

In the Matter of the Appeal of

CITIZENS FOR LIVABILITY IN BALLARD

From a decision by the Director, Office of Planning and Community Development,

Regarding the adequacy of a Final Environmental Impact Statement

Hearing Examiner File:

W-16-003

Declaration of Joseph E. Wert

I, Joseph E. Wert, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington, that the following is true and correct.

- 1) I am over the age of 18, a member of "Citizens for Livability in Ballard" and make this statement in support of our appeal.
- 2) In addition, I am a homeowner and have lived in *Olympic Manor*, a housing development in the Crown Hill area for over 15 years. Olympic Manor is a mid-century (built in the 1950's) housing development consisting of approximately 320 single family residences with maybe, 6-8 duplexes. We have an HOA (Homeowners Association) a set of enforced covenants and I have served on the Board for over 10 years. We are primarily known as one of the best neighborhoods in Seattle to look at Christmas lights. In 2016, the *Huffington Post* declared us one of the ten best neighborhoods in the country for Christmas lights displays. There is also one elementary school (North Beach, approx. 270 students), one middle school (Whitman, approx. 720 students) and one park (Sound View) that directly abut Olympic Manor.
- 3) Concern about impacts on schools.

The proposed boundaries for the Crown Hill Urban Village actually encroach into the neighborhood, specifically 20th Ave NW and NW 90th St. I live approximately three blocks from the edge of the boundary. It is my concern that with up-zoning that would be allowed in an expanded Urban Village, our neighborhood ambience may be destroyed. This is a neighborhood where everyone knows each other, the kids play in the streets, walk to school and to the park and neighbors are neighborly. In my neighborhood, we are not against duplexes as we already have them; rather, we are concerned about larger complexes. We realize that the city will grow and neighborhoods have to adjust. However, the city must adjust the infrastructure needed to accommodate this growth before the growth happens, not after. Both our neighborhood schools are currently using portable classrooms with North Beach having four. Neither one of these schools can accommodate more students. Sound View Park is a mid-size park that currently suffices, but I am concerned whether it can handle increased usage that will occur with a significant amount of new residential development, particularly since new development is expected to be multifamily and will not have play areas or other open space.

- 4) Concern about impacts of increased traffic

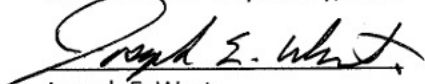
The north/south arterials, 8th Ave NW and 15th Ave NW, though crowded, seem to be able to cope with current traffic. However, the east/west streets --NW 80th St, NW 85th St, and Holman Rd are more problematic. I have had to wait through 3 lights trying to cross 85th at 15th on weekends. The city may believe that the new residents that will live in Crown Hill will all take the bus and ride bikes and not add to traffic on the streets, but this is just not a realistic expectation.

5) Elimination of parking requirements in Urban Villages.

The proposal to eliminate parking requirements in the Urban Village is again unrealistic. People own cars. It may be the case that many resident's downtown, on Capitol Hill, and in the U district do not own cars, but that is not the case on Crown Hill. I estimate that 100 new apartments with no parking would result in at least 75 additional cars on the streets. As I drive between 15th Ave NW and 8th Ave NW, from NW 80th St to Holman Road, even now, before many new developments, there are a number of cars parked on the streets on a week day. As the number of apartments and businesses grow, the number of parking spots on commercial streets will dwindle and parking will spill over into the neighborhoods. This is already occurring.

As a homeowner in an area close to the boundary of the proposed expansion of the Crown Hill Residential Urban Village and one who travels near and through the Ballard Urban Village on a regular basis, I believe that if the Comprehensive Plan policies envisioned in the document addressed by the EIS are implemented, negative impacts to my quality of life will occur in the form of increased traffic and congestion, loss of parking in my neighborhood and in downtown Ballard, and reduction or impairment of public services including our neighborhood schools and local park.

Dated this 15th day of July, 2016


Joseph E. Wert