

CENTRAL NORTHEAST NEIGHBORS, INC.

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August 14, 2019

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Council,

The Central Northeast Neighbors Coalition wishes to express our concerns regarding the proposed changes to City Code Title 3.96. We feel that the proposed changes are flawed both in substance and in the process in which they were derived.

We respectfully recommend that the City Council postpone its vote on the proposed changes to City Code Title 3.96 until at least 60 days after the City Council has received the final revision of the 3.96 Committee's proposed draft code.

City Code Title 3.96 is the empowering language for Portland's neighborhood system and any proposed modifications deserve the utmost attention and scrutiny from all Portlanders. From the beginning this endeavor has been underwhelming, from sudden or missing public notices to the lack of public input to the composition of the 25-member committee charged with rewriting the Code.

The current process is a stark departure from previous efforts. For example, in 2005, the last time the Code was revised, the process included 27 public meetings and three public workshops. It also included a three-month public comment period following the release of the committee's final recommendation.

It is vital that the current review process include opportunities for all communities to reflect on all outcomes possible under the proposed language, provide feedback, and for Council to have the time to review community concerns.

Further, we, as a Board representing all the neighborhoods in our Coalition, cannot support the most recent proposed changes to the Code.

Beyond the vague language that is susceptible to varying interpretations, we feel that the latest revision instills in the Director too much authority and discretion with the recognition of civic organizations.

We believe that neighborhood associations and coalitions need to work to become more diverse and inclusive and need to tear down any and all perceived or legitimate barriers to participation. We welcome and look forward to the opportunity to work with all City departments and civic partners to make this a reality.

Sincerely,



Douglas Fasching
President, Central Northeast Neighbors