



Proposed Up-zone Attacks NSHD, All Tacoma Residential Zones

From the NSHD, Inc. Board of Directors

The Tacoma Planning Department has proposed to up-zone all single-family residential zoning in Tacoma, including the category Historic Mixed-Residential Special Review District (HMR-SRD) which covers our North Slope Historic District. This across-the-board up-zone is imbedded in a proposed Affordable Housing Pilot Program, and has three elements that negatively affect our historic district:

- ◆ Allow more **conversions** of single-family homes to duplexes and triplexes. This flies in the face of the intent of our District to protect the remaining historic single-family homes and to encourage the restoration of cut-up historic homes to their original state. Duplexes and triplexes destroy historic interiors and lead to requests for exterior changes, like exterior staircases. This denigrates our District and, since these apartments will rent at market rate, does nothing for affordability.
- ◆ Allow even smaller **sub-divisions** of existing lots (from 4500 sf to 3500 sf) to allow more infill; i.e. those tall, narrow contemporary houses wedged between older ones. While our district has many small lots, the historic houses on those lots are also small and the quality of construction and architectural detail is far superior to the usual infill houses. Allowing oversized, low-quality houses on small lots will degrade the historic quality of our neighborhood and again do nothing for affordability.
- ◆ Allow **two-story garage apartments**, known as detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs), on lots as small as 5000 sf. with only 5 ft. setbacks. That's like having an entire new house built right next to your backyard. While DADUs may be appropriate on some larger lots where their height and size don't negatively impact adjacent backyards, this proposal allows too large a building on too small a lot.



None of these proposals directly address affordability; instead they provide a goldmine for developers who can now build more in already-desirable neighborhoods.

Our NSHD is already doing far more for density and affordability than most of the city's residential neighborhoods. Our 228 acres has only 724

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August Meeting to be on Safety

Keeping Our Neighborhood Safe

By Jarett Bailey, Safety Committee Chair

Some of you may have heard various comments about crime in our neighborhood. We've all done a pretty good job of keeping each other informed of the incidents through multiple networking avenues and discussions with our neighbors. But there is more we can do to keep our homes and neighborhood safer.

So, please join the NSHD, Inc. Board of Directors at Immanuel Presbyterian Church on August 20th at 7 pm. We will have Wanda Rochelle, from the Safe Streets organization, and our Community Liaison Officer, Kelly Custis, offering us instruction, hand-outs, and suggestions to

make our homes and our property more secure.

Included will be information about how to set up a Neighborhood Watch on your block. We have several Neighborhood Watch programs in NSHD, but we need more so it is easier for us all to exchange information.

Come and find out some things you might want to do to improve safety at your house!

Remember: August 20th, 7 pm for meeting, Social Time at 6:30

Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 901 N. J. St., Basement Room, Entrance on N. 9th. Park in the lot, or on the street.

CITY WANTS MORE DENSITY IN ALL TACOMA NEIGHBORHOODS

(Continued from page 1)

remaining single-family parcels, but we provide over 1400 units of multi-family housing in both large apartment buildings as well as 66 duplexes, 24 triplexes, and 70 fourplexes. Additionally, we host a number of special needs housing: 85 subsidized, low-income units, an assisted-living group home for 63, and an AIDS hospice, among others.

Our density in the District, measured in housing units per acre, is currently **17.4 units/acre**. Most of Tacoma's residential neighborhoods are zoned R-2 and have a maximum density of **only 8 units/acre** while most have a current, actual density of about 4 units/acre.

The North Slope is doing its part for both density and meeting the city's special needs. In return, the city needs to protect and enhance what remains of one of the city's first streetcar suburbs and **oppose this "one size fits all" zoning** that the Planning Dept. has proposed. Our neighborhood needs the protection of the Historic District AND its HMR-SRD zoning.

The North Slope Historic, Inc. District Board of Directors opposes any changes to HMR-SRD, and asks for help from all of you to accomplish this. Please read the article "NSHD ZONING IS IN DANGER" to find out how to help.

NSHD Zoning is in Danger!



Your help is **urgently needed** to tell the Tacoma Planning Commission that its proposed city-wide changes to zoning will **endanger NSHD's historic buildings** and neighborhood. The planned changes are really an up-zone of all residential zoning categories, meant to increase density. These changes would impact our zone, called HMR-SRD, which was designed especially to protect our historic structures.

Please join the NSHD, Inc. Board in its effort to avoid damage to our historic zoning category. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3, 4.

1. Read: the article on Page 1 of this issue about the Tacoma Planning Department's plan for increasing residential density.

While reading, keep in mind that NSHD's density is already twice the target density of 8 units/acre that is the Planners' goal. **Our density is 17.4 units/acre.**

2. Write: a comment, long or short, asking the Planning Commission for **no changes** to HMR-SRD because:

- ◆ converting **more** single-family houses to duplexes and triplexes creates risk for our historic structures' architectural integrity.
- ◆ allowing short-platting of large lots into two small lots, to build large houses interferes with the historic development pattern of the neighborhood.
- ◆ permitting the proposed large detached accessory dwelling units (DADU), would reduce yards and privacy on our lots that are historically small.
- ◆ more of the above would endanger our ability to **protect** and **preserve** the Historic District's unique environment and historic structures.

Send to: City Planner *Lihuang Wung*, lwung@ci.tacoma.wa.us or

Mail to: Planning Commission, 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, WA 98402

3. Sign: a petition and get others to sign it, too, urging the Planning Commission to not change the HMR-SRD zoning that covers NSHD. Petitions are available from *Julie Turner*: 253-383-2329: juliejayturner@gmail.com Return to: 817 N. J. St.

4. Attend the hearing on **August 19th** at 5:00 pm, in City Council Chamber, first floor of City Hall, (747 Market St.) Enter on Market St. and take the stairs or elevator down one floor. Or, use St. Helens St. and go in on the first floor.

You do not have to speak, but you may - **just be there!** NSHD residents will be chosen to speak to the Commission on the points outlined in the petition. You will be asked to stand to show support.

The Board of Directors of NSHD, Inc. appreciates your help.

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND ITS PIPE ORGAN

By Ruth Tweeten

History – Christ Episcopal Church Parish was born in 1889, the same year Washington achieved statehood, and its history is deeply connected to the history of Tacoma. The church began with St. Luke’s Episcopal, a downtown Tacoma congregation that had been organized in the late 1870’s. As St. Luke’s began to outgrow its downtown space, the new parish was formed on the corner of North 3rd and North K. The first service was held in December 1889 in the gothic-style church that cost \$8,000 and held 300 people.



In the late 1960s, authorities declared the old church building structurally unsafe. This made way for bold Christ Church parishioners to build a new, dramatically different church structure. Designed by renowned *Brutalist* architect Paul Thiry, the new sanctuary was completed and dedicated in 1969. It stands in sharp contrast to the traditional building that preceded it.

The unanticipated resonant acoustics enhanced the new space, and in recent years numerous choral groups and organists have chosen to make recordings in Christ Church sanctuary, using the internationally acclaimed Brombaugh pipe organ (1979) or the Steinway grand piano (Hamburg, Germany, 1928).

Brombaugh Pipe Organ – Built in 1979 by John Brombaugh & Associates of Eugene, Oregon, the organ at Christ Church is designed after 17th and 18th Century models from Europe’s Golden Age of Organ Building. The case, made of white oak and western cedar, is a modern adaptation of the famed 1483 organ in Bologna, Italy. The keyboards are made from cow bone and ebony and the lead pipes were hammered in keeping with historical practice. Because of its historical *mechanical* action, electricity is needed only for a small blower and light bulbs illuminating the music desk.

In addition to Sunday services (10:30 a.m.), when the organ is played by Mark Brombaugh, brother of the builder, **the organ can be heard at noonday recitals (12:10-12:50 p.m.) each third Friday of the month.**



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KEEP OUR “ARCHITECTURAL BONES” INTACT

By Julie Turner

In the early summer of 1993, a young man living in the 900 block of North J St. distributed a flyer titled, “**We Should Care About This!**” He was referring to the recent demolition of a small “homesteader” house in his block to build a multi-plex. He said we should all *do something* about demolition of these old houses before we lost them all!



Consequently, at the first National Night Out in our neighborhood that August, a group of about 30 North J. St. residents met for a block party and talked about demolition and how J. St. could avoid it. They decided something should be done and selected two tactics to consider: ask for a zoning change, and about forming an historic district.

Ah! An awakening of the grass roots of a neglected neighborhood! Those roots began to stir and grow, as neighbors decided on a do-it-yourself project – save the neighborhood. And, did they learn a lot in the next few years! After a lot of hard work.

Roger Johnson met with the Historic Preservation Officer of Tacoma, and Julie Turner talked with Tacoma’s Planning Department. Roger got encouragement and Julie got turned down flat about a zoning change.

So, a group of 15 North J. St. homeowners met

in November at the Turner home, and Historic Preservation Officer Valerie Sivinski said:

“Bring me the names of at least **50% of property owners** on J. St. who say they are interested in establishing an historic district. If you can do that, the City will write an ordinance to establish a District on your street.”

Over the next two years, neighbors discovered that getting 50% of property owners to agree to a District was not hard; learning what was in an architectural historic district, and accepting the limitations, was more challenging. Many wanted more than the Landmark Commission’s mandate would allow – no constraints on paint color, landscaping, trees, inside work would be included. Exterior structure was the focus.

Owners would need to “ask before you hammer” to assure changes would not alter the historic **architectural bones** of the building. Changes needed approval, in other words.

Finally, after Ms. Sivinski guided the group through three different City hearings, neighbors sat in the City Council Chambers in August of 1995 to hear the ordinance pass the City Council unanimously. The “*North Slope Historic Special Review District*,” from North Steele to North 3rd St. along North J Street, became a reality.

The group of neighbors had become “community activists,” who took the future of their neighborhood into their own hands, made the decision to accept oversight by the Landmarks Commission, and proceeded, over the next 5 years, to establish one of the largest residential Historic Districts in the United States.

And, all of it was a **grass-roots effort**. And, it still is, because it takes vigilance to keep what we have, and effort to make our neighborhood better each month, every year.

Keep those grass roots watered and growing!
Keep our Historic District, *historic!*

News Around the NSHD

Please Attend Planning Commission Hearing on Zoning

Tacoma's Planning Department is proposing a re-do of all residential zoning to increase various kinds of in-fill. The Board of NSHD, Inc opposes the proposed changes to our zone, HMR-SRD because they would endanger our remaining historic structures in NSHD.

Planning Commissioners will decide on the various pieces of the Planning Department's proposal to increase residential density after public input via **written comments** and **testimony** at a public hearing. We need a **crowd** at the hearing, to just stand when asked to show support of our speakers. Please come and help out by your presence.

Planning Commission Hearing, Aug. 19th, 5 pm, City Council Chambers, 747 Market. Park on Market, enter, go down to First Floor; or park on St. Helens St., and go in on the First Floor. Board members will greet you in the hall, and point you to the room. Sign in and sit down – look for some of your NSHD neighbors, and stand when asked. Read the articles in this issue for more information.

Questions? Call Julie Turner, 253-383-2329; read articles in this issue re zoning.

Living Hope Care Center Appeals Denial of Permit Changes

On July 13th, 2015, the owners of Living Hope Care Center (LHCC) at 402 N. J. St., a group home for up to 58 residents, **appealed the denial** of their requested changes to the permit allowing the facility to operate in our zoning category. Now, the City Hearing Examiner, will review the documents, talk with attorneys for the facility and the City, and, if warranted, perhaps hold a public hearing concerning the issues.

LHCC asks to eliminate or change the requirements to **not** house anyone who is currently monitored by Department of Corrections, or who has a violent felony on record. The Board of NSHD, Inc. opposes the elimination of these provisions in the permit as a matter of neighborhood safety and livability.

Land Use Density Issue Included in the Comp Plan Update for 2015

NSHD's request to make the charts in the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Density Section match our zoning code's (HMR-SRD) single-family designation, is included in this year's update of the Plan. Thanks to Marshall McClintock for taking care of this overlooked issue important to our zoning in NSHD.

City Now Enforcing Parking Laws In Residential Neighborhoods

The City of Tacoma is enforcing parking regulations in residential areas. Avoid warnings and tickets by parking according to the parking regulations. Be forewarned! Park legally.

If you have a question about parking regulations, call 311 and follow the prompts. Or, use the website: <https://www.cityoftacoma.org/tacomafirst311>, press the "Tacoma First 311 Ask A Question" icon, press "Ask a Question," and post your question.

The Trolley Times is a quarterly publication of the North Slope Historic District, Inc., Tacoma, Washington

Editor, Communications Committee Chair, Julie Turner: juliejayturner@gmail.com

For more information about NSHD, Inc. and a list of the Board of Directors, consult our website: tacomanorthslope.org

Contact Information may be found at tacomanorthslope.org/contact.php



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Announcements

Program Meeting, Aug. 20th at 7 pm, Social time at 6:30. Immanuel Presbyterian Church, North 9th and North J. Sts. Enter on North 9th. Subject: Home and Neighborhood Safety

Planning Commission Hearing, Aug. 19th, 5pm, City Hall, 747 Market St. City Council Chambers. See articles in this newsletter for details. Help save historic structures in NSHD.

New CLO Officer: Kelly Custis Phone: 591-5290 Email: kcustis@cityoftacoma.org



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