

Jefferson Westside Neighbors

A City-Chartered Neighborhood Association

March 15, 2006

Mayor and City Council

City Hall

777 Pearl Street, Room 105

Eugene, OR 97401

RE: Temporary moratorium on zone changes in redesignated area of Jefferson neighborhood

Dear Mayor and City Councilors:

At a standing-room-only neighborhood meeting on March 14, the **Jefferson Westside Neighbors** *unanimously* adopted the following motion

Jefferson Westside Neighbors requests City Council adopt a temporary moratorium on zone changes for lots within the area encompassed by the Jefferson/Far West Refinement Plan that was redesignated in 2004 from “Low-Density Residential” to “Medium-Density Residential” on the Metro Plan Diagram. This area is approximately as shown in the map associated with “Jefferson residential area #15” (in the first column on page 28) of the Jefferson/Far West Refinement Plan.

The moratorium should remain in effect until Council adopts appropriate development standards to protect this area’s neighborhood character, as stated in the refinement plan’s policy for this area.

The fifteen-block, redesignated area to the east of Jefferson Street is mostly a textbook example of a “traditional” single-family area that has historically been zoned R-1 (single-family) and that has been completely built out for decades with detached, single-family residences.

Redesignation as “Medium-Density Residential” now allows any property owner to apply for a zone change from R-1 to R-2 (medium-density). At this point, it’s undetermined whether or not an /SR (site review) overlay and/or other restrictions would be required based on applicable Jefferson/Far West Refinement Plan land use policies.

Future redevelopment under R-2 standards in this area would be grossly incompatible with the neighborhood character. A ten-minute walk down Washington Street from W. 13th Ave. to W. 18th Ave. will make this abundantly clear.

Mayor and City Council

March 15, 2006

Page Two

The redesignation was approved in April 2004 as part of City Council action on a package of Metro Plan amendments. Other Metro jurisdictions subsequently approved the package of amendments, as well.

The redesignation was not in effect until recently because the entire package of Metro Plan amendments was held up on appeal. We understand the appeal was recently dropped, and the redesignation is now in effect.

The minutes of meetings and hearings where the Metro Plan amendments were considered indicates the Jefferson area redesignation was lumped as one of a number of "housekeeping" and/or "consistency" changes, and City Councilors (and Planning Commissioners) did not discuss the Jefferson area redesignation or its potential impacts.

Residents of the affected area were also apparently not advised of the potential impact of this redesignation, and many residents have expressed complete surprise at the dramatic change in how their heritage neighborhood will henceforth be treated.

Placing a temporary moratorium on zone changes will not prejudice what final outcome is most suitable for this area. There are a variety of reasonable approaches to addressing this issue, and residents should be meaningfully involved in determining what's done.

A temporary moratorium also will simply preserve the *status quo ante* that existed until very recently (before the appeal was dropped). This action will *not* take away any development options that property owners have had under the prior, long-standing "Low-Density Residential" designation.


However, it's critical to take immediate action to close the current "window" whereby property owners can submit applications for zone changes to R-2 and irreversibly damage currently stable and healthy sections of this neighborhood by inappropriate infill and redevelopment.

Prompt action will also reduce the exposure to future Measure 37 claims based on the "Medium-Density Residential" designation now in effect. (In essence, a claim could be made that a property at some point during the current "window" could have been developed to the maximum allowed by R-2.)

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact either of us if we can be of assistance.

Respectfully,

<signed>
David Hinkley, Co-Chair



Paul Conte, Co-Chair

cc: Dennis Taylor, City Manager