

## **Camacho, Rudy**

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**From:** Fred Forster <fkforster@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 14, 2015 11:22 AM  
**To:** PRC  
**Subject:** Project 3020114: 6726 Greenwood Ave N Public Comment

**TO:** City of Seattle - DPD PCR  
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000  
PO Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**DATE:** October 13, 2015

**RE: PROJECT 3020114 - THE NEED FOR MAXIMIZING BELOW-GRADE VEHICLE PARKING IN THE DESIGN OF A FOUR-STORY STRUCTURE CONTAINING 56 RESIDENTIAL UNITS + 3 LIVE/WORK UNITS WITH 4,000 SQ. FT. OF COMMERCIAL SPACE ON THE 6700 BLOCK OF GREEN LAKE AVE N.**

I have read all the letters of concern regarding the negative impact of the proposed design on vehicle traffic and parking. Many of the viewpoints have significant merit, and I see no value in repeating all of them. What I would like to address in my letter are two issues that I do not feel were covered sufficiently. The first is the trade-off between of the extra cost and effort of maximizing below-grade parking and the overall loss of quality of life in the Greenwood Neighborhood if that is not done. The other addresses the current traffic and parking situation on Greenwood Ave N in the vicinity of the planned project, not to mention the effects on residential streets.

### **MAXIMIZING BELOW-GRADE PARKING:**

Directly across North 68th Street from the subject development is an approved 32-unit residential building at 6800 Greenwood Ave N with 4,000 sq. ft. of retail space and below-grade parking for 28 vehicles, which I presume maximizes parking space given the available footprint. This building is currently being constructed. As of this week the hole for parking has been dug and the concrete forms removed. Just looking at such a simple thing made me realize it was the right thing to do, just as it is the right thing to do for the project under review. Yes, it cost a developer a "chunk of change" to do it, which will be passed on to the future owners of the units. But it is not hard to see that it is a simple and effective solution for lessening the negative effects of the increased population density created by the building that benefits new residents as much as current neighbors. Don't get me wrong; there will be negative impacts to the neighborhood. These are condo units, which could have their share of two-car families, and let's not forget the people who drive to visit the residents and retail space. However the approved design attempts to address parking impact in a very significant manner. I compliment the developer and the city for working together to this end.

For the above reasons I do not agree with comments made in other letters about providing only half half the number of parking spaces as there are units for the currently proposed apodment-type building. It may be that maximizing below-grade parking ends up with that many spaces, but it does not make sense to tie that number to the number of units. Maximizing parking makes sense even if, as some people have been led to believe, there is significant data that only 20% of apodment residents will have cars. Buildings such as that proposed will be around for many generations. Unless every wall between units is load bearing, as society changes so may these units, becoming larger apartments or perhaps condos. But even if that does not happen, maximizing parking benefits both the new residents and the current neighbors alike. There may be units that want parking for more than one car, and any space not

used for parking can be flexible storage space that residents can pay for **ESPECIALLY** considering how small the currently planned units are. It can also serve as parking for the retail space. Lastly, the building owner can charge for public parking, and perhaps make the street parking situation better than it is now, no matter how improbable that may be. To not provide the maximum below-grade parking now, the only time it is feasible, ignores the Law of Unintended Consequences. After all, this is still Seattle, near, but not a walk or a practical bus ride away from hiking at Mt. Rainier or skiing at Mount Baker for a day—this is not New York—cars play an important role here and will continue to do so.

#### **CURRENT TRAFFIC AND PARKING ISSUES:**

The design of any new building must take into account where it is located just as much as the design of an automobile needs to take into account the type of roads on which it will be used—there are big differences between Porches and Jeeps! Some of the letters I read did address some parking and traffic issues, such as the S-turn just south of the proposed building and its proximity to the sidewalk complicating the pickup and drop off people. But I want to address existing problems that will only get worse unless as many vehicles as possible can park in the proposed building.

With the Fini building across Greenwood from the proposed building and the 6800 Greenwood Ave project being built across a street from both of these, the experience for walkers, bikers and drivers will only get worse given the current uses of Greenwood. This street has parking on both sides, bike lanes on both sides in addition to having two-way vehicle traffic. On top of all that, it has what is what could be called a continual left turn lane in the center. That center area, however, has become a parking lot for trucks servicing the many businesses on Greenwood. Whether there is a city policy for truck parking there or the police just ignore that it is a violation, it is another indication of how untenable the situation already is. If anything, there should be **LESS** curb parking for cars to make space for delivery trucks. **THE PRESENT SITUATION IS ENTIRELY INAPPROPRIATE FOR SAFETY TO BIKERS.** Vehicles, **INCLUDING BUSES**, are forced at times to pass between trucks on one side and bicyclists on the other while presented with space and visibility issues. It is a recipe for serious injury or death for the cyclist. Metro bus drivers at times have to fold truck mirrors back in order to continue on. If these problems were addressed correctly, a significant amount of curb space for cars would be lost in favor of trucks. Even with the best attempts to mitigate the current problems on Greenwood in addition to maximizing below-grade parking, the presence of the proposed building will still lead to increased traffic of all types. To not maximize parking under such conditions would be extremely shortsighted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my views and suggestions.

Sincerely,  
Fred K. Forster  
Professor of Mechanical Engineering  
Resident on 68th St east of Greenwood Ave N