

Good evening. My name is Meg Staines. I am a 20 year resident of Lanier Heights and I am here this evening to urge you to support rezoning our neighborhood to R-4. Things are completely out of control in Lanier Heights. Developers are robbing us of our quality of life. The people who designed and built the Lanier Heights neighborhood placed a value on aesthetics, they knew right from wrong, they appreciated architecture, and they designed and built houses where families would have what they need to live a pleasant life, including lovely back yards. Developers today see nothing but square footage. They rob us of our back yards, our views, our light, our air, our green space, the harmony of long rows of back yards. Some neighbors now have to live with 50-foot tall walls along their back yards. **What about our property rights?**

For us, Lanier Heights is not just square footage.

I spent my life savings to buy an extremely deteriorated rowhouse, sold “as-is” for \$220,000, with lots of problems. I have spent the past 19 years fixing those problems. Well, that all came crashing down on me last spring when my next door neighbors sold their house to the developers, who plan to demolish the house and build a 6-unit monstrosity that stretches all the way to the alley. When he is finished, and the development on Columbia Rd is finished, my back yard and parking area will be surrounded on three sides with 50-foot walls. I will lose sunlight, the view of the sky, air, and the enjoyment of my back yard.

My neighbors on the other side of 1766 Lanier, are the loveliest people you could ever want to know. They have lived at 1764 Lanier for 31 years, and raised 13 children there. They are 83 and 85 years old, and every day, they are in their back yard tending to trees, and vegetables, and fruit trees, and other plants. They are always working on something. The 50-foot tall monstrosity will also block all sunlight to their yard. **What about their property**

rights?

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This is not just about rowhouse owners. The residents of the existing apartment building adjacent to my yard will also be robbed of their quality of life as they used to have a view from their balconies of seven lovely rowhome back yards. Soon, they will look at a 50-foot wall (70 feet long). **What about their quality of life?**

The ever-tightening parking situation, loss of green space, and increased noise also affects everybody., Our alleys are now an obstacle course of garbage cans permanently stored IN the alley because there is no place to put them away.

I do not know how the neighboring developer will be able to underpin the foundation enough to support a 50-foot building without destroying my foundation and the party wall. My roof will be piled with snow drifts. My house may literally get destroyed in this process – such has happened in the neighborhood just a few months ago.

Lastly, this process has been going on for a really long time. After years of discussions with neighbors, Zoning, Planning, and the ANC, the original proposal was submitted to the ANC in October 2014. The neighborhood turned out overwhelmingly in favor of R-4 and the ANC did so unanimously.

The decision is now before you, Commissioners. I hope you will vote for R-4 and help Lanier Heights survive as a diverse mix of apartments, condos and family suitable housing.

Thank you.