

**From:** [Plancom](#)  
**To:** [Rachael Markle](#); [Steve Szafran](#); [Easton Craft](#); [David Maul](#); [William Montero](#); [Paul Cohen](#); [Lisa Basher](#); [Jack Malek](#); [Laura Mork](#); [Miranda Redinger](#); [Julie Ainsworth-Taylor](#); [Susan Chang](#); [Donna M. Moss](#)  
**Subject:** FW: additional comments on proposed amendments to development code to allow backyard tent cities  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 02, 2016 10:37:11 PM

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**From:** maggie[SMTP:MAGGIENUM@YAHOO.COM]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 02, 2016 10:37:04 PM  
**To:** Plancom  
**Subject:** additional comments on proposed amendments to development code to allow backyard tent cities  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Dear Planning Commission,

On October 20th, I submitted detailed comments to you explaining why I oppose proposed amendments to the Development Code portion of the Shoreline Municipal Code, which would allow tent cities in residential back yards. I also spoke briefly at your October 20th meeting.

I would like to address additional issues regarding those amendments, issues that arose at the meeting and/or in the public comments available on your web page, which can be found here:

<http://cityofshoreline.com/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/9530/25?backlist=%2f>

### **1) who will be most hurt by these amendments?**

It seems to me that backyard encampments would be more likely to appear in the working class neighborhoods of Shoreline than in the Highlands or on Richmond Beach view property. These are the homeowners whose wealth is tied up almost exclusively in their homes, who would not have a large investment portfolio to fall back on should their home value plummet as a result of this experiment.

I've noticed that some of the strongest proponents of backyard campgrounds would not be personally affected by such camps, either because they live in Innis Arden, where they'd be protected by HOA covenants, or because the layout of their property is such that they can't even see their neighbors' yards. It's fine for them to support the camps, as long as they also support giving absolute veto power to neighbors of any proposed camp.

### **2) setbacks**

I addressed this quite thoroughly in my October 20th comments, but I must address a recent suggestion that the City should treat tents and portapotties the way it would treat a stone barbecue or a garden shed. This is preposterous. Barbecues don't snore, and we don't defecate in our garden sheds.

### **3) one commenter has asserted that prohibiting backyard campgrounds would be "plain discrimination against some of Shoreline's most vulnerable citizens"**

If the City allowed Boy Scout camps, but not homeless camps, it would be discrimination. Prohibiting ALL backyard camps is not.

**4) one commenter has suggested that Shoreline should try backyard campgrounds as "a limited social experiment" for 3 years and then re-evaluate**

**IF YOU BUILD IT THEY WILL COME.** Look at how Seattle's lax enforcement of outdoor camping laws has led to an explosion of the drug-addicted homeless population there.

Once Shoreline's homeless population has quadrupled, or worse, as a result of this "social experiment", we'll have an even bigger problem with homelessness, and then the cry will be "you can't just throw all these people out on the street. We must allow each backyard homeless camp to remain indefinitely."

**5) a couple commenters have asserted that opposition to the camps is based on irrational fear**

10 Shoreline citizens stood up on October 20th and presented FACT-BASED objections to these proposed amendments. At least 17 submitted fact-based objections via email, which were posted on the Planning Commission's website.

Merely belittling our concerns as "fearful" does not rebut them.

I urge the belittlers to watch the video of the October 20th meeting and listen to those fact-based objections. I would also suggest that they take a look at the photos on Safe Seattle's facebook page for a glimpse at what could be in store for Shoreline.

**6) one commenter has suggested that encampments should be allowed to stay for at least nine months, so that children don't have to change schools mid-year**

I absolutely agree that children should not have to move in the middle of the school year, especially when they've already been traumatized by losing their home, but this is just one more reason why mobile tent cities are a bad idea. We should find a way to provide stationary housing, not tents, for homeless families, perhaps in tiny houses or trailers on City land, such as Fircrest.

**7) the conversation is getting unpleasant**

On October 24th, I reviewed the public comments on your web page. At that time, there were 20 sets of comments - 17 Against and 3 For. One of the Againsts has since been removed. I read on Nextdoor that the author had received hate mail and asked the City to remove her comments.

In addition, proponents of the camps have accused the opponents of racism, and have openly threatened lawsuits against the City to force the camps upon unwilling Shoreline citizens.

Little good ever comes of conversations that have devolved to this level.

I would ask that we take a step back and see what we're really trying to accomplish here.

Everybody agrees that we need to address the plight of the homeless. How about if we take a look at what has worked in other cities, and work together on implementing those solutions here?

Sincerely,  
Margaret Willson  
maggienum@yahoo.com