



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Hall and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk

DATE: June 5, 2018

RE: Documents received at 6/4/18 Council Meeting

CC: Debbie Tarry, City Manager
John Norris, Assistant City Manager

Attached hereto are documents received from the public at your June 4, 2018 City Council Meeting.

- 1) News Article titled "Lakewood opposes some psychiatric hospital releases", submitted by John Cole.
- 2) Written comment regarding bike lanes, submitted by Ginny Scantlebury.

Lakewood opposes some psychiatric hospital releases

206 450 0173

June 2nd, ST.
John Cole johndecole1944@gmail.com

WESTERN STATE

City officials say some discharges pose threat to safety

By WALKER ORENSTEIN
The News Tribune

The city home to Washington's main psychiatric hospital is fighting to stop patients from being discharged to residential treatment centers within its borders.

Lakewood approved a moratorium last week on city business licenses for new adult family homes and authorized a lawsuit against the state to end what it calls the unsafe release of people with histories of violence or sexual offenses into its city.

"Injecting sex offenders and violent criminals into a residential neighborhood was never the idea of the authors of this legislation," said Mayor Don Anderson, addressing state law around discharges, before the legal action was approved.

Adult family homes routinely contract with state government to serve people with disabilities and mental illnesses, a small portion of whom are leaving the 857-bed Western State Hospital. They can serve up to six people and are in residential areas.

Lakewood officials also want adult family homes to be more spread out around Washington. The city has one of the highest concentrations in the state.

Lakewood's measures come as Washington is desperately looking for places to discharge patients who the state considers healthy enough to leave the hospital. State officials, mental-health advocates and owners of adult family homes have slammed the city's efforts as discriminatory, shortsighted and cruel toward people in need.

John Ficker, executive director of the Adult Family Home Council, testified at last Monday's council meeting that the care facilities are a community asset and a success story other cities should imitate.

"They are reducing the backlog in your hospital. They are helping people live in the most community-based option available," he said. "In my opinion this really boils down to nothing more than a 'not in my backyard' kind of story."

Safety concerns

Friction over adult family homes in Lakewood is not new. But tensions spiked last year when Western State nearly discharged a mentally ill man charged with murder to an adult family home in the city's Oakbrook neighborhood despite psychological evaluations that ruled him a risk.

The man's release was postponed after an outcry from local officials.

While the Lawrence Butterfield case is a noteworthy part of Lakewood's argument, other patients are moving into adult family homes and other facilities from Western State with histories of arson, violence or sexual offenses.



ELLEN M. BANNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

The administration building at Western State Hospital in Lakewood.

In those cases, the state has deemed the patients psychologically stable enough to leave the hospital but ruled they need ongoing care and mental-health treatment.

City officials contend state law requires those patients to be served at more secure treatment centers, preferably in nonresidential neighborhoods. One type of treatment center that has attracted support for tough-to-place patients is enhanced services facilities. Those have more support, including behavioral health workers and required round-the-clock nursing staff.

Washington has only three enhanced service facilities, holding eight to 16 beds each. A fourth is to open in September, and the state is encouraging more of them — namely with construction money. There are none in Pierce County.

Many on Lakewood's City Council also expressed distrust of hospital officials, saying they are motivated enough to release dangerous people out of Western State that safety worries won't stop them.

Alleged driving factors: It's far cheaper for the state to serve people in community settings, and the hospital has a severe admission waitlist caused in part by its inability to discharge patients who are ready to leave.

Lakewood officials have accused the hospital of skirting state law around stringent review of certain dangerous patients before ordering Butterfield's discharge.

"They have every incentive not to be too tough of a regulator because at the same time they need to move the merchandise out of places like Western State," City Councilman Paul Bocchi said Monday.

Alleged discrimination

State officials have not directly commented on the Butterfield situation, citing patient privacy.

But hospital officials argue people discharged from Western State with criminal pasts often are at low risk to reoffend under proper supervision. Some are older. They also attribute part of the hospital's backlog to their careful work to not discharge patients to unsafe conditions.

A poor discharge can lead a patient right back into Western State, said Bea Rector, who runs a division at the

state Department of Social and Health Services that oversees the process of finding a step-down home for patients who need mental-health care.

"We know that they are healthy and safe in the state hospital," Rector said in a recent interview with The News Tribune, The Olympian and public radio's Northwest News Network. "And so until we find that right placement, we are making that difficult decision to have them in the hospital while we continue to build the community resource that will meet their need."

Rector called Lakewood's efforts to block people with certain criminal histories from living in adult family homes "discriminatory."

"There is state and federal law that require for housing to be fair and to not use people's background as a way of saying, 'You can't live here,'" she said.

Ficker, of the Adult Family Home Council, said he would estimate fewer than 100 adult family homes in the state serve patients from Western State. Data offered by DSHS show more than 2,500 adult family homes across Washington.

Because of the discharge troubles, the state has been boosting its efforts to increase the number of beds at adult

family homes, enhanced service facilities and care centers as part of a larger strategy to reshape and improve Washington's mental health system.

What's driving location?

Part of Lakewood's lawsuit filed in Pierce County Superior Court last Tuesday alleges that Washington is violating the Growth Management Act, which regulates development. The city argues the state is unequally distributing adult family homes, leading to a crush of them in Lakewood and specifically the city's Oakbrook neighborhood.

The growth law stipulates essential public facilities be spread out fairly. Lakewood says adult family homes meet the definition of an essential facility.

Lakewood had 81 adult family homes in early May, according to state data, meaning it has the fifth-highest rate of the treatment centers per capita in Washington.

Vancouver and Seattle appear to have the most adult family homes — 153 and 123, respectively, in early May — but their populations also are far higher.

In fact, large cities tend to have low rates of adult family homes. Seattle is 35th in the state when comparing its

family homes to population. Tacoma is 32nd, Spokane is 33rd and Olympia is 22nd. Shoreline has the highest ratio of adult family homes to population.

"There's no effort by DSHS to make sure these things are in different geographic areas of the state," said Bocchi, the Lakewood council member.

A handful of community members from Oakbrook testified before the Lakewood City Council last week that adult family homes are beginning to dominate the neighborhood and that they may have dangerous people near them.

A DSHS spokesman would not comment directly on the allegation of violating the Growth Management Act, saying the agency wouldn't address the pending litigation.

Yet in a May 9 letter to Lakewood, the assistant secretary of Aging and Long-Term Support Administration for DSHS pushed back on the idea that his agency has control over siting adult family homes.

"The department does not select the location of its contracted providers," wrote assistant secretary Bill Moss. "Where adult family homes are located is largely market driven."

Ficker said a huge determining factor is housing costs, which are higher in bigger cities. Another is building type. Ficker said Oakbrook has an abundance of large one-story houses, ideal for adult family homes.

Fewer options near home

In a meeting with adult family homeowners before the Lakewood council meeting, Ficker stressed that Lakewood's ordinances would hurt businesses owners, employees and patients across the spectrum — not just the slice of Western State patients Lakewood is hoping will go to more secure treatment centers.

Isabela Njeri, 41, is one person who might be affected by Lakewood's moratorium. In an interview after Ficker's

meeting, she said she has been working for five years at a facility that helps people who have Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other disorders that affect memory, but recently decided to set up her own adult family home.

She settled on Lakewood and has been searching since last year for the right property.

Njeri said that if Lakewood successfully blocks her and others from setting up homes, elderly people will have fewer options close to home and less access to one-on-one care.

"They're well taken care of," she said.

On a personal level, she said it would certainly throw a wrench in her long-made plans.

"I would probably have to look for something else to do, which is not where I want to go," she said.

Deaths, Funerals, In Memoriam

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A CONVERSATION WITH ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTRESS SHIRLEY MACLAINE



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June 4, 2018

Alisa Arment and Kendra Dedinsky
Shoreline Traffic Department

Re: Navigating new bike lanes on Richmond Beach Road

Dear Alisa:

Attached is a copy of an article in the June issue of the Richmond Beach Community News.

We are asking for a clarification to a couple of recommendations in this article:

1. "Cyclists are NOT required to use dedicated bike lanes" – we ask why do we even have bike lanes?
2. "You are not allowed to pass them (the bicyclists) in the new center turn lane". Can we pass a garbage truck or a bus in the center turn lane?

I also have a question. Why did you tell all those attending your two public hearings last year that the reason for the Richmond Beach Road Diet was only for safety – NOT BIKES? It would be nice if you were transparent about the reason for a project before you spend our money - \$350,000.

We look forward to your insight on these issues.

Roy and Ginny Scantlebury
19625 – 27th Ave NW
Shoreline, WA 98177

Cc: Shoreline City Council

NAVIGATING NEW BIKE LANES ON RICHMOND BEACH ROAD

By Bryce Hansen,
RBCA Board Member

As you may have noticed, our beloved Richmond Beach Road has received some new stripes. Regardless of your feelings on the subject, it's here, so let's make it safe for everyone. Our road is now set up to provide safer passage for turning cars and bicyclist. You may be wondering how to handle bikes in the lane to your right rather than in the road in front/behind you. Cyclists are NOT required to use the dedicated bike lanes, so if you encounter a cyclist in the roadway, pack your patience and give them some room. You are not allowed to pass them in the new center turn lane.

Courtesy of the Cascade Bicycle Club, here are some best practices for operating your motor vehicle around bicycles.

- Set a good example by demonstrating safe and respectful driving around bicyclists.
- Remember that bikes may legally use as much of the lane as they need for safety.
- When passing, give at least three feet of passing space between your vehicle and the bicyclist.
- It's easy to underestimate a bicyclist's speed; carefully assess when passing or turning.
- When turning left at an intersection, yield to an oncoming cyclist just as you would any other vehicle.
- When turning right across a bike lane, always scan over your right shoulder and yield to bicyclists before turning.
- Before opening a car door on the traffic side, look for passing bicyclists, and open doors slowly.
- At intersections, stop behind the crosswalk area, then look for approaching pedestrians and cyclists before advancing across the intersection.
- At trail crossings, slow and look both ways before proceeding.
- Remember that bicyclists and pedestrians in a crosswalk have the right of way.
- Children on bicycles often act unpredictably: expect the unexpected and drive attentively in residential areas.
- Consider the impacts of your speed, especially in residential areas or routes commonly shared with bicyclists. A 20 mph crash with a bicycle or pedestrian has a 5% fatality rate. At 30 mph, the fatality rate jumps to 45%. At 40 mph, the fatality rate is 80%.

