

## **JWN PlanJam Workshop #1**

November 22, 2008

Participant input recap

This recap lists the input from participants at the JWN PlanJam Workshop #1 held November 22, 2008. Nineteen JWN members participated in the three-hour workshop. Information on the workshop is available at [jwneugene.org/infillstds](http://jwneugene.org/infillstds).

For each segment of the workshop, the coordinators presented information on the topic, and participants received a handout summarizing prior work on that topic (e.g., a list of positive neighborhood characteristics). Participants were then encouraged to ask questions, identify additional items and provide comments. Participants were also provided a printed form on which they could list additional items and comments.

Please note the following recap reflects opinions of individual JWN members and does not necessarily represent opinions or positions held by other participants or other members of JWN. The workshop did not attempt to rate or prioritize participants' input because this workshop was only one of a number of ways in which JWN members have expressed opinions on the topics.

The workshop participants' input will be used along with other sources to develop findings that will provide the foundation for developing appropriate infill compatibility standards. The PlanJam Workshop #2 in January 2009 will provide JWN members the opportunity to work on specific proposals for infill standards.

### **Assessing Positive Neighborhood Character**

<b>Input</b>
“Stay-put-ed-ness”
Substantial owner-occupied
Middle-class
Favorable to family living
Availability of rentals
Street orientation & engagement
Appropriate front-yard setback ‘semi-public zone’
Families with kids
Safe and hospitable; built and natural environment along streets, especially walking and biking routes
Solar access
Available on-street parking for guests
Sloped roofs
Alley access to backyards
Diversity and balance of tenure
Unimproved alleys
Eclectic residents
People work at home
Diverse economic means
Open to change

Dynamic
Accessible to young and families
Walkable to resources and activities
Parking strips
Street is used for parking
Undeveloped land
Open space pockets, especially along Amazon canal
“Shared” private open space
The Tate lacks desired community engagement
Students [?]
Tenure is changing
Fourplex on Broadway alley is managed by adjacent property owner.
Parks and open space: Monroe, Charnel Mulligan, Fairgrounds
Decisions now will have a major impact on the future
Projection: how to attract families with kids

### **Assessing Current and Potential Negative Impacts from Incompatible Infill**

<b>Input</b>
Snout-noised houses are incompatible (excessive curb cuts and concrete)
Good list already
Consider density limits per block
Developer should be required to improve alley
“Affordable housing” strategy needs more careful examination, e.g. affordable owner-occupied housing
Wise use of alleys can help with safety and walkability
Exercise care in using the term “architectural style”
What causes a person to leave the neighborhood?
It’s OK to address property values, socioeconomic profile
Consider standards that have ”contextual” or cumulative” impact
Address requirements of aging residents vs. retirement communities (e.g.. intentional communities)
What about design review?
Owner nearby should be considered

### **Identifying Areas for which Infill Standards Should be Considered**

<b>Input</b>
No flag lots
Additional units should be no higher than existing ;take context into account
Excessive high walls is a top priority
Maintain pattern of lot configuration
Roll back maximum density
Development of multiple lots should not be precluded
“Parking” category
Under “objectives” – include biking & walking “friendly”

### **Planning Next Steps in the JWN Process**

<b>Input</b>
Find out why recent new neighbors moved here
Find out what would make them consider moving or drive them out of the neighborhood
What would make the JWN even better?
Open-ended questions would result in more interesting results
First survey could be a small set of broad questions, categorize those first responses, then the second survey would be a simple list.
A four-page response would be a turn-off. Use a three-questions first approach, then another, more detailed survey
What about a door-to-door survey?

#### **Additional issues raised by participants:**

- What is the impact of the downtown exclusion zone on the neighborhood?

## **Suggested Items and Comments Submitted by Workshop Participants**

The following pages recap feedback provided on the printed form at the workshop. See other documents at [jwneugene.org/infillstds](http://jwneugene.org/infillstds) .

### **Positive Neighborhood Characteristics**

#### **Tony Rosta**

- History: These are some of the oldest residences in Eugene.
- Social Stability: long-term residents tend to be those people who buy a home they plan to stay in for a long time. For those who want to end up living on a vintage home, because of their subjective desire to own such a house, based upon style, quality of construction, nostalgia, or other factors, there is a limited supply of such homes in the community. Many of these houses exist in our neighborhood. Much of the appeal of these homes comes from their context in the neighborhood – including backyards, views from windows and yards (private open spaces), relative scale of size and similarities of adjacent buildings. A stable population of long-term residents tends to enhance the happiness and safety of residents who know each other and will socially interact. A cohesive neighborhood, with continuity of residential population, makes for more vigorous participation in local self-government processes. Witness the PlanJam.

#### **Chris O'Neill**

- Few cars on side streets & alleys so it's safe to walk.
- Lots of mature trees & bushes; especially big trees that can sustain animals and birds
- Gardens in the strip between sidewalk and street
- Low height of front yard fences and hedges.
- Graded alleys (most are NOT maintained)
- Houses back off the street – some space in front yard
- Front porches big enough to sit and socialize
- Private backyards without neighbor 2<sup>nd</sup> story windows
- Houses that fit the “old” character of architecture.
- Smaller parks that are maintained
- Bicycle routes
- Driveways from the alley not the street where possible
- Community gardens
- Mix of density: single family, apartments, small stores
- Houses with eaves and overhangs
- Active Neighborhood Association!

#### **Dale Deason**

- Solar access for most properties
- Available on-street parking for guests

- “semi-private” backyards
- Pitched roofs – not flat
- Setbacks from street –front yards
- Alley access to backyards
- Limited traffic
- Street trees
- Largely owner-occupied
- Good access to open space
- Predominantly middle-class
- Family living
- Favorable for walking/biking

### **Ilona Koleszar**

- Qualitative: housing looks like people actually live there, not just sleep there.
- Setbacks are sufficient to encourage social interaction between neighbors, i.e., when buildings are TOO close together walls actually deter social interaction – need those buffers that are inviting, green rather than concrete, hard surface.
- Houses face street rather than wall or garage with “residence” behind it.
- Really diverse inventory of structures which attract all kinds of people to the neighborhood (size, rent/own, social opportunities, etc.)
- Quality construction: lots of old structures which, with a little work, will continue to stand for a long, long time, and weather well

## **Negative Impacts from Incompatible Infill**

### **Tony Rosta**

- Solar Access: too high a building next door, in the path of the sun, means reduced opportunity for thermal and photovoltaic collectors at a given residence
- Too many “apartment buildings” can mean strangers living next to one another. The transitory nature of renters (upwardly mobile will seek to move, eventually to their own stand-alone residences) reduces, or can reduce, continuity, social cohesiveness, in the neighborhood.
- Reduction in permanent residents (i.e. long term occupiers of residences) means less predictability of the social nature of the “hood. Families with kids may be wary of moving in to raise the kids when they are less sure who will live next door to them next year.

### **Chris O’Neill**

- Too much alley traffic > noise & danger to adults & kids
- Too much paved surface > loss of habitat & beauty
- Loss of backyard privacy when someone builds a two story building next door.
- Ugly buildings and too massive, too close to boundary

### **Dale Deason**

- Reduced percentage of owner-occupied
- [Loss of] backyard privacy
- No available street parking
- Lower socio-economic status
- Reduced property values
- Increased percentage of short-term, uninvolved residents
- Forcing current property owners to pay for alley improvements made necessary by developments

### **Ilona Koleszar**

- Don't want to see the face of a garage from the street. Want to see porches, front doors and windows, architectural amenities, a "family face"
- Height of structures should be similar to avoid substantial loss of privacy, loss of sun, sense of being hemmed in/crowded
- Would like to see neighborhood edges (i.e., the areas one can feel characteristics changing) stabilized by paying careful attention to new things built there. This will avoid or counteract degradation from the outside in.
- No flat roofs. They are not compatible with surrounding structures and result in faster structure in rainy climate.
- Overhangs on buildings help them look better, more compatible and reduce the flat, high wall look that makes new buildings look like rentals.
- Every new structure will add new lighting, more light pollution
- Encourage rehabilitation of existing older structures over relocation or demolition.

## **Areas for Infill Compatibility Standards**

### **Tony Rosta**

- Height limits: taking into account aesthetic scale of nearby buildings and solar access – the latter being a huge sustainability issue – for solar energy collection by machines and plants (food).
- Parking: enough spaces on-site for expected number of residents. Reason: overburdening of on-street parking. This impacts not just existing residential needs, e.g., visitors parking their cars – but pedestrian visibility for crossing streets, accessibility for moving vans, delivery vehicles, emergency services.

### **Ilona Koleszar**

- I really don't like the so-called "flag lots." All of a sudden there's another driveway curb-cut which affects bike and pedestrian traffic, etc. and you almost have to torture code requirements to make them work. They add chaos to our existing lot configurations. I'm not against dividing lots, per se, just don't like carving them up into odd shapes.

## **Follow-up survey**

**Tony Rosta**

- Compare concepts studied here for infill standards with possible developing city/state/national standards for solar access. That is, does the City's drive to promote infill run up against sustainability goals of the City of Eugene as those goals relate to promotion of individual residential solar panel installation.
- Survey? Ask new move-ins, especially people who have or intend to raise new families in newly purchased homes, why they chose to buy in the neighborhood.

**Chris O'Neill**

- Be sure to ask owner-occupied properties about what negative impacts would drive them to move from the neighborhood. You might consider providing a check-off list of the assumed most-negative impacts from which to select.

**Additional comments / questions****Dale Deason**

- Can a focus on individual lots ever provide protection from cumulative impacts? – plan by blocks or streets, not by lots.

**Erika Seiferling**

- To address an aging community: All inclusive quality of life issues for all stages of life including “aging in place” vs. having to move to an “intentional community”, “assisted living” or “nursing home” or “retirement community.” This would make a dynamic vs. static community = neighborhood.