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From: [Jon H](#)

Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 4:00:35 PM

To: [City Council](#)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Written Comment -

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

[Shoreline City Council Letter- Amendment 1.docx](#) ;

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Please include this letter for the written comment for tonights meeting. Thank you.

-Jon Houghton

Dear Shoreline Planning Commission and City of Shoreline Representatives,

I am writing to you regarding Amendment 1 in the Comprehensive Plan Docket. I urge you to vote against advancing this proposal. I am the owner of 19004 Firlands Way North, which immediately borders both parcels that are proposed for high-density residential rezoning, making my home and family undoubtedly the most severely affected in the neighborhood by this rezoning and the resulting development.



This neighborhood is not new, it is not ripe for future development, and it is not populated with tightly packed homes or apartment rentals. Rather, it is a quiet residential neighborhood with quality single-family homes that were built in the 1950s that are shielded from the city with mature evergreen trees and a forested buffer zone.

Introducing high-density development immediately next to this R6 residential neighborhood is completely inappropriate and violates all reasonable expectations that each of us had when purchasing our homes in this small residential neighborhood. Permitting high-density housing that will pave over this forested area will reduce our home values and will be severely detrimental to our

community's mature wooded landscape that is so crucial to preserving the neighborhoods wooded and private residential atmosphere. This road through our community was named Firlands Way for a reason.

When I purchased my home in May of 2019, I was provided a plot map that listed the parcel in question as an exempt zone. I was told that it would be extremely difficult for this exempt zone to be changed and that I could rest assured that no future development would happen in this beautiful, wooded area that surrounds my home. This is the main reason that I purchased here and spent thousands of dollars building garden beds, a chicken coop, and creating peaceful property surrounded by trees. Imagine my surprise when within mere months, I looked out my window to backhoes and the lot being cleared. That very same night, a racoon family was displaced by the bulldozing and killed several of my chickens. This quiet residential neighborhood will be forever ruined if the remaining trees and vegetation surrounding my property is replaced with townhomes and noisy neighbors. My property will no longer serve my needs when a roadway is paved along my property line making my land unsafe for my animals and children and my peaceful yard within the constant view of many tightly packed neighbors. My property value will severely decrease if my buffer from the crime and noise of the city is replaced by more noise and easier access from Aurora. I am extremely disappointed in the city's failure to provide me with a properly updated map when purchasing my home and with its failure to notify the community that this parcel was sold to a private developer 5 years prior. I am also extremely disappointed in the city continuing to act as if this private development meets the city's goals. According to Shoreline's Vision 2029, the City Council is committed to:

- (1) Ensuring our neighborhoods are safe and attractive;
- (2) Conserving and protect our environment and natural resources by encouraging restoration, environmental education and stewardship;
- (3) Respecting neighborhood character and engaging the community in decisions that affect them;
- (4) Making timely and transparent decisions that respect community input;
- (5) Supporting diverse and affordable housing choices that provide for Shoreline's population growth, including options accessible for the aging and/or developmentally disabled.

I struggle to understand how this developer's financial gains to the detriment of the surrounding neighborhood meet any of these stated goals. If the city truly wanted to use this property to reach its goals, it would not have sold it. Instead, it is clear, the city is favoring the desires of a developer over the interests of its residents. This rezone does not ensure our neighborhood is safe and attractive, instead it removes the trees that currently make our neighborhood attractive and replaces them with townhomes that will tower over our single-family homes. At the last meeting, Council Member Chang asked about step-back requirements and Steve Sazafran agreed that there were requirements. However, we were not informed what these requirements are and he did not confirm that this drastic rezone meets those requirements. This

rezone also does not conserve and protect our environment and natural resources and does not encourage restoration or stewardship. Instead, it leads the community feeling as if the city does not care about the natural resources that we are fighting to protect. Rezoning the lot bordering our R6 residential neighborhood to R48 high density residential does not respect our neighborhood character and when all of us have repeatedly brought this to the attention of the planning committee and now the city council, our input has not been respected. Finally, I have been unable to find any information that suggests that these townhomes will actually provide diverse and affordable housing choices. Mayor Hall mentioned this goal when explaining why he is in favor of this amendment, yet he too failed to provide any information as to why he believes that this development actually meets this goal. I am unsure why you are each comfortable voting for this private developer's financial gains without this information and why none of you have thought to ask for it at these public meetings.

The last major concern I would like to bring attention to is that the King County parcel and property map shows that the parcel in question has been determined to be an erosion hazard zone. This erosion zone is immediately apparent upon visual inspection of my property. A naturally elevated ridge of extremely soft soil is present around the perimeter of my property line that is slowly eroding down the hillside. I fear that removing the mature evergreen trees and forest undergrowth along the hillside, in addition to the construction of the developers high-density housing units, may lead to or have the potential to cause my home or land to become unstable over time. Given that King County has identified this as a "severe to very severe erosion zone" and that multiple residents have expressed erosion related safety concerns, I would think that it would be in the City Council's best interest to prohibit or restrict construction on the property rather than encourage high-density housing units to be built in area deemed unsafe.



When the private developer purchased this lot, he knew that it was zoned as R-18, just as when each of us purchased our homes we knew that they were zoned as R-6. It was his responsibility to decide whether that purchase was cost effective for him and he should not be allowed to financially gain by completely changing the character of our neighborhood, the values of our homes, and the enjoyment of our property. Voting in favor of this amendment would put all of our homes at risk and would lead to a very upset community.

Please also consider the following photos of the property line between our home and this lot. We will no longer be able to enjoy this property when this line becomes a driveway and townhomes tower over us. Please recognize the major impact that this rezone and high-density development will have on us.





