Seattle Neighborhood Workshops

MORGAN JUNCTION: TABLE SHEETS

March 6, 2017

Note: Yellow highlight to mark where a particular table had consensus

TABLE 1

- Unclear where height limit is measured from on a slope
- Increase in height from 30 to 45 feet is a concern
- Yard space and setbacks are valuable, along with trees and light/air let sun reach street level
- 6 to 7 hours of light per day is ideal for plant growth, increased heights in certain areas could make this difficult to achieve
- Setback considerations for different zones, street versus alley boundary
- Property taxes going up cost is passed on to renters (stated by a landlord)
- "Wedding cake" (stair-step) transitions are ideal
- Many people don't park in their own garages
- Controlled parking garage could consolidate parking needs
- Constricted traffic routes in and out of West Seattle
- Housing vouchers need to complement provision of brick-and-mortar housing units
- 3-story buildings may not be financially feasible in NC zones
- Unclear what the difference is between RC and NC ground floor commercial
- Need flexible size of retail spaces, small to big
- UV boundary change next to Morgan Junction Park
- LR2 block in NE area has small 40-foot lots
- Creek/spring runs down hill to the west through middle of UV
- Recent open space investments/donations

Summary:

- More nuanced height limits to allow better light/air access
- "Wedding cake" (stair step) concept could work in places
- Setback considerations to adjacent zones
- More continuous walkable retail on south portion of California Ave. SW
- Open space (parks, parking lots) are valuable
- California needs height tradeoffs, can be spread out more (no consensus on 40' vs. 55')

TABLE 2

Assets:

- Neighborhood character
- More restaurants in neighborhood core

Some folks have lived here for 40 years

Comments on proposal

- Why don't developers pay now?
- Current development not going far enough to require developers to provide affordable units
- How to reduce displacement?
- How will the city keep tabs on low rent units for 75 years?
- Some current rents in the area are already lower
- Once the sign is up, it's too late
- New families already able to move in/afford area
- Dollars for low-income housing from neighborhood should stay in the neighborhood
- What does affordable housing look like?
- Require more affordability: 30%? 40%? 50%?
- Zoning needs to account for slope
 - o Smaller scale zoning prescriptions, block to block
- City should use their own land first
- Folks at the City need to walk the neighborhoods first
- Don't need all commercial
- Parking and transportation:
 - Current development pushes parking down the hill
 - Require parking
 - o Improve bike infrastructure, parked cars a huge safety issue
 - o Parking structures for transit users
 - Pedestrian amenities need to improve
 - All new construction should provide parking
 - Density should trigger new parking
 - Add underground parking
 - o Parking requirements should be affordable, too
 - o Center new lane being used for deliveries, blocks up traffic
 - o The City doesn't know what impact of the light rail will be
- Infrastructure needs to come first
 - Thriftway patched onto the grid and affects the neighborhood
 - o Infrastructure doesn't support density
 - o Streets are narrow
- This is a neighborhood! Preserve the character
- How will density change the character of the neighborhood?
- Design:
 - Community design review
 - Design needs to better fit the character of the city
 - o Design decisions should benefit the character of the neighborhood
- Accessibility is a huge concern dropoff zone

- o How will the elderly access new amenities?
- Debris
- Outreach: How do we know our comments will count?
- Concentrate density where it already exists.

TABLE 3

- Densities of what's proposed need to be better illustrated
- Need better visualizations of the maps for specific neighborhoods
- Need an accounting of existing affordable units
- Increase densities along California
- Limited access to West Seattle "peninsula" creates an access problem.
- Infrastructure improvements should be commensurate with density increases.
- No one develops RSL in this neighborhood now.
- 8-unit townhouses more lucrative than smaller development
- Incentivize DADUs and ADUs
- As California has grown, more transit on Fauntleroy . . . still choked at the bridge. Access to West Seattle will become more congested.
- There is a need for more jobs closer to home. This would help relieve congestion getting to and from West Seattle. Few places for employment in West Seattle. Increase opportunities beyond ground-level retail. How do you incentivize?
- 11 years ago there was a more affordable neighborhood
- Need better design review
- HALA team needs to walk the neighborhood to "see" the topography and adjust zoning.
- Transit problem needs to be solved. It will continue to be a problem.
- Lack of parking everywhere now
- Adding RSL lessens inequality Add RSL capacity around the neighborhood.

Summary:

- Increase density along major arterials in current NC zones. Expand along California into LR3/LR2 zones.
- Fine-grain building modulation needed, topography changes with respect to views, scale, steep slopes
- Incentivize more commercial, retail, and commercial office space. Live and work.
- Proposed "4" level up-zoning in some single family zones is <u>"WAY" too much</u>. See topography.
- Concerns for future growth and impacts on improved/expanded transit without better access ("the Peninsula" of West Seattle is constrained)
- Need better visualization of the maps
- Hold HALA Walking Tours! Tours of officials with neighbors would allay a lot of fears and give
 officials better sense about making proposed up-zones.

TABLE 4

Assets:

- Like diversity of architecture we have
- Family feeling is a big asset; don't want huge influx not respecting the neighborhood
- Small, innovative businesses

Comments on proposal

- Somewhat concerned by the proposal, especially the possibility of a tunnel effect along California Ave. SW
- New developments now coming in are very sterile
- Cut back on new units and impose rent control?
- Concerned about new development's impact on small business, losing small businesses
- Huge concerns about parking accessibility. Discussion, but no consensus about putting parking underground.
- · Density and transit are maxed out, insufficient
- Concern about new development catering only to young people
- Concern about proposed height
- Why not build an affordable housing building?
- Currently you are not covering the affordable housing. Why not build concentrated affordable housing?
- Concern that the developers will just pay into the pot and not invest it in the neighborhood
- Concern that no affordable housing is being built in the neighborhood, no family housing being built
- Concern that we are giving up single family ownership vs. rental. Want to encourage ownership.
- Incentivize family homeownership
- Developers avoid design review concern there is no <u>real</u> input on the design review
- Consensus: All single family that is converting should trigger a design review more than 2 units
- Want to preserve the character neighborhood conservation districts
- Make more family units that encourage space
- Need trees, parking, more friendly and attractive buildings
- Lack of open space in the area
- More setbacks; restore deeper front setbacks
- Concern that LR1 setback is completely insufficient
- There should be community consensus before a single family unit gets changed to multi
- Loading space for senior livability
- Concern about lighting in the parking lot and keep that zoning
- Don't want height to go up
- Concerned about losing the existing affordable housing; can we get a 1:1 replacement for affordable housing?

TABLE 5

Assets:

- Single family, well maintained, occupied with diverse architecture, some have intrinsic art value
- People are vested in the neighborhood through working on their homes and paying taxes
- Like walkability to store, bus
- Views used to have
- Transportation becoming harder. Currently has some parking, but concerns about potential loss of that asset.
- Lawns, green space, good tree canopy, birds (concerns about potential loss of canopy)
- Sense of neighborhood, can see your neighbors at the store, positive feeling; neighbors know each other, look out for each other, say Hi, congeniality
- Crime not bad currently, but concerned about abandoned homes
- Neighborhood flavor, bungalows, uniqueness, holiday lights (concern about boxy new development)
- Diversity of housing types
- Convenience of the neighborhood

Comments on proposal

- Concern that the neighborhood is losing affordable housing, as well as economic and racial diversity
 it is turning into a neighborhood of only upper middle-class white people.
- Parking:
 - Can barely park now, concerned it will get worse
 - o Concerned six single family homes and 54 units without parking
 - Already people from California Ave. park here, from Thriftway, often park for days
 - o Concern about parking strong, strong, concern! Why can't developers have a requirement for off-street parking? City is supporting developers, not the neighborhood.
 - o Concerned that the City isn't listening to the neighborhood concerns about parking.
- Lots of apartments and multifamily housing already
- Lots being developed now in south part of neighborhood, uncontrolled
- People on one side of the street will lose their views
- Won't protect the rights and views of people who live here now
- Cost for developer payment is too low developers would pay 10% more not to have to build affordable units on site
- Concerned developers will pay into the fund only
- Would like to see where the affordable housing is now
- Some want more affordable housing here, others think it's not likely
- Where will the affordable housing be built?
- Along Beverage Place is low-income housing; if rezoning happens, the pockets of lower-income housing we have will be lost because owners will cash in
- In West Seattle generally growth in housing has been huge Delridge, Alaska, Junction; population has doubled or more since we moved in
- Neighborhood is pretty dense already

- Maybe density doesn't need to be in a long strip
- Neighborhood plan:
 - 20 years ago the City asked us to write a neighborhood plan on how many people could live here. We reached that maximum five years ago. We're now 13% above it.
 - o How are the changes going to fit the Neighborhood Plan with schools, parks, parking?
 - O City told us the 2035 Plan is now the plan this changes the plan we created. OK that density will happen, but the City is asking us to bless something that we had no part in. The Neighborhood Plan defined our neighborhood with zoning, boundaries, but we didn't get anything out of it except a small park.
 - Neighborhood Plan had light, trees.
- Left out Beach Drive all the rich people not in the plan, they live on the periphery. Why aren't they part of this? Why is the focus on the urban village?
- Why not allow a zoning change to anyone who wants to build affordable housing on their lot? That would spread it out.
- Changing NC40 to NC55 doesn't make sense because the development has already happened.
- Concern that runoff, which goes into the Sound and is bad for birds, will get worse with development.
- Problem with runoff and potholes because of the soils we have.
- Transportation concerns:
 - o Traffic into downtown Seattle already takes almost an hour
 - o How will people travel when we have a greater population?
 - Access is limited to hospitals, specialty medical providers
 - o Morning commute bus lane on bridge needs enforcement
 - Commuters park over our drive
 - o Special consideration because West Seattle has limited accessibility
 - o Fauntleroy Way is a race track poor livability and safety. Look at the bigger picture slow down Fauntleroy; people turn in and out of Trader Joe's incorrectly.
 - o Consider the Transportation Levy has a safety proposal
- Concerns about incentive levels and timing of proposal
 - This proposal is a sell-out to developers. City not listening to neighborhoods. There needs to be a significant conversation. Brought us a plan we didn't make.
 - Raise "M" level (developer requirements for affordable housing) or do deliberate public housing
 - o If not 50% affordable and 50% fee, how will it change what's already built?
 - Any way to pause development before this is decided? Consider a moratorium on development before this plan starts?
- Now construction has poor workmanship, "pull-down" houses
- Great bungalows are being torn down rapidly
- Will EIS address livability, parking?
- Design:
 - Neighborhood design guidelines?

- Make design rules to go to the community earlier, and have meetings at night so we can attend
- Make the NC areas a little higher
- Put apartments on top of Thriftway
- Fix up old apartments instead of building new ones
- Expand the park!
- Area on the west of neighborhood is a canyon, can't be developed
- People in SF areas concerned they'll be priced out of their homes by the zoning change because they can't afford the taxes and will have to move even though they don't want to
- Roosevelt experience on taxes isn't telling because they don't have million \$ views
- Freeze taxes for continuing residents rates can't exceed a certain amount of increase, tie to COLA. Excuse teachers, cops, fire fighters from larger taxes.
- Concern that the result will be to displace current residents, particularly retirees and seniors.
- Displacement is not necessarily by cost might be because of noise
- Concerns about the level of growth that has occurred in West Seattle.
- Outreach:
 - o Notification in door hanger didn't have this meeting on it
 - Want all the information at the same time about what HALA will do can't make good comments on this program without knowing everything

See Attachments for documents participants provided at the meeting: a written statement; a set of calculations about sunlight; and an article on urban buildings and access to sunlight.

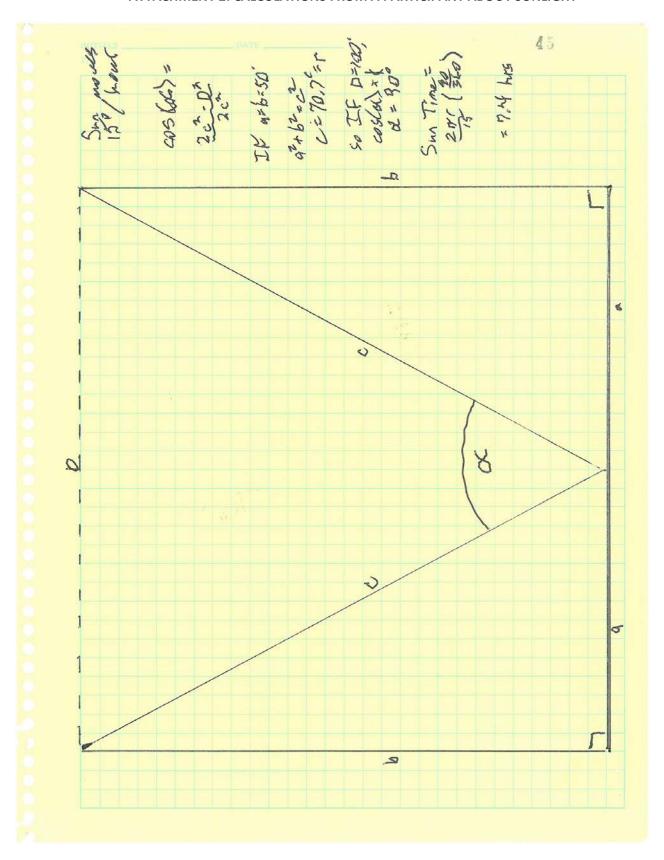
ATTACHMENT 1: STATEMENT FROM A PARTICIPANT

Thank you for letting me speak three minutes to argue for livability in Seattle. When the Morgan Junction Neighborhood Plan was written and approved by the City in the '90s, we used terms that were assumed to be understood. Two of those terms are livability and character. I propose that the City allow us to submit itemized definitions of these terms, and today I propose to define one aspect of livability.

One thing that livability, or life, on earth requires is light. Fruit trees and vegetable beds thrive on light. Some things can survive with less light, for example, most roses can survive with only six hours of direct sunlight. You may have noticed that roses (and many other flowers) don't grow in the window boxes along California. The businesses there have determined the types of flowers (and the distance up the lamp posts) that can survive in hanging baskets. Many articles have been written on the effect of light on human life. The general consensus is that light is 'good' for human life, business and recreation. Today I'm proposing we define the light requirements for livability in the Morgan Junction neighborhood.

Using simple trigonometry, we can define the amount of direct sunlight that reaches the sidewalk. I propose this as a livability criteria, since I (for one) no longer use my precious time off to walk up to Great Harvest bakery to sit at a bistro table, and enjoy a croissant and coffee. I no longer do this because I don't enjoy sitting in a dark, cold canyon. People want to sit in sunlight, so let's define how much sunlight we will require to reach the sidewalks. Let's use an example of a street+sidewalk that is 80 feet wide; that is, 80 feet between the building façade on the east side of the street to the building façade on the west side of the street. Using the Law of Cosines, we can show that for building heights of 40 feet, only six hours of direct sunlight reaches the CENTER of the street. This is why roses won't grow in the California businesses' window boxes. This will vary a bit, but let's use the Spring and/or Autumnal solstice as our measuring date. If Morgan Junction wants its livability to include not only human, but plant life, we need to define building heights to be no more than 40 feet. Many of the great neighborhood cities of Europe articulated this long ago. You'll find parks across the street from tall buildings to let in light. In other places you see 40 foot buildings on the east side, but 20 foot buildings on the west side of busy streets. This is to let in more late-afternoon light. Let's make Morgan Junction a place that discerning, urban folks want to live. Let's attract them with our businesses, character and livability. And let's define that livability to include light. I'm attaching the simple trigonometry to calculate how much sunlight reaches the street for any width street and height of opposing buildings. I'm also attaching several references to studies and articles about how better lit neighborhoods have lower crime rates, about how higher performing students live in more open neighborhoods, and a business report on how better lit neighborhoods attract wealthier and more diverse citizens. Thank you for your time.

ATTACHMENT 2: CALCULATIONS FROM A PARTICIPANT ABOUT SUNLIGHT



40' How many his does it take the Gun SY= 5,5 hr COB(X) = 2.2500 - 4998, 5, X= 89.9° = 7,4 hrs



re website at www.troweprice.com/access
r programs and other services, in "My Accounts"

1027 - 1002 - 0xxx 2(20:7) - 1000 - 3:02

ATTACHMENT 3: ARTICLE BROUGHT BY A PARTICIPANT

(untitled article by Emily Badger)

Emily Badger is a reporter for Wonkblog covering urban policy. She was previously a staff writer at The Atlantic Cities. Follow @emilymbadger

NEW YORK—"Billionaires' Row" is rising over midtown, a collection of glassy new pinnacles that promise the kind of condo views you can only get in Manhattan by building taller than everything else around.

With its <u>S95</u> million penthouse, 432 Park Avenue tops out just shy of 1,400 feet. It will remain the tallest residential building in the Western Hemisphere until the Nordstrom Tower — high-end shopping below, lavish apartments above — goes up <u>four blocks away</u>. Between them are a few <u>more audacious developments</u>, all part of a race for ever-taller towers to distinguish luxury living in an increasingly crowded city.

These new buildings — a product of developer ingenuity, architectural advance and international wealth — are changing more than the city's famous skyline, though. They will also transform New York far below, further darkening city streets and casting long shadows that will sweep across Central Park.

Together, these towers, and new additions in neighborhoods undergoing a building boom from San Francisco to Toronto to even low-rise D.C., have revived a long-simmering urban tension: between light and growth, between the benefits of city living and its cost in shadows.

For cities, shadows present both a technical challenge — one that can be modeled in 3-D and measured in "theoretical annual sunlight hours" lost — and an ethereal one. They change the feel of space and the value of property in ways that are hard to define. They're a stark reminder that the new growth needed in healthy cities can come at the expense of people already living there. And in some ways, shadows even turn light into another medium of inequality — a resource that can be bought by the wealthy, eclipsed from the poor.

"There are certain things you just can never go back from," said Renee Cafaro, a longtime resident of the neighborhood just south of Central Park and a member of the local community

board that's been studying the shadows there. "Laws can be changed. Even trees and traffic patterns can be changed. But once you have buildings of that caliber and that height and that massing, there's nothing we can do to save the park any more. Those shadows are there in perpetuity."

These tensions are rising with the scale of new development in many cities. As New York's skyscrapers set height records, Mayor Bill de Blasio has also proposed building 80,000 units of affordable housing over the next 10 years, much of which the city would find room for by rezoning land to build higher. Boston wants to find space for an additional 53,000 units.

Toronto in the last five years has built more than 67,000. All of which will inevitably mean more shadow — or even shadows cast upon shadow, creating places that are darker still.

"We support development. We think it's essential to the growth of the city. And I do think spectacular architecture and buildings are always exciting," says Margaret Newman, the executive director of the Municipal Art Society of New York, an urban design organization that has criticized the shadows creeping over Central Park. "Where does density belong? That's kind of the key question here that this has really provoked: Where is it OK to build these things?"

In New York, legislation was introduced in the city council this spring that would create a task force scrutinizing shadows on public parks. Lawmakers in Boston in the last few years have repeatedly proposed to ban new shadows on parkland, though they haven't succeeded. In San Francisco, the city has tightened guidance on a long-standing law regulating shadows in an era of increasingly contentious development fights. In Washington, where the conflict arises not from luxury skyscrapers but modest apartments and rowhouse pop-ups, the zoning commission voted in April on rules that would prohibit new shadows cast on neighboring solar panels.

The stakes are highest in Manhattan, a crammed borough with few of the back yards, balconies, or even clear window views that city dwellers count on for light that doesn't come from a fluorescent bulb.

"Parks have become the place where we go for this incredibly important experience of being in the sun," says Mark Levine, the New York councilman who introduced the bill that now awaits public hearings. "And if even parks lose the sunlight, then I think it diminishes the experience of living here."

Shades of inequality

New York City has been regulating shadows, if in an indirect way, for a century. When the 42-story Equitable Building was completed in Lower Manhattan in 1915 — rising from the sidewalk like the sheer face of a cliff for more than 500 feet — it cast a <u>seven-acre shadow over the neighborhood</u>.

The outcry it caused helped prompt the city's first comprehensive zoning law. Those rules didn't require buildings to cast shadows of a certain size, but they influenced the shape of skyscrapers in ways that controlled how they loomed over the city below. Tall buildings required "setbacks" at higher floors. This is why the Empire State Building grows narrower as it rises, why New York's skyline looks like a collection of wedding-cake toppers. This is also what creates space and light between buildings that might otherwise rise shoulder to shoulder.

In Central Park today, the new generation of luxury towers on Billionaires' Row reach higher than many in the city ever envisioned. The developers behind them merged multiple building lots or purchased the "air rights" above adjacent properties to legally build taller than what would historically be allowed.

As a result, multimillion-dollar apartments in the sky will darken parts of the park a mile away. Enjoyment of the park while actually in the park — a notably free activity in a high-cost city — will be dimmed a little to give millionaires and billionaires views of it from above.

That picture is an apt symbol for the city's widening inequality. But it's also an example of a much broader conflict: New York, and many cities desperate for new housing, must find space to put it.

"Right now, we're concentrating on trying to get affordable housing, and we're going to have to provide more density," says Mitchell Silver, a longtime planner who is now the parks commissioner in New York. "Do you reduce density in order to reduce shadow impacts on the park? Those are the values that start to bump up against each other."

San Francisco, long torn between high housing demand and a reluctance to build more of it, faces a similar dilemma.

"We're in the most extraordinarily gigantic building boom that we've seen," says Rachel Schuett, an environmental planner in San Francisco's planning department. "And a lot of the buildings that are going in are over 40 feet."

Since 1984, San Francisco has <u>had a "sunlight ordinance"</u> that requires the parks commission to review any proposed building taller than 40 feet that might shadow public parks. Last year, the planning department <u>wrote new guidance</u> on how developers must measure their shadow impacts with tremendous precision to comply with it.

First, they must hire shadow consultants to calculate how much theoretical sunlight, in square-foot-hours, a park would receive over a year if nothing were blocking it. The park is then modeled in 3-D with the buildings around it, taking into account how the sun moves over the course of the day and changes position over the year.

"This software," Schuett says, "is literally like a calculus model."

Animation shows potential shadows creeping across San Francisco Play Video0:22

This animated video models how potential new development could cast shadows in San Francisco over the course of a fall day if the city permitted taller buildings. (Fastcast)

The software recognizes the intricate geometry of sunshine: that the sun isn't as high at "high noon" in San Francisco as it is in Mexico City, that it casts shorter shadows when it's overhead and long, gloomy ones when it's low in the sky in winter.

In a model like this, it's possible then to insert a new building and measure how the shadow load changes, maybe subtracting another few percentage points of theoretical sunlight. This is the number the parks commission in San Francisco then considers, alongside diagrams of where those shadows would fall.

Earlier this year, the commission <u>rejected for the first time a new project</u>: a six-story condo that would have increased shadow in the park nearby by less than 1 percentage point. That small

number meant a loss of 42 minutes of sunshine on summer nights, on the basketball court and grassy knoll in the only multipurpose park in the neighborhood.

"I'm glad to live in San Francisco with all the noise and traffic and everything else involved in living in a dense urban environment, but I do want to be able to go the park and have there be sunlight to enjoy," Schuett says. "It's a human need to have sunlight. It's a quality-of-life issue that we're trying to preserve."

The analysis has become incredibly technical, Schuett adds, but at the end of the day it's still accompanied by more human concerns. How do children use public space? Is a park less enjoyable in partial light? Is that patch of public sun worth more than 20 new market-rate apartments in the city? How about 10 affordable ones?

The bright side of shadows

Away from public parks, the issue grows even murkier: What about sidewalks, schoolyards, back yards and private rooftops?

This last area has become increasingly testy in Washington, where costly rooftop <u>solar panels</u> have spread alongside pop-ups in many residential neighborhoods. This spring, the city's zoning commission voted to approve new rules on additions, including one that would prohibit them from shading nearby solar panels. If the rules are adopted, D.C. will join several cities that now have zoning laws protecting if not sunshine then at least "solar access."

Washington otherwise doesn't have quite the problems that exist in Manhattan — the city's height act ensures, for now, that a billionaire's condo won't lord over the Mall. But the height act also limits the ability of architects to sculpt their buildings with shadow in mind, to build up instead of out, creating slender shadows instead of squat ones.

Washington also illustrates that shadows, like buildings themselves, are relative. In a city full of light, where you barely have to crane your neck to glimpse the sky, a third-story pop-up feels like an affront. A new six-story apartment creates the pushback that a 60-story one might in New York.

"I think you have to be careful not to show a bias towards those who came first," says Washington architect Shalom Baranes. "The whole point of cities is to rejuvenate, to rebuild, to densify. And if you get overly concerned about shadows, then it's always the latest building that gets handicapped, because the existing building already casts shadows — it's the status quo."

In entirely different contexts — Southern cities, the Middle East — shade is an essential resource in its own right, and shadows can add a dimension to open space that can be quite pleasant. It appears in the reflections of trees that cast shivering patterns on the sidewalk, in the stark lines between light and dark that give drama to our photos of cities, in the shadows that turn ornate buildings into two-dimensional cityscapes.

Baranes argues that new buildings also add something to a city that's greater than what they take away. Central Park is an extraordinary place as much for its vast green space as its uniquely urban setting. The park is an outdoor room, surrounded on four sides by glass and steel, 19th century apartments and Beaux-Arts buildings.

"To me, as an architect, that's much more important than losing some sun — the contribution of the building to creating that outdoor room," says Baranes, who makes the same case for a proposed apartment he's designed across the street in D.C. from Meridian Hill Park. "I don't think any of our squares and circles downtown would be nearly as wonderful if they didn't have any buildings around them."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/05/04/in-the-shadows-of-booming-cities-a-tension-between-sunlight-and-prosperity/?utm_term=.4fa50441b3c1