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To: Plancom
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Townhouse design standards

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I have been reading through and looking at the packet items for Townhouse Design Standards that are on the October 3 agenda. From what I am reading and seeing I think the standards are on the right track and if implemented, will make neighborhoods look more like neighborhoods and less like apartment cities (I can't think of any other way to describe it).

Having the three design elements (setback, roofline, facade, trim, etc.) is good, it will keep the buildings from looking like the two recent cookie cutter styles (if different designs) that just went up on 155th (west of 5th) and 5th (north of 155th). I think most residents of this neighborhood (my own, on 9th and just outside the zone changes that will eventually take over 8th) are afraid that those sorts of townhome standards as they are currently seeing will be the norm. With good planning, and code changes, a more interesting, accessible, and enticing neighborhood can be built. Change will happen, so let's make it positive (though for some, any change will never be anything but negative).

I do hope that given Shoreline's "tree city" thinking, some of the standards for landscaping will include requiring trees, once they are more mature, it will mitigate some of the visual disruption new buildings always present AND help the environment.

Thinking of personal preference only ... the code as I am reading it should result in something more akin to the townhomes built on the old nursery site on 65th and 25th in Seattle in the Ravenna neighborhood ... my preference for design ... but even more modern and square buildings should look far more interesting with the standards being proposed.

I will keep my fingers crossed that change will create an interesting and vibrant street scape.

Thank you for your time,

Cathy Aldrich
resident since 1981