

**RE: Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 PLUZ Committee meeting agenda item "U District Planning Process: Community Engagement".**

September 8, 2016

Dear Councilmember Johnson and members of the PLUZ committee,

**Correctly gauging community support for the U District Rezone**

Livable U District is at a loss to understand how OPCD came up with figures alleging 35% "outright support" and 30% qualified support for the U District Rezone proposal. Livable U District's observation, shared by hundreds of residents and small business owners in the U District, is that there is community-wide opposition to the rezone proposal, and to OPCD's characterization of adequate incorporation of public input.

In the "Compilation of Public Comments (August 2016)"<sup>1</sup> the OPCD has made it nearly impossible to identify who submitted which comments and when, because it deliberately omitted letterhead information and signature lines from its posted compilation, rendering all of the comments anonymous.

We urge you to ask these questions and ask OPCD to produce additional information.

- How did OPCD arrive at their claimed levels of community support/non-support?
  - Were letters submitted by multi-member organizations given the same weight as comments submitted by one individual?
  - Did OPCD distinguish and balance comments from persons or groups closely connected to the U District Rezone area versus comments submitted from outside the area?
- What are the differences between "Outright Support", "Qualified Support" and "Fundamentally Opposed"?
  - Provide three representative samples of comments counted in each category.
- OPCD should submit to council members and for public review a revised compilation of comments, identifying who or what organization submitted each comment, and the date and manner received. (E-mail, letter, comment card, etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/p2479844.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2479844.pdf)

Furthermore, the “stakeholders” invited to sit at your conference table and brief you on Friday morning are all members of the University District Partnership Board of Directors. None are residents of the U District – and even if there were, we suspect they’d be hand selected upzone proponents. Furthermore, we would like to emphasize that The U District Partnership does not represent all residents of the U District, even though it claims to do so.

It is disturbing that the U District Partnership is violating the spirit and letter of the U District BIA ordinance by taking a position on the merits of the proposed upzone and advocating for certain changes in the ordinance. It does not pass the smell test to contend that the UDP's lobbying activities are funded solely from sources outside those received from BIA assessments. That U District BIA businesses who oppose the UDP's lobbying position on the upzone are forced to pay for lobbying against their interests is particularly galling.

Attached are Livable U District's written comments to OPCD on the draft zoning ordinance, along with Livable U District's position statement. Livable U District is not opposed to growth. But growth must pay for growth, and First Things must come First.

Sincerely,

Nancy Bocek and Shirley Nixon

Representing Livable U District

*Livable U District (LUD) is a true grass roots ad hoc coalition of University District renters, homeowners, small businesses, organizations and their supporters committed to preserving both the livability and affordability of Seattle's University District. Scores of individuals and organizations have thus far endorsed LUD's position statement found at [livableudistrict.com](http://livableudistrict.com).*