

May 17, 2019

Honorable Chair Keny-Guyer and committee members,

Welcome to the first exhibit in the "**Gallery of Mything Middle Housing**"; where truly "a picture is worth 1,000 words."

The overarching theme of this exhibition is that HB 2001 is fundamentally flawed in it's simplistic, "one-size-fits-all" dictate that usurps and short-circuits the essential crafting of flexible housing code so that it fits the local context.

In contrast to the blunt instrument of HB 2001, my neighborhood community has proven how to do it right. The Jefferson-Westside Special Area Zone, which community members themselves crafted, allows all forms of so-called "Middle Housing" with a great deal of flexibility in design. But the S-JW zone also has reasonable development standards to ensure that infill and increased density don't create significant negative impacts on current residents and property owners. Learn more by reading the attached "Guide and FAQ for the Jefferson-Westside Special Area Zone."

Stay tuned for more exhibits from the "Gallery of Mything Middle Housing."

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The claim:

The proponents of dictating that all single-family zones allow "Missing Middle Housing" paint nostalgic pictures of what this would look like. The images range from housing and mixed-use with local commercial around 1920s street car lines to "fantasy" images such as the one below.

“Missing Middle Housing” in Theory. – From missingmiddlehousing.com

Notice the extremely low-density and certainly not “affordable” concept.



Here’s the “Middle Housing” that is, unfortunately, not “missing” in the Jefferson Westside Neighbors (on W. 10th Ave.). The slum developer bought the house on the right and then exploited flaws in Eugene land use code to create the monstrosity on the left with the front yard turned into a parking lot.



Here's a triplex that was jammed into the backyard of a classic Craftsman home facing W. 11th Ave. The bottom image shows the view from the kitchen of the small house on a small lot. The family in this house lost their morning sunlight and an open viewscape across the adjacent backyard. Ultimately they moved. The developer put parking in the front yard of the original house further degrading the block.



Are these awful examples evidence that “middle housing” is inevitably incompatible with single-family neighborhoods? Definitely not! However, the glossy images and fantasies of the more zealous proponents of “Missing Middle Housing” are similarly not evidence of what will be produced if Eugene’s R-1 zone is simply “stealth upzoned to the equivalent of R-2.

Fortunately, Eugene already has a sensible approach demonstrated in the Jefferson-Westside Special Area Zone, which the City Council unanimously approved. The essential element is to have carefully crafted standards that ensure infill compatibility, appropriate to the context of the established neighborhood area.