



City Neighborhood Council

c/o 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 1700, PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

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September 30, 2008

Seattle City Council
P. O. Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Re: Process for City Council consideration of incentive zoning proposals

Dear Councilmember:

Although it establishes the potential for significant upzoning that could render some neighborhoods seriously out of synch with their neighborhood plans and short of infrastructure to keep up with growth, the issue of incentive zoning has little visibility outside City Hall. We regret that the advisory committee on incentive zoning that the City Council convened did not include neighborhood representatives who could have provided more balance to the discussions.

We are concerned that citizens have not sufficiently tied into this initiative. Few know about the July 21, Stakeholders Memo or August 21 Director's report. The 56-page proposed ordinance has only recently been released--not in time for your committee's meetings that discussed incentive zoning. There is inadequate lead-time before the Oct. 7 public hearing and the committee's possible action on Oct. 8. We suggest that the hearing date be delayed until November or December, or that a second hearing be scheduled at that time, with the legislation not be acted on until afterwards.

The City Neighborhood Council is organizing a Tuesday, Oct. 21 workshop on incentive zoning (6:30 to 9 p.m. at the West Precinct, 810 Virginia St.), to help citizens understand and discuss the proposal. We hope that you and your staffs can attend. There will be a mix of perspectives in order to understand the financial mechanism and how the proposal might affect multi-family and neighborhood commercial zones throughout the city.

We also recommend that, like the residential small lot zone, incentive zoning should be considered only within the context of neighborhood plans or

updates. While passing the incentive zoning legislation does not automatically create or grant zoning changes, the legislation clearly has as its goal the use of significant bonus height allowances that could have a dramatic effect on parcels or blocks in many neighborhoods.

Thank you for whatever you can do to provide balance and engagement regarding this important legislation. This letter was approved unanimously at the September 29 City Neighborhood Council meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Leman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Leman, Chair
City Neighborhood Council
cleman@oo.net

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Irene Wall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Irene Wall, Chair
CNC Neighborhood Planning Committee
iwall@serv.net

cc: district councils