

Carla Hoekzema

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Sent: Thursday, February 3, 2022 2:19 AM
To: Plancom; Carla Hoekzema
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Contact the Planning Commission

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Submitter ID: 45840
IP address: 2601:602:9600:1cb0:6109:4974:5710:6048
Time to complete: 54 min. , 32 sec.

Survey Details: Answers Only

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1. Briarcrest
2. No Response Needed
3. Jean Hilde
4. jmhilde61@gmail.com
5. February 3, 2022
6. Agenda Item 6.a
7. Dear Planning Commission:

I support the citizen Tree Preservation Code Team's proposed amendments across the board.

Specifically as to TPCT's proposed amendment C.2.6, Definition of Significant Tree, the City of Shoreline already uses the six-inch dbh definition for significant Public Trees. Using six-inch dbh for all trees would simplify and bring consistency to the code. The fact that this measurement is already in the code proves that the City believes it is a reasonable definition of a significant tree. There is no valid reason to have differing measurements in different parts of the code. TPCT's proposed amendment C.2.6 should be approved.

Specifically as to staff's proposed amendment C.9, giving the Director the power to waive ["refrain from applying or enforcing a rule, restriction, or fee"] or reduce the required minimum significant tree retention percentage will in no way "further greater tree preservation" as the staff comment claims, it will only lessen tree preservation. Thus, staff's proposed amendment C.9 should not be approved.

Similarly, giving the Director the power to reduce the number of replacement trees required will also lessen tree preservation. This is why TPCT's proposed amendment C.10 should be approved. If a site cannot reasonably accommodate all required replacement trees, then either those replacement trees are planted elsewhere or the fee-in-lieu is paid. There should be no administrative discretion involved.

Allowing a city employee the discretion to waive or change code requirements can lead to a number of undesirable results, including uncertainty about what and who the code covers, why some projects qualify for a waiver or reduction while others do not, failure to notify the public of or to allow public input into such decisions, and the appearance of unfairness or favoritism. These pitfalls are avoided in traditional zoning, where, according to the American Planning Association, an "...ordinance contains a set of precise rules drafted in such a way that development is ordinarily possible without the exercise of any discretion in individual cases by enforcement officials." Fair and equitable treatment of all citizens is protected by the consistent enforcement of regulations. TPCT's proposed amendment C.10 will protect our trees as well as assure equitable treatment of citizens under the city code. The amendment should be approved for these reasons.

Thank you for your consideration and for your hard work.
Jean Hilde

Although I am a member of the City of Shoreline's PRCS/T Board, the views expressed above are solely my own and are not meant to represent opinions of the Board or any other of its members.

Thank you,
City of Shoreline

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