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1. Yoshiko Saheki
2. Shoreline
3. (O) Parkwood
4. Not answered
5. 09/12/2016
6. 8(a)
7. Dear City Council,

In the proposed SMC 20.30.280(C)4, I am urging you to strike out reference to "50 percent of the use area or 1,000 square feet, whichever is lesser" for MUR45 and MUR70 and allow expansion of homes applying R6 standards. I believe this would restore fairness and equity to homeowners in these zones in the context of the 145th Street Subarea rezone. I do not believe retaining R6 standards as permitted use in these zones precludes density in the future, but rather, will help promote vibrant neighborhoods that will make this area more desirable for future development.

There are multiple reasons why I believe R6 standards should apply within these zones and I will elaborate on two: 1) the inability to expand applying R6 standards could potentially suppress the value of small homes and; 2) those of us who bought and have stayed in our homes did not expect such a fundamental change in what we can and can't do with our homes.

On the first reason, most of the homes slated to be MUR45 or MUR70 are presently zoned as R6 and many homes are small: 1,000 square feet or less. Expanding 500 square feet or less seems hardly worth the expense and hassles.

I understand the restriction was designed to encourage those of us in small houses on R6 lots to sell to developers. But this is surely encouragement with a stick, not a carrot. Of course, I know it is up to me when and if I will sell my home. I have considered my options if the expansion limitation

becomes code:

- 1) I can sell my home to individuals who would like a detached, single-family residence. Given the rise in home prices over the years, I will make a profit. But as a small home with one bathroom, my house doesn't reflect contemporary tastes for a single family residence. The restriction on expansion lessens my home's value as a single-family residence.
- 2) I can sell my home to a developer. The value will be in the lot, not the structure. From what I have heard, I will make far more money selling my home to a developer than selling it to individuals seeking a home to reside in.

But at this point in time, it is simply conjecture that I will make considerably more by selling to a developer than selling my home as a home. There is great deal of multi-family construction occurring in Seattle. For all I know, developers may already be tapped out and would not be interested in my property, particularly given the many choices they would have in this subarea. On the other hand, the values of single family homes have steadily increased, so while the rate of growth in value may slow down, common sense tells me the value of my home will continue to rise as long as R6 standards apply. The value of my home as a single family residence will not rise as much if its expansion opportunity is limited.

I do recognize that being zoned MUR45 or MUR70 has the potential to increase property values far beyond that of single family residences in other areas of Shoreline. But again, this is conjecture. In contrast, there will always be a market for a conforming single family residence.

But really, what is more important than any future value of my home is the ability to do what I have always wanted to do and still want to do, which is to remain in my home and to expand it. To address my second reason, I must say I did not see this rezone and related restrictions coming in tandem with light rail.

By eliminating the expansion restriction, I will have a viable future with my home, the ability to expand according to R6 standards, which happens to be what I had been planning to do as an activity in my retirement years. I like my neighborhood and community so had planned to stay in my home for the long run. Needless to say, the rezone has thrown the proverbial monkey wrench in my plans for the future.

There are other reasons to permit R6 standards in these zones:

*For the smaller homes, R6 standards will make it easier to add an accessory unit. E.g., while adding on 500 square feet to expand a 1,000 sq ft home, another 500 square feet could be added for an accessory unit. In contrast, if home expansions are limited, any accessory unit would be confined to the "1,000 square feet or 50%, whichever is lesser" rule. So, for a 1,000 sq ft home, one could expand the home by 500 sq ft or add a 500 sq ft accessory unit but could not do both. I will add that it seems to me encouraging accessory units is probably the easiest way to add more housing units. Let's not leap frog this idea in favor of razing existing structures in order to create density.

*Retaining R6 standards will give current homeowners the confidence to invest in their homes. When homes become nonconforming with a restriction on expansion, why would homeowners want to improve their homes at all? Again, when we are only able to expand our homes by a little, the value of the property will be in the lot and not in the structure. While people may continue to mow lawns and sweep walkways, they may not paint, replace gutters, sidings, etc. and collectively, the neighborhoods may not look as vibrant and healthy as they are now. Because the area won't

magically change into brand new MUR structures once the ordinances are passed, it would be best to encourage the most vibrant neighborhoods in the meantime.

*By allowing R6 standards in the MUR45 and MUR70 zones, the message the City sends is that it truly cares for its present-day constituents, as well as looking ahead to the future. Those of us living in the MUR45 and MUR70 zones want to be part of the City's future, too.

Please eliminate the expansion limitation.

Thank you for reading.

Yoshiko Saheki

8. Oppose

Thank you,
City of Shoreline

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