

S·M·I·L·E

SELLWOOD MORELAND IMPROVEMENT LEAGUE
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July 18, 2018

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
Neighborhood Contact Testimony
1900 SW 4th Ave, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Commissioners:

SMILE strongly feels that one of the few ways it can impact neighborhood development is through the required Neighborhood Contact Meeting requirement. We have had 21 contact meetings since 2015 and many of them have resulted in improved project designs that will positively impact our community for years to come. Such livability benefits as improved setbacks and landscaping, creating better and safer traffic flows, and modifying construction materials and design to better complement our neighborhood's historical architectural quality have resulted from these meetings.

The elimination of these required collaborative planning meetings for proposed developments of less than 25,000 square feet (sf) is a serious mistake that will negatively affect the livability of our community for years to come. Since 2015, only 9 projects larger than 25,000 sf have been issued permits in our neighborhood (details were separately provided to the Project).

We request that the development threshold to require neighborhood contact meetings be set at 10,000 square feet. We recognize that this may be a low threshold for zones that allow greater density than found in our neighborhood; setting different thresholds for different zones would be a logical and simple approach.

Contact meetings are particularly relevant in the design (d) overlay zone which is common in our neighborhood. *"The Design Overlay Zone promotes the conservation, enhancement, and continued vitality of areas of the City with special scenic, architectural, or cultural value"* (city code 33.420.010). We believe that projects in a design overlay zone especially need our requested lower threshold for a meeting (10,000 sf). While signs effectively provide information about a project they do not provide an opportunity to improve project design.

Projects that utilize size bonuses or size adjustments will be larger than commonly found in that zone, so they should notify with a sign. Signs are the most effective way of conveying information to project neighbors.

Additional information that should be provided on a sign are date of posting, 35-day timeline, and the number of affordable units.

This testimony was approved by the SMILE Board of Directors July 18, 2018. If you have any questions, please contact David Schoellhamer, Chair of the SMILE Land Use Committee, at chair.landuse.smile@gmail.com. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Leib". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "L".

Joel Leib
President, Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League