

RE: Opposition to SB 10

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 10, which purports to address residential infill in Portland. I live in Portland's Eastmoreland neighborhood and am opposed to the expressed intent to apply residential infill indiscriminately to virtually all metropolitan neighborhoods.

In my neighborhood we have been dealing with this issue for the past decade and our concerns seem to have fallen on deaf ears. Portland has several neighborhoods that have unique neighborhood-wide character: Eastmoreland, Ladd's Addition, Irvington, and others. We have attempted for the past several years to add Eastmoreland to those neighborhoods that place restrictions on demolitions. We have continued with that effort as we have watched affordable homes torn down and replaced by McMansions at more than double the former purchase price. Developers love your plan. The people who live in these unique neighborhoods and who moved to them because of the general appeal of the neighborhood hate plans for residential infill.

What is neighborhood character? Eastmoreland, Ladd's, and Irvington were platted in the 1920s and 1930s and were built with a comprehensive style of architecture and landscaping. It is the same style of development that makes San Francisco and New Orleans architectural wonders and great tourist attractions. To indiscriminately open these neighborhoods to destructive development is a short-sighted plan that can change the character of an entire city. **If you need an example of how change can have broad, unintended consequences, look at what Portland's Pearl District did to Chinatown. It now exists in name only, and the former residents have scattered several miles away to Portland's east side, leaving behind a haven for drug users and sellers.**

Here's a bit of history for you. In Eastmoreland the neighborhood voted overwhelmingly in favor of establishing a Historic District. After the votes were counted, the owners of four homes then put their homes into trusts divided between thousands of members, all which were themselves. They demanded that the 5,000 members of those trusts (themselves counted 5,000 times) constituted votes against the Historic District. For the past two years the Attorney General's office has been delaying any decision in this matter, after the National Parks Service, which designates Historic Districts, sent Eastmoreland's case back to the State with the demand that Oregon straighten out something that might change the way all Historic District requests are handled nationwide. In two years, no opinion, no solution has come from the Oregon Attorney General's office, so the process is stalled. In the meantime several more affordable homes have been demolished, while the character of the neighborhood has been irrevocably damaged, and housing prices have continued to skyrocket. **Affordable homes have been replaced by three-story McMansions built out to the edge of the property with no landscaping. They sell for well over one million dollars each. On the street where I live, most of us have lived here for at least a decade and face the reality that we could no longer afford to buy a home in this neighborhood.**

I know that the residential infill plan is not aimed at destroying established neighborhoods, but you must realize that **developers will take advantage of any opportunity to replace something they can buy for market price with something they can offer at double that price.** They are not concerned with "infill", since one single-family dwelling is being replaced with another. Developers tend to use any relaxation of rules and regulations as a means of replacing at a profit the old with the new. I don't fault them for that. Business is built on making a profit. But with that in mind, I urge you to consider carefully changes that make it easier for existing neighborhoods to be destroyed.

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