

Hello Seattle Speaks Up (SSU) petition signer.

There is an old saying... "If you don't deal with politics, it will deal with you."

You signed the SSU petition because you had concerns about development and land use in your neighborhood. Land use is politics and can be changed for the better through action by concerned citizens.

As a result of your signature and those of thousands of others, legislation was introduced to address your concerns. Since then, intense lobbying by developers and their allies has resulted in those legislative proposals being eviscerated. Councilmember Mike O'Brien is currently attempting to pass a hollowed-out shell in lieu of genuine substantive legislation. **This is the result of a process that is analogous to the EPA allowing Shell Oil's attorneys to write the rules for offshore drilling. That's scandalous.**

We need your help to ensure that real action is taken, instead of empty symbolic gestures that leave the developers' interests untouched.

**There is a public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, June 2 from 2-4pm, which is being held at City Hall, 600 4th Ave, in City Council Chambers.**

Attendance at this meeting by those dissatisfied with the way development is affecting our neighborhoods is critical. **Please attend this meeting** so that Seattle's Councilmembers know how residents stand on this important issue affecting our neighborhoods. This is the second time that the Planning Land Use and Sustainability (PLUS) Committee will be discussing this topic and it will be the only formal public hearing. Attendance at the first committee meeting by concerned residents prepared to make comments about this issue was poor. Therefore it is imperative that we have a strong showing at this June 2nd meeting to ensure that real protections are put back into this legislation. Please show up early, before 2pm, so that you can sign-in to make your public comment. **If you cannot make the meeting please take the time to email City Councilmembers, to make your voice a matter of public record and to express your dissatisfaction with legislation as it is currently proposed** (Councilmembers' email addresses are at the bottom of this email).

### **What is proper action?**

When we initially brought our concerns regarding the developer-influenced 2010 revisions to the low rise land use codes to the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) they responded with suggested legislation that addressed many of our concerns. Subsequently, the same developers and architects - some of whom are members of the

Seattle Planning Commission - picked apart these revisions, weakening the pending legislation to the point of insignificance. Therefore, we need affected and upset neighbors to attend the meeting and demand this legislation be strengthened and returned to its original form.

This is the only chance we have to improve the situation regarding current development of our lowrise neighborhoods. This struggle has taken years of effort by a small, committed group of like-minded and concerned neighbors. We have done most of the important work for you and are close to achieving some relief from out-of-scale development for our neighborhoods. **However, all this work is in danger of failing unless you and others act to pressure Councilmembers to strengthen this legislation.**

### **What needs strengthening and what needs to be changed in this proposed legislation?**

The following bullet points are what needs to be changed and/or included in any new legislation, and can be used as a guide for your letter to Councilmembers. While this information uses rather technical land use language, we have tried to make it understandable by simplifying the text without changing its meaning. Feel free to cut and paste this portion into your own letter if necessary.

- Eliminate the allowance for the additional 4' of height for partially below grade story for apartments, townhouses, and rowhouses.
- Eliminate Floor Area Ratio (FAR) exemption for partially below grade story for all housing types.
- Require a minimum of 3.5' side setback in all LR zones for row housing to provide a buffer and reduce adverse effects on adjacent properties.
- Set a standard for height of street-facing façade to ensure the structure is no higher than 44' above the sidewalk within 12' of the street.
- Include unenclosed stairs, hallways and breezeways in chargeable floor area ratio (FAR) with no exemptions allowed.
- Include floor area of loft spaces, or any finished interior space with a floor-to-ceiling clearance greater than 36' in the Gross Floor Area calculation.
- Establish a 0.85 rounding threshold for density calculations for all LR zoned lots regardless of lot size.
- Apply density limit for row houses in the LR1 zone regardless of lot size.

- Require Streamlined Design Review for all new developments of 3 or more units in LR1
- Require drive access to parking to one side of the property with a 3.5' setback at the other side boundary line to increase open space between properties.
- Require a minimum 15' setback at the front of property in all LR zones.
- Require a minimum 17' setback at the rear of property in all LR zones.

**Now is the time for action.**

It will take many voices to pressure the Council to do the right thing for our neighborhoods. **Please attend the meeting, and please write Councilmembers.** Tell them we need robust legislation to correct the disastrous changes made to the Land Use Code in recent years, and not the watered-down developer-influenced legislation that is currently being considered.

**Recently, citizens successfully banded together to insist that City Council create legislation to regulate micro-housing. We fought the developers and won! Micro-housing is now subject to regulations. Regulations that we created. The process we are asking you to undertake for our lowrise neighborhoods can have a similar positive outcome if residents act in concert to demand changes from City Councilmembers. This is not an impossible task.**

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue affecting your neighborhood. We need to see you at this meeting and hope that you write an email to Councilmembers as well.

Sincerely,

Seattle Speaks Up

<https://seattlespeaksup.wordpress.com/seattle-speaks-up/>

**City Councilmember names with email addresses below:**

PLUS Committee Councilmembers:

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