

Laurelhurst Community Club

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Planning, Land Use and Sustainability Committee
Public Hearing on Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments
July 11, 2013

The Laurelhurst Community Club Board of Trustees (LCC) opposes the proposed comp plan amendment that would change the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) from single-family residential to multi-family for the 18-acre Battelle/Talaris property in Laurelhurst. We ask that you not include this proposed amendment on the policy docket for further review and consideration.

LCC supports responsible redevelopment of the Battelle/Talaris site. This can be accomplished under the single-family code through a planned residential development (PRD). A change in the FLUM map is unnecessary. Clustered single-family residential housing under the PRD provisions would preserve open space and trees and protect the wetlands on the site. PRDs are intended to provide flexibility to enhance and preserve natural features and open space. The property owner insists that the only way to preserve open space and vegetation is through a multi-family designation. This is not true. The owners have not explored a PRD option.

One of the criteria for consideration of Comp Plan amendments is that the proposal is not better addressed through another process. In this case, redevelopment of the Battelle/Talaris property is better addressed through the yet to be explored PRD process.

The owner has proposed up to 333 apartment units on the site—a massive increase in density in this single-family area. Under the Comprehensive Plan, increased density is allowed within urban village or urban center boundaries or under adopted neighborhood plans. This excludes Laurelhurst.

Concerns expressed by neighbors over the apartment house proposal include lack of adequate transit, infrastructure needs, school capacity at Laurelhurst Elementary, parking and traffic issues and lack of home ownership opportunities. There are also issues related to the daylighting of Yesler Creek that have not been addressed. Despite the impacts of multi-family development on the Battelle/Talaris property, DPD's report indicates that a mere environmental checklist would be required, rather than a full Environmental Impact Statement which involves public involvement should the multi-family option move forward.

Multi-family housing is inconsistent and incompatible with the single-family character of the Laurelhurst community, the Comprehensive Plan and the criteria for selecting proposed comp plan amendments for further review. The LCC urges you to reject the proposed comprehensive plan amendment.

Thank you for considering the comments of the Laurelhurst Community Club.

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