



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Planning and Community Development Department
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3225
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager
From: Eric Shields, Planning Director
Date: October 26, 2006
Subject: LETTER FROM ELLEN CURTIS

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the mayor to sign the proposed letter to Ellen Curtis.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

Ms. Curtis's letter to the Council expresses concern about the impacts of development activity, particularly adjacent to her residence.

430 Lake Street South, #33
Kirkland, WA 98033
October 18, 2006

Kirkland City Council
123 Fifth Avenue
Kirkland, WA 98033

RECEIVED

OCT 23 2006

CITY OF KIRKLAND
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

Dear Kirkland City Council:

The joy and delight of living in Kirkland is rapidly waning. I've lived in the downtown area since 1991. I have painfully watched what used to be a quaint, village-like atmosphere become a city under siege as cranes and bulldozers make way for numerous new condos and homes. For the last two years, I've navigated from 5th Avenue South, State Street, Kirkland Way, Central Way, and Lake Street as all have been under construction.

My own living space is crowded out, too. There is a second multi-unit condo going up on 5th Avenue South, about a car length away from our now shared driveway. We put up with garbage strewn in the lot, hastily-laid asphalt tracked in on our carpets, noise from dozers and saws and pounding, as well as dust and grit from sanding. I feel the walls shake and windows rattle from the noise some days. I leave the fan on and play CDs most of the day while at home to create white noise. Did I mention the "Honey Bucket" on the lot fills my unit with its odors? I keep towels under the door and the windows shut to keep the stench from seeping in.

And today, as if the frog has not completely boiled in increasingly hotter water, the Fire department and construction workers pounded on our doors to alert us of a gas line break. We had to rush out and couldn't leave in our cars because of the danger of an explosion. What a disaster! One considerate construction worker dropped a few of us off at the coffee shop while the gas line was repaired. A casual "Sorry about that" was offered by the construction manager when I walked home. I'm now sitting in my unit, doors and windows open. Puget Sound Energy confirmed it is "safe" to enter.

Along with the gas that is dissipating, my love for this community is evaporating. I'm afraid Kirkland has lost its way. The city's mission statement reads: *"We are committed to the enhancement of Kirkland as a community for living, working and leisure, with an excellent quality of life which preserves the City's existing charm and natural amenities."* Is this what our community leaders and visionaries are committed to? Only if one can afford the price tag of the "new Kirkland" with its traffic, dozers, mud, debris, and noise. No thanks. The price of losing that intangible charm and quality of life is just too high.

Sincerely,



Ellen Curtis
425-827-5636

sarahe.curtis@att.net

cc: Kirkland Courier
The Seattle Times
King County Journal

November 8, 2006

DRAFT

Ellen Curtis
430 Lake St. South #33
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Ms Curtis:

The City Council received your letter describing the impacts you've experienced from development activity near your home. Like most other cities in the Puget Sound area, Kirkland has continued to grow, and with that we have experienced growing pains. The City seeks to minimize development impacts through our development regulations. We acknowledge your frustration with the adjacent construction and regret that the City was not able to do more to prevent the problems you experienced.

Your letter mentions several specific issues, among them: a gas line break, the noise and commotion of development activity and the location of a "Honey Bucket" near your front door. The gas line break appears to be due to the fact that the line was unmarked by Puget Power.

Development activity is limited to the hours 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. If development is occurring outside of those hours, please report this to the code enforcement group in the Planning Department at 425-587-3225. During hours when City Hall is closed you can call the Police Department at 425-587-3400.

With regard to the "Honey Bucket," although the City does not have any specific requirements for them, a City inspector was asked to look at the placement of the one located on the development site next to you. He reported that it was placed in the only feasible location given the development activity on the site. The location is also roughly equal distance from your building and the building to the east of the site. I encourage you to discuss any concerns you have about this with the construction superintendent.

Again, we are sorry that the recent development activity next to you and in the vicinity has negatively impacted you. Although the City is unable to control all impacts, please feel free to contact the City if you have any concerns and we will be happy to investigate.

Sincerely
KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

by: Jim Lauinger, Mayor