



St. Charles Borromeo Parish

Dear Commissioners of Planning and Sustainability

As the Pastoral Associate at St. Charles Catholic Church, located in the Cully neighborhood, it is my privilege to be the church liaison on issues of social justice. St. Charles supports the zoning proposal without amendments #5 #6 #7. We value the benefits that mobile home parks bring to our neighborhood and understand the detrimental effect that a park closure would have on the neighborhood/community. This is why our parish has actively been involved in preserving our neighborhood MHPs for the last 3 years.

St. Charles in partnership with Living Cully and other allies built a successful campaign to save the Oak Leaf mobile home park from development 2 years ago. City (financial) intervention was needed because the detrimental ripple effects of a mass displacement was a cost the city could not afford. We are thankful to the Council for taking the bold and courageous action that was called for. This model, however, is not a sustainable option when it comes to the 58 mobile home parks throughout the city. The zoning proposal before the commission moves our city in the right direction towards an effective solution in preserving an affordable housing option serving thousands of Portland families, including those who do not/will not qualify for alternative affordable options. In working class such as Cully, closures have an effect on everything from the way in which Churches administer resources effectively to low income residents, to the overall security and wellbeing of neighborhood schools and small businesses. The closure of a mobile home park would result in a huge tear in the relational fabric that keeps communities like ours safe and functioning. Further, it would mean the loss of the only affordable housing option for those who do not qualify for the alternatives. Those who are most vulnerable.

My family and I moved into a Habitat for Humanity home on 64th and Killingsworth (right across from the Arbor trailer park) 2 years ago. Since then, I have come to realize a few things.

- 1.) The local elementary school, which is over 53% Hispanic and 15% African American, would lose 20% of its student enrolment. For Schools already struggling to survive this sort of lose would be detrimental and would likely force consolidation of facilities, meaning loss of jobs and increased class size in already underserved neighborhoods comprised of underserved people.
- 2.) Many families living across the street from my family would not qualify for alternate affordable housing options such as a CDCs or Habitat for humanity. For several reasons, including but not limited to credit, immigration documentation, and ability to access and participate in the long processes involved in receiving affordable housing, many of these families would be forced into homelessness or (if they were lucky enough to have the resources) to relocate to another city.
- 3.) Institutions like St. Charles's St. Vincent de Paul provide food and utility and rental assistance to thousands in the neighborhood. If the Cully neighborhood was to experience a large park closure, our SVDP would lose volunteers and financial donors (currently living in the parks), as well as the ability to provide assistance to those forced to live on the streets or outside of the parish bounds. The needs will be increased but simply transported to areas not prepared to accommodate these needs.
- 4.) The fundamentals of a mobile home park provide a potential (more than any neighborhood or apartment I have witnessed) for a communal distribution of social welfare that would be extremely costly for the public or non-profit to replicate. The multi-generational, relational fabrics imbedded in these parks are priceless to the safety and wellbeing of the entire community. Loss of this free community-supplied social well-fare would

result in an increased burden on our police departments, public social service agencies, non-profits, gang prevention programs, and schools.

St. Charles Catholic Church urges the commission to support the Manufactured Dwelling Parks zoning proposal without amendments that would offer more easily accessible avenues to development of current MHPs, whether or not they are identified as “affordable” or market rate.

Blessings and Solidarity
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St. Charles Catholic Church
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