

# Neighborhoods and District Framework Testimony

April 1, 2019

I would like to continue to make a point that the aspirations in the Westside Area Concept Plan are being degraded by pre-development actions taken today by some landowners in advance of the incremental and integrated growth that we expect from new neighborhoods on the Westside.

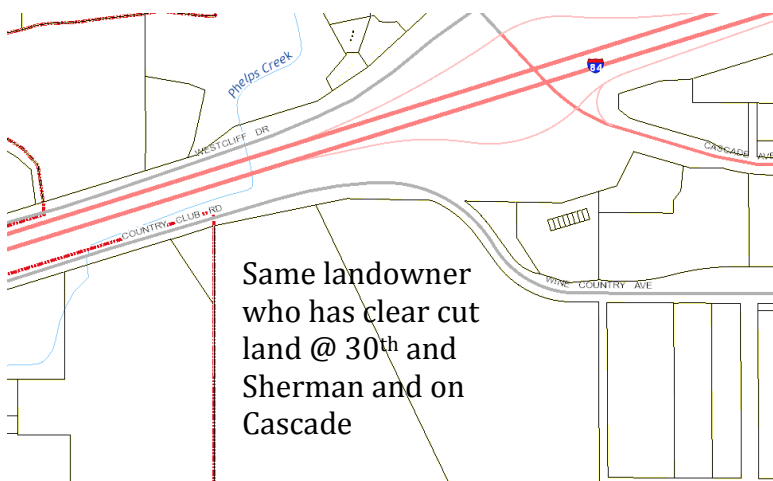
On page 15, the Neighborhood Designs Framework diagrams in Figure 6 through Figure 8 show how “development could be guided or shaped to implement the vision and guiding principles.” However, since property owners can clear property in advance of filing plans for building, we lack effective ways to keep some of the opportunities listed here, including:

- Tree groves retained and integrated into site design
- Mature trees preserved as part of site design
- Henderson Creek as a connecting open space



Any updates to this plan should acknowledge the loss of trees from the 8-acre site at Sherman and 30<sup>th</sup>, where Figure 7 envisioned the 3-acre park. The same landowner has substantial property in the West Cascade Avenue and Country Club Road District. Most of the trees on the slopes running down to Cascade have been

removed in those sections of land being clearcut. And there are bulldozers and land clearing activities along Wine Country Avenue as well. Our current entry into town on Cascade Avenue has the bitter irony of our “Tree City” sign showcased in front of a bulldozed hill.



The concept plan often refers to the opportunities provided by parcels being under “single” or “large” ownership. We should recognize that this also presents risks – in particular, the risk that a landowner who is not interested in preserving trees, ground cover towards Henderson Creek, or other natural features, will strip down the land in order to be able to sell it or develop it in

advance of housing going up and therefore circumventing design ideas from this plan or code ideas about tree preservation.

The regulations alluded to on page 22 will need to be comprehensive and well integrated as developments appear in phases. On page 23 of the example plan, for instance, the photograph shows the High Point neighborhood in Seattle. This neighborhood was created by the Seattle Housing Authority on 120 acres, with 1600 units of mixed income housing and developed from 2000 to 2010, and was a redevelopment of an area done by replacing 716 low-income housing units with others. Our HR development is unlikely to proceed at the same pace and in the same integrated way. The piecemeal clearance occurring on the Westside now on some of the larger pieces of property illustrates what is happening today.

Additional photographs follow:



Entering the "Gateway" to Hood River, a "Tree City"



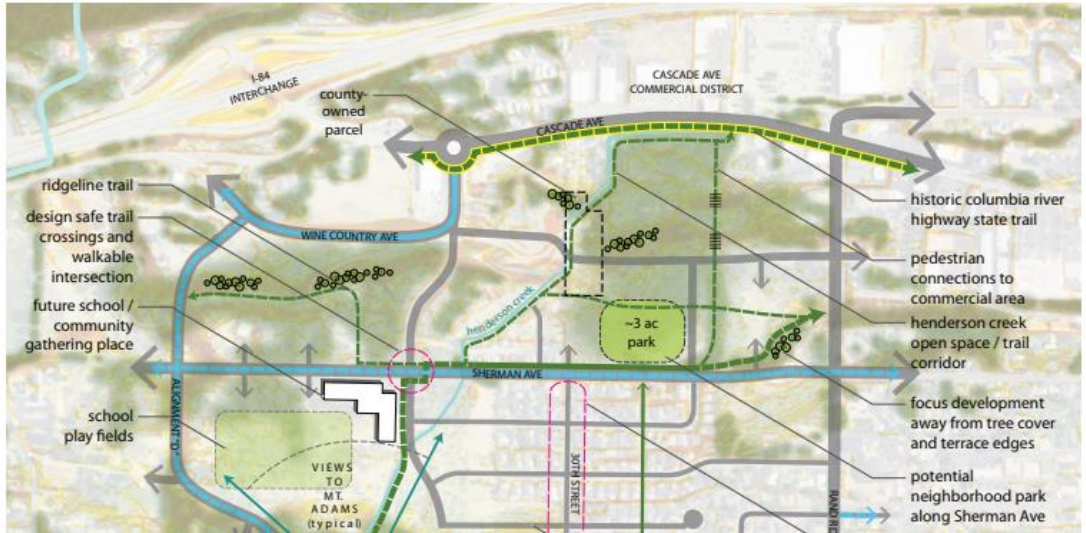
Lovely views towards Mt Adams from the former potential park site near 30<sup>th</sup> and Sherman. It's easier to see now that all the tree canopy is gone. Less certain is now the clearance will affect runoff into Henderson Creek.



More views from the potential park area describes in the Westside Area Concept Plan, Neighborhood Forms, page 18. The Planning Commission should bear witness in its report to the City Council about the loss of potential parkland to development, and the fact that the aspirational nature of the WACP is undercut (pun intended) by the development by some landowners who remove habitat and trees in

advance of filing development plans. No protection from ordinance or from purchasing the land for future use exists as of April 2019.

Neighborhood Design Framework Diagram  
Middle Terrace Neighborhood



LEGEND