to the example design in OMC 18.170.110 that is deemed “not acceptable”.



INSUFFICIENT WALL PLANE MODULATION AND DIVISION INTO BUILDING SEGMENTS

- REQUIREMENT: “Minimize any appearance of scale differences between project building(s) and existing neighborhood buildings by stepping the height of the building mass, and dividing large building facades into smaller segments.” (OMC18.170.110)
- Guidelines intend dividing the building facade into “house-size building segments.”



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES OF HOMES ON SAME STREET ARE NOT REFLECTED

- REQUIREMENT: "Reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood (within 300' on the same street) through use of related building elements." (OMC18.170.110)
- Guidelines intend similar roof forms and pitch, similar window patterns and proportions, and similar façade materials
 - Major lines of Bing Street Apartments are horizontal and vertical -- not the diagonal pitch of roofs.
 - Wall areas are dominated by rows of balconies and windows.
 - Roofs of adjacent homes on the corner of Bing and Jackson have steeper slopes.



Supplemental information for testimony on proposed 301 Bing St. Apts. Olympia City Council, July 24, 2012.

William M. Crabtree, Jr.
P.O. Box 12895
Olympia, WA 98508-2895



October 26, 2013

Todd Stamm
Principal Planner
City of Olympia
P.O. Box 1967
Olympia, WA 9857-1967

Dear Todd,

In response to your letters dated October 11, 2013 and October 23, 2013, I am interested in commenting on the proposed *Residential Transitional Zoning* proposal. I will not be able to attend the hearing November 4th so I am sending you this letter. . . . Aside from the concerns expressed by home owners near High Density Zones (I am one of those home owners), I believe the larger question is how do we integrate more (affordable) housing in our neighborhoods? For me, an accessory dwelling ordinance without the current 'owner-occupant' restrictions would be a giant step in forward in providing access to those who otherwise could not afford to live in our neighborhoods. Simply put, most of our neighborhoods have alleys. Allow an apartment to be built above the garage(s) facing the alley, cause it to match (roof pitch and siding) the house at the front of the lot so the neighborhood retains its architectural integrity, and assess fees that are 'reasonable' reflecting the less-intense use of the apartment. I recognize that the neighborhood associations are not keen about liberalizing the ADU ordinance but aren't we, as a community, about fairness, acceptance, and quality neighborhoods? Thank you for allowing me to comment.

Sincerely,



Bill Crabtree

November 3, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am thankful for the opportunity to address the subject of the Zoning Code Amendment for Residential Buffering (File 13-0118). I was out of town and did not receive the first notice within the designated comment period. I was quite troubled to discover that the first notification, although dated the 11th of October, was not posted until the 12th. If I understand correctly, the standard notification period for public comment is ten days, already a short notification period- a travesty to have it shortened by even one day.

I strongly urge the Planning Commission to adopt the Zoning Code Amendment for Residential Buffering in its clearest possible form. I believe it should become a standard part of the City's zoning and not only apply to the High Density Corridor zones (HDC-1,2,3 or 4) but should apply to similar situations in the City's General Commercial (GC) and Professional Office- Multifamily (PORM) zones.

In my view, as a member of a small group of Westside residents who spent countless hours researching the Bing Street Apartment project and engaging with the Community Planning & Development staff, it was not easy to be heard. We sought simply to have our voices heard- voices that addressed issues in the Olympia Municipal Code, the Comprehensive Plan and the EDDS. I feel when residents spoke of the Olympia Comprehensive Plan, I heard from CP&D staff: it is of no consequence; I feel that when residents spoke of community concerns, I heard from CP&D staff: the zoning codes permit this project; I feel that when residents spoke of safety concerns, I heard from CP&D staff: we aren't responsible for safety.

In my view it is imperative that the community have strong, clearly defined codes and regulations upon which to rest their concerns. Zoning codes, if my memory is accurate, were written to protect the community; this amendment protects the quality and integrity of existing communities- the small neighborhoods that are the fabric of the city of Olympia. In my opinion, there is no need, as Mr. Stamm suggested in his October 11th letter, to 'slow down'. What we do need are more safeguards in place to aid the neighborhoods of Olympia. This amendment, applying to both High Density Corridor zones and General Commercial and Professional Office zones, accomplishes that and is a positive step forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this most important matter.

Susan Burgoon

2616 Bush Ave. NW

Todd Stamm

From: djlaf115@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, November 03, 2013 10:23 PM
To: Todd Stamm
Subject: Height Changes - NO

Mr Todd Stamm and Planning Commision

Please do not allow height restrains on our properties. I believe the city has tried for years to keep service in the city with increase growth staying local. If the city of Olympia allows these kind of restrains, there asking business to locate outside of Olympia. (That decision decreases land value, opportunity, and affects the tax value). With population growth continuing and available space decreasing we shouldn't limit height and increase building costs by allowing unnecessary requirements.

I would gladly attend a public hearing, but my job requires me to work out of town, and again will not be available to attend.

Thanks
Dan LaFreniere
3500 Stoll Road S.E.
Olympia, Wa 98501
(360)412-0266

Todd Stamm

From: Holly Gadbow <hollygadbow@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2013 4:58 PM
To: Todd Stamm
Subject: Urban Corridors Amendment

Dear Chairman Parker and Members of the Planning Commission,
I appreciate you extending the chance to comment on the amendment to the urban corridors. Having a chance to think about it more, I urge you not to adopt this amendment at this time. I believe that allowing for mixed use buildings of six stories on these corridors is Olympia's best chance of providing affordable housing for younger people just getting into the housing market, some without children. Studies have shown that this group of young adults between the ages 18 and 30 are not driving as much some even not pursuing obtaining a driver's license. The same goes for empty nesters and seniors who want to drive less or not at all and want to use public transportation or live in a walkable neighborhood. Many are ready to give up their single family houses, and want to stay in their neighborhoods, but cannot find smaller places that provide easy access to public transportation or are walkable. Adopting this amendment would wipe out many opportunities to achieve these goals.

Further, if Olympia truly cares about reducing the pressure for the conversion of rural and agricultural lands to suburban sprawl and homes that leave no choice but to drive, adopting this amendment, further exacerbates this pressure.

I recommend that you review Thurston Regional Planning's excellent report, "Revitalizing Urban Transit Corridors", and reports by John Owen and Greg Easton, "Creating Walkable Neighborhood Business Districts" and "Protecting Existing Neighborhoods from the Impact of New Development".

During the upcoming comprehensive planning process, you will have the opportunity to gather some data on Olympia's ability to accommodate growth and meet its transportation and land use goals and evaluate then whether the current regulations need amending. I hope that good design can mitigate lowering the heights and reducing densities.

Sincerely,
Holly Gadbow
1625 Sylvester Street SW
Olympia, WA 98501

Public Hearing

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

You may use this form to provide written testimony to the City Council on any issue of City business.

If at a City Council meeting, complete this form and turn it in to the meeting Clerk.

If you wish to return this form by postal mail, the Council's address is:

Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967
Olympia WA 98507-1967

11/26/13

Your completed form will be copied to all Olympia City Councilmembers. Thank you for your comments.

PLEASE WRITE OR PRINT CLEARLY

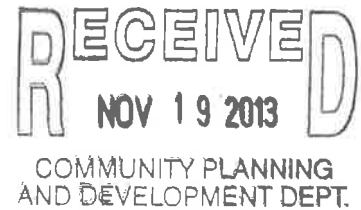
Name: Timothy Kelly
Residence Address (optional): 5813 Swayze Dr NE
City, State, Zip: Oly WA 98516
Phone Number (optional): 360 491 5641
Email (optional):
Subject: High Density Corridor

[X] FOR making ordinance / buildy floor setbacks permanent [] AGAINST

Comments: I own a house at 2325 Jackson St. NW on Oly 15 west side. Last year we faced a challenge when a 40' apartment building was proposed for the high density corridor. In the end it was not permitted to go forward; it had a number of problems (traffic impact, water, others.) But the building, as designed would have risen monolithically about 100' behind my house. The requirement for setbacks on each 3rd floor is one way to mitigate the worst effects of building in the high density corridor. I would support making the recent changes in design demands permanent.

Tim Kelly

November 19, 2013



Dear Mayo Buxbaum and Members of the Olympia City Council,

I am writing in regard to the changes that you are considering making permanent to the zones within the high density corridor. While I am not as concerned about reducing the amount of space for commercial and professional office space on the high density corridors that will result from reducing the allowable heights, I am concerned about the reduction of space allowed for residential housing. The HDC are one of the zones that increased residential density makes sense for the future because of the easy access to transit. Multi-family housing on the corridor is important to Olympia's future because the largest population groups are young people between the ages of 18 and 30 and baby boomers. These age groups are looking for smaller places as the younger group begins living on their own and the older group is downsizing. These groups are most likely not to drive as much or own cars. TRPC's urban corridors study emphasizes this. Higher densities on the corridors is key to making transit work better and reducing single occupancy auto trips and air pollution caused by these vehicles.

Further, if Olympia is going to keep its commitment to making Thurston County a more sustainable place, then higher density development on the corridors is the city's greatest contribution to reducing pressure on development of rural and agricultural lands.

In 2001 when the council added to the allowable heights along Columbia Street and various properties in the downtown and along the corridors (pre-isthmus controversy), the council was told that to incorporate underground parking at least five stories was necessary to make it feasible. At only three stories, at this proposal recommends, any redevelopment on the corridors would need surface parking lots and would detract from your goal to have a walkable, well designed community. I think the concerns about these buildings can be met with better design standards and getting some professional design assistance for corridor projects to make sure these buildings meet neighborhood concerns and the city's goals.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Holly Gadbow
1625 Sylvester Street SW
Olympia, WA 98501

Cc: Todd Stamm
Jerry Parker

November 25 2013



Mayor Buxbaum and Councilmembers:

I am appreciative for the opportunity to express my thoughts on the Zoning Code Amendment For Residential Buffering.

I strongly urge the City Council to adopt the Zoning Code Amendment For Residential Buffering in its clearest possible form. I believe it should become a standard part of the City's zoning and not only apply to the High Density Corridor Zones (HDC-1,2,3 or 4) but should apply to similar situations in the City's General Commercial (GM) and Professional Office- Multifamily (PORM) Zones.

The discovery that I carry forward from my involvement in the Bing Street Apartment project is that codes are present to protect and safeguard the integrity and viability of the existing community. The standards detailed in Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) 18.04.060: Residential districts' use standards, Section FF: High Density Corridor Transition Area, clearly exhibit awareness of this importance. In Chapter 18.04.020 of the OMC: Residential Districts: Purposes, Section A extensively outlines the general purposes of the residential districts contained in the chapter. One definition, "To ensure the compatibility of dissimilar adjoining land uses" (A.8), strikes me as most relevant to the discussion concerning residential buffering. It underscores the importance of the transition area to existing neighborhoods.

One facet of my interaction with the City of Olympia Community & Planning Development staff that remains most clearly in my mind is that voices of concern seem to be defined as voices of

dissent. I would like to assert the possibility that when dissenting voices arise they might indeed speak of the vision that runs as a vital current within the community; they might indeed be voices that have the dedication and perseverance to state boldly and persistently the thoughts that others will only guardedly whisper.

As a citizen active in the community for the first time, I stumbled upon an extraordinary learning: law supports community. In other words, zoning codes and regulations serve to shepherd a society in a well-considered manner through inevitable transition. The Amendment For Residential Buffering is simply an informed response to present circumstances, an action that responds with sound intention to interweave the new with the old.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Burgoon
2616 Bush Ave. NW