



**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner  
Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director  
Eric Shields, AICP, Director

**Date:** April 18, 2014

**Subject:** MRM PRIVATE AMENDMENT REQUEST (PAR)  
FILE # ZON11-00006/SEP13-00554

**RECOMMENDATION**

Take public comment, close the public hearing, and defer the request to be considered with the Comprehensive Plan update.

**REQUEST FROM THE APPLICANT**

At the March 13<sup>th</sup> public hearing, the Planning Commission asked staff to return with the exact wording of the potential amendments to be considered and to keep the hearing open for further comment on 4/24/2014.

Since that time, the applicant has requested that the Planning Commission recommend tabling the MRM PAR pending greater clarity as to what will be proposed for the Parkplace site (see Attachment 1).

The specific plan and code changes have not been provided for this meeting, since staff is recommending that the Planning Commission defer their review of the MRM PAR for the time being. In addition, it is recommended that the proposal be considered with the overall Comprehensive Plan update which is presently occurring. This will give staff and the Planning Commission a chance to learn more about the future of the Parkplace project and to consider the proposal in relationship to the entire downtown as well as the overall Comprehensive Plan.

If the Planning Commission would still like to review the specific plan and code changes, then staff will bring those to a Commission meeting in May; however, staff recommends going to the City Council with the applicant's request to defer the process at this time.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

- Take public comment.
- Close the public hearing.
- Determine whether to recommend that the request be considered with the Comprehensive Plan update and make a recommendation to the City Council.

## **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION**

The City Council directed the Planning Commission and staff to study this proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code for CBD 5. The PAR would allow increased height and residential uses for the parcel at 434 Kirkland Way in the Moss Bay Neighborhood (see Attachment 2). The proposal is to amend the Comprehensive Plan and zoning to increase height from the current 5 story (67 feet) maximum to 8 stories (100 feet) and to allow residential uses on the entire site (in addition to other permitted uses). The existing zoning allows residential uses only: (1) On properties with frontage on Second Avenue; and (2) Within 170' of Peter Kirk Park provided that the gross floor area of the use does not exceed 12.5% of the total gross floor area for the subject property.

The property was previously the old Kirkland Hardware site, but the building is currently being used as offices. Parkplace is to the north, Peter Kirk Park (Kirkland Performance Center and Teen Union Building) is to the west, and there are offices to the east and multifamily residential and office uses to the south. The City Council directed the Planning Commission and staff to expand the study area to include the entire CBD 5 zone as shown in Attachment 2.

The Parkplace property to the north was rezoned in December of 2008 to allow for a 1.8 million square foot mixed use development with 1.2 million square feet of office, as well as retail, a hotel, and an athletic club. The allowed height was increased to a maximum of 8 stories (up to 115 feet) on parts of the site, with lower heights adjacent to Peter Kirk Park and Central Way. Residential is allowed for up to 10% of the gross floor area of the Master Plan for the site, but no residential use was included in the approved Parkplace redevelopment project.

The proposed Parkplace project is presently on hold as the original developer, Touchstone, has sold its interest in the project. The remaining owner, Prudential, is assessing whether to proceed with the project. In the meantime, the existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning allowing for a 1.8 million square foot development up to 115 feet high is in place.

Additional emails and letters received from citizens since the hearing on March 13, 2014 are included as Attachment 3.

### Attachments:

1. April 15, 2014 letter from Joe Razore
2. Site/study area map
3. Emails and letters received since last PC meeting

cc: File ZON11-00006  
Joe Razore, applicant  
Rich Hill, Attorney for Joe Razore  
Brian Brand, AIA  
Moss Bay Neighborhood Association  
KAN  
Ken Davidson  
Brent Carson, Attorney for Davidson, Serles and Associates



April 15, 2014

Kirkland Planning Commission  
123 Fifth Avenue  
Kirkland, WA 98033

Re: MRM Private Amendment Request (PAR)

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for your consideration of the MRM Private Amendment Request (PAR). As you know, the PAR includes two separate proposals. The first is to increase allowed height on the MRM property to eight stories, from the currently allowed five. The second is to add residential as an allowed primary use, in addition to the currently allowed office, on the property.

At the last Planning Commission meeting, it became clear that the lack of definition of the potentially new proposal for Parkplace rendered it difficult for the Planning Commission to review the MRM PAR with an adequate level of certainty as to how approval of the PAR would affect development in CBD 5 as a whole.

In that light, MRM respectfully asks the Planning Commission to recommend tabling of the MRM PAR, pending the development of greater clarity as to what will be proposed for the Parkplace site. Once that greater clarity is achieved, it will be possible for the Planning Commission to evaluate the MRM proposal with a greater sense of confidence.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JR", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Joe Razore







**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Kerry Abbott <kerry.michael.abbott@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2014 12:48 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** 24 Apr 14 Hearing - MRM Private Amendment Request, File No. ZON11-00006

Dear Ms Ruggeri,

One of the owners in my Kirkland condominium indicated that she had exchanged communications with you regarding my inability to attend (I will be on the US East coast) the hearing noted above, and whether it was possible for her to present my remarks. Apparently it is not, and she suggested I present them in writing. To that end:

Following an over 24-year military career in the US armed forces, and much experience in travel and living internationally, I specifically chose to reside in Kirkland after several years of research. Consequently, I have reflected on this proposal by MRM, as well as the Kirkland 2035 plan and other matters that have arisen following my attendance at the Planning Commission meeting on 14 Nov 13. To my mind, what the City of Kirkland agencies seem to be striving for, but I fear are falling short of, is responsible (albeit a relative term) growth and development. The MRM proposal is a case in point.

- The Planning Commission as an agent of the City Council is responsible and answerable to the citizens of Kirkland (with an eye to the wider community);
- Ever before these political and professional entities/persons must be a desire to maintain a generational, not simply a short-term, perspective taking into account historical and well established community values as discerned by the citizenry they now (and will) serve. In other words, what is decided today will have an impact for a multiplicity of generations, not just ourselves, our children, or grandchildren, but for a much longer term;
- It seems to me that for the past few decades the downtown area of Kirkland has been characterized by a general desire to balance and enhance the natural green and blue (i.e., sky) space the Kirkland area is blessed with, against a need for housing as well as a desire for vibrant, responsible commercial / service and retail spaces coupled with adequate allowances for transportation requirements;
- It has not always been so. It is an interesting and necessary endeavor to view the many historical photographs that depict earlier years in the history of Kirkland and environs, particularly the petroleum facilities along the shoreline of Lake Washington and ferry dock in downtown. These facilities were constructed in an era when unbridled growth, coupled with unattractive and potentially hazardous construction was often the norm. Little thought was given to the impact of these projects on the environment or to generational impact, except for the application of an unhelpful rule of thumb which stated that growth coupled with development was always good;
- Thankfully, those that preceded us as holders of the Kirkland legacy began to view this precious area (and resource) as a treasure to be respected and protected, as well as responsibly developed and shared;
- Ergo, the era of the removal of the shoreline petroleum facilities and ferry dock, with visionaries in our city replacing these blights with beautiful parks, public access paths and docks, while allowing private development within limits which enhanced public access, a shared beauty, and a minimum of over-development, unregulated growth and "eye" pollution;

- Doing the right thing, for the right reasons, in the right way is always more difficult and requires vision and compromise by all involved. Kirkland was emblematic of these principles, and the outcome is generationally positive;
- In recent decades the well-understood urban model (by other cultures and urban areas) of mixed-use development, coupled with limitations that respect established and planned green spaces, public / private transportation requirements (and perhaps, most importantly, the limitations of space in the downtown area for roads and parking) saw a well thought out policy restricting the height of structures developed for downtown Kirkland;
- Consequently, the downtown area of Kirkland is currently a precious jewel positioned for responsible growth and development, set amidst beautiful green and blue spaces maximizing the absence of the eye pollution and obstruction that high-rise development fosters (e.g., witness the concrete blight which is Bellevue);
- There *is* a need (I believe) in the Eastside area for a concentrated mega-zone providing commercial, retail, residential, entertainment and transportation offerings...we have that in Bellevue, which is easily accessible via private and public transportation. The people of Bellevue made a decision decades ago to achieve what they have, and to continue in the mega-zone direction;
- Kirkland made a different choice. Not to de-develop, or remain static, but to grow and develop in a way that provided a balance of urban values (and opportunities) that Bellevue has now lost (though it provides other opportunities that only a mega-zone can);
- Witness the private, often mixed use development which rings the downtown core of Kirkland, without overpowering the natural beauty of the area, or preventing access to water, land and sky;
- Even the variance granted to the potential (and hoped for) Park Square developers respected this dynamic while granting a one-time height variance which was designed to (and does) increase open and green spaces below;
- The MRM development fails on all of these counts. It pushes up building height with no off-set for green or open spaces. It increases vehicular traffic at the very busy intersection of 2 single lane roads (6th St & Kirkland Way), which will already be taxed by the Google campus expansion and hoped-for Park Square redevelopment;
- Furthermore, unlike the Park Square development variance, which was ostensibly a one-time allowance so as to achieve a specific mixed-use purpose, the MRM development offers no such return on the investment. The height variance request is simply a desire of the developer to maximize return on investment at the expense of generational impact, with the consequent degradation of the Kirkland downtown pearl of great price as part of the cost;
- If this variance is granted to MRM for such a spurious enterprise, what is to prevent other developers from making the same case for over height allowance development? Of course they will since a precedent has been established which has none of the intrinsic hallmarks of the Park Square redevelopment height variance authorization;
- How does the Planning Commission then plan to respond to these inevitable requests? Or, is that to be left to another generation who will, unlike ourselves gifted with precious downtown resources having abrogated our generational responsibility to use, develop and protect those resources, have to try to repair the damage inflicted upon them?
- We have only one chance to get this right for our generation and those that follow...once this pearl of great

price (the heart and soul of downtown Kirkland) is abused and lost, once responsible development which provides for a balance between green, blue, commercial, private, residential, and public spaces is gone, it will be nearly impossible to recoup;

- I beg the Panning Commission (and City Council) to do the right thing, for the right reasons, in the right way, and deny this MRM proposal for height variance.

V/r, Father Kerry Abbott  
Kirkland, WA

April 12, 2014

City of Kirkland

Planning Department

Kirkland WA

re: Permit No.ZON11-0006

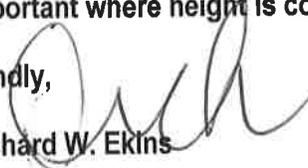
As the owner of Kirkland Hardware Company, we occupied this site for 28 years. Our address then was 425 Kirkland Avenue. Our Mayor at the time, and quite a few WW II babies, used the word "ambience" and "height limits" to describe their destiny of our small city. Now, huge, empty buses oppose the large car traffic in our city

We certainly did not want to be anything like Bellevue. Enough people felt the same way and PRESTO we now approach the 100,000 level of dwellers. They all like to shop near where they live. The narrow streets give evidence to our early colloquialism. Fixation on ambience has resulted in a disheveled Central District.

Central Kirkland needs to develop. It also needs to maintain open space. Only way is up! A mere eight stories seems inadequate for the needs of the mini-sized Central Area, with that little-used, ill-kept park in the middle.

I am in favor of a really glamorous eight or twelve story building to offset the nearby blight of the City-owned areas. Also allow at least sixty percent for residences, please. Height should only be a minor consideration. Previous nearby developments did not consider obstructed view when they built in past years. But open space is quite important where height is contemplated. New buildings: Better height than width!

Fondly,

  
Richard W. Ekins

Former—Former---Former

530 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, # 309

Kirkland, WA 98033

425 827 3765

RECEIVED  
APR 14 2014  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT PM  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** andy@andyheld.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 17, 2014 2:23 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** MRM

Dear Ms Ruggeri,

Please forward the attached to the Planning Commission at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Gentlepersons:

I understand the applicant has requested the MRM PAR be tabled for consideration during the comp plan update. It seems to me they saw the writing on the wall that they were going to lose. Staff and PC have (nearly) completed their process. The recommendation to council should be finalized and submitted.

By postponing, MRM gets another swing at the same ball. The lengthy review which has been undertaken by the planning commission should be formalized with a recommendation to the City Council.

As the applicant has noted in their testimony, the land-use zoning has been in place since 1989. They have failed to mention that during the intervening 25 years the zoning has been reviewed many times, including extensive review during the last 12 months. Please finish the task at hand on April 24, as currently scheduled.

Respectfully,  
Andy Held  
5505 127th Ave NE  
Kirkland WA 98033

RECEIVED

APR 18 2014

AM PM  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

BY \_\_\_\_\_

16 April 2014

Kirkland Planning Department

123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Kirkland, WA 98033

SUBJECT: MRM PAR

I oppose allowing MRM more intensive development beyond current CBD zoning. Allowing eight stories and more residential use in an area that is zoned retail/commercial use with a 5 story limit isn't in the community's best interest.

When Kirkland approved the Touchstone PAR project, adjoining property owners piled onto the PAR process/window asking for more intensive development just because they saw the opening. It took an economic recession to halt oversized development in downtown Kirkland. Until now.

The Touchstone PAR project isn't going to be built in the ParkPlace site; there is talk of lower building height in exchange for less retail/commercial use. Giving what's going on at ParkPlace, the MRM PAR is not a good fit. We have enough new construction residential use projects in the downtown core and with ParkPlace going more residential use, we don't need residential use at the MRM site. And we certainly don't need an 8 story building in that location which would be totally out of scale relative to surrounding properties and possibly oversized to ParkPlace when it gets developed. This is our chance to do something nice for Kirkland, please keep the bigger picture in mind. I'd like to think City Hall and Kirkland City Council members are there to ensure the Comprehensive Plan and zoning codes actually mean something. It does to me; it's why I chose to live here in 2004; it's why I moved my business here in 2005.

Glenda Schmidt

225 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, B402

Kirkland, WA 98033

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Jan Olson <janmarols@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 15, 2014 7:12 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** Re: MRM proposal on Kirkland Way/6th St.

Thank you. I'm most concerned about height of buildings and impact on traffic and the City of Kirkland park and green space areas.

Sincerely, Jan Olson

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 15, 2014, at 4:14 PM, Angela Ruggeri <[ARuggeri@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:ARuggeri@kirklandwa.gov)> wrote:

>

> The applicant has asked that their request be put on hold until we know more about what will be happening at Parkplace and the surrounding area. Staff agrees and will recommend looking at this with the Comprehensive Plan update to the Planning Commission at their meeting on April 24th. The Planning Commission will decide if they agree. If they do, their recommendation will go to the City Council in June.

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> Please let me know if you have additional questions.

> Angela

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> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jan Olson [<mailto:janmarols@gmail.com>]

> Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2014 7:52 PM

> To: Angela Ruggeri

> Subject: MRM proposal on Kirkland Way/6th St.

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> I am inquiring as to the resolution of this project. I believe that the Planning Committee and City of Kirkland were addressing this requested exception in March.

> Thank you.

> Jan Olson

>

> Sent from my iPhone

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 2:31 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: Size Matters – 8 is WAY too big

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**From:** Robin Herberger [<mailto:mediaworks1@frontier.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 6:19 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** Size Matters – 8 is WAY too big

Angela,

I strongly urge the City to give a resounding “NO!” to MRM’s request for an amendment to the City’s zoning height restriction. I’m sick of the pillage and plunder of Kirkland by greedy developers, and a City administration that bends over backwards for these guys. Of course, 8 stories is too high at this location! Anyone who’s not going to benefit financially or has two brain cells to rub together knows that.

What is the point of a city having zoning restrictions when every time a developer comes along and wants to exceed them, they get an amendment to do whatever they want, Kirkland citizens be damned.

I’m probably spitting into the wind, but I hope the City of Kirkland listens to the people who actually live here – not to developers swooping in for a financial kill – and says NO! to granting MRM an amendment to the current zoning code that was established by the City for a reason. Please abide by your own rules.

Robin Herberger  
Kirkland, WA

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2014 11:55 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed 8-story bldg. in Kirkland

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**From:** Kathy Frank [<mailto:frogspk@frontier.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 14, 2014 3:49 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** Proposed 8-story bldg. in Kirkland

Commissioners,

I am writing to let you know that we strongly oppose the proposed 8-story apartment building at 434 Kirkland Way, currently a Microsoft facility. We've lived here 28 years and seen Kirkland grow a lot, and we've already been discouraged by some of the changes we've seen and by the proposal for a major expansion of Parkplace. The last thing we want to see is an 8-story apartment building that will just be an eyesore and take us farther down that road toward looking like downtown Bellevue!! Kirkland has a lot of charm, and those of us who call it home want to keep it that way. Big money talks, however, and we feel our voices will hardly be heard in comparison.

Please don't let this be approved. Listen to us just this once. Isn't that what your job is? I came once and spoke up at a meeting against the proposed increase in height limits for Parkplace, but, like the others there against the plan (including an architect who talked about the drawbacks of the plan), I was ignored. We don't trust you anymore to make decisions based on the desires of the homeowners and residents of Kirkland, and that's a terrible shame.

Kathy & Paul Frank  
1850 3rd Street  
Kirkland

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:19 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: Parkplace development

**From:** Richard Gode [<mailto:rgroquedog528@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:05 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** Parkplace development

An eight story building anywhere in Kirkland will change the entire image of our fair city from a user friendly people oriented town to the beginning of a high rise commercial concrete urban city like Bellevue. We are opposed to such a change.....Richard and Nancy Gode

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Eric Shields  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 8:49 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: MRM PAR

Eric Shields

-----Original Message-----

From: Carolyn and Jim [<mailto:Carolynandjim@hitterworld.com>]  
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2014 4:25 PM  
To: Planning Commissioners  
Subject: MRM PAR

Commissioners,

The Commission meeting of March 13th was quite interesting. I would like to take the opportunity to comment on a number of aspects of that meeting. First, some of the commentary by “neighbors” of the project were off the mark. Given that the height of the proposed structure is mostly at or below the level of the Emerald Building the view blocking in relation to the person who lives at Park Ridge is impossible. Also, the commentator living at the corner of Kirkland Way and 6th Street wouldn’t have her views blocked in any substantial way.

It was pretty obvious that many of you Commissioners are leaning toward recommending that the property be used for offices only. But, we’d like you to consider these observations as well—As we walked home from that meeting (did you drive or walk?) we could see that Park Place, almost all commercial and office, was almost completely dark while the surrounding apartments and condos were alive with the warmth of family life. Paraphrasing Chuck Pilcher; “this is downtown not a CBD.” To put it another way, do you want to doom DOWNTOWN Kirkland to have a dark, uninhabited core or have a lively center with people going about their daily routines at home and on foot?

We live just a stone’s throw from Park Place and would not be happy with a deserted and dark core on weekends and after the business day was over. We want to see people walking on the streets of our city, shopping, and entertaining themselves. This is an unlikely prospect if the MRM PAR site is relegated to business use only. Turning Park Place and MRM into an office park is not the proper use for this important DOWNTOWN center.

Sincerely,  
Jim and Carolyn Hitter

## Angela Ruggeri

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2014 10:55 AM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: MRM

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**From:** Margaret Bull [mailto:wisteriouswoman@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2014 10:57 PM

**To:** Angela Ruggeri

**Subject:** MRM

Dear Planning Commission members,

I was at the quilt show and unable to go to the Planning Commission meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup>. I have listened to the recording online since then. I always plan to write short letters but it never works out that way. I controlled myself though and didn't send a letter the day before the meeting. I'm glad to hear that plenty of other citizens did.

Firstly, I want to say how glad I was to hear that most of you are taking the public's trust seriously despite the fact that we are coming out of a recession that may continue to affect developers for some time to come. Most citizens aren't complaining that the parking lot on the MRM property is underutilized except for the fact that Microsoft isn't letting them park there at night.

One of the things I noticed with the Park Place project was that they were big on envisioning but much of the public benefit they suggested wasn't something they had to commit too. Who really could know for sure what type of retail establishments would actually want to lease space in the bottom floor of a big office complex that requires paid underground parking for employees? Touchstone obviously didn't. Kirkland citizens and the Planning Commission can envision all they want but often retail options are governed by market forces not by anything that a developer suggested originally. I moved here in the 1980 and didn't always like walking around Park Place Center because it often had empty store fronts which made it depressing...for years and years. With the shadow of a recession still hanging over us, it will be a long time before we have the vibrant retail environment that is often discussed at planning meetings.

I mention this because the MRM developers can tell us that they hope a Trader Joes, Whole Foods or drug store might want to lease space in their building. But really those ideas might not work out. Personally I don't feel Trader Joes or Whole Foods grocery stores are a good compliment to the mix of businesses in downtown Kirkland. I doubt that people going to Whole Foods in Bellevue or Trader Joes in Totem Lake are spending a great deal of time shopping at local businesses nearby. It is more like: get your groceries and hop in the car for your next errand someplace else. QFC has remodeled and isn't planning on moving any time soon. The Park Place 'typewriter' building may be on hold until the QFC lease runs out. It might be hard for another grocery store to try to compete with QFC right next door. On the other hand, a lot of people need health related items and sundries that can't be purchased at QFC so I do see a void in downtown Kirkland for a drug store that seniors that live downtown can easily access by foot. That said, Walgreens on Rose Hill and the pharmacy at Costco can be accessed in **8 minutes** on the bus. Bartels in Houghton can be accessed by bus in **6 minutes**. The shops at Bridle Trails shopping center, including the Ace hardware store, can be reached in **13 minutes by bus and 7 minutes by car**. When we think about Kirkland we have to consider supporting businesses that are within 3 miles of the downtown core. This will keep all of Kirkland vibrant. Many of the businesses in the neighborhood centers rely on customers that live downtown. If you focus too hard on making Moss Bay neighborhood a bigger retail center you may actually hurt businesses in other neighborhood centers close by. Bellevue and Redmond have sprawling downtown areas so it could easily take a resident 15 to 30 minutes just to walk to the store or restaurant that they want

### Attachment 3

to patronize. We have a great deal less area to build office and retail so filling that space up with apartments doesn't seem wise. I was grateful that the majority of the Planning Commission felt this way as well. I've noticed that the retail storefronts in many of the new tall apartment buildings in Redmond are businesses that I don't find a reason to patronize, especially since street parking is so limited. I suggest that you be cautious when making deals allowing greater height in exchange for retail space and other amenities. Even so called public space can be reclaimed by future property owners and made private. Would I want my crazy brother washing in the fountain in front of my apartment? Absolutely not! And I doubt anyone else would either. Can the Planning Commission, which is made up of volunteers, actually get any guarantees that Kirkland will always have the public benefits discussed when this PAR goes through?

There are companies that want to expand in Kirkland and may choose to do so if office space becomes available. This has been a point several people have made during public hearings. I don't feel we need to look at what Bellevue and Redmond are doing in order to make a good decision for Kirkland. Most of us live in Kirkland because we love it. I'm sure many people would enjoy working in Kirkland if there were more options available. Six stories of office and retail on the MRM site should be more than enough to get things moving.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Bull  
6225 108<sup>th</sup> Place NE  
Kirkland WA

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2014 10:53 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: Kirkland Way apartment zoning

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Chris Meyer <[Chris.Meyer@microsoft.com](mailto:Chris.Meyer@microsoft.com)>  
**Date:** March 14, 2014 at 5:14:42 PM PDT  
**To:** "[planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov)" <[planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Kirkland Way apartment zoning

Hello, my wife and I are writing today to voice our opposition to the Planning Commission granting a height increase to the developer who owns the soon-to-be-raised building currently occupied by Microsoft Game Studios. We live just up the way at 811 Kirkland Way and are concerned that converting any more of the Central Business District from commercial to residential would have three primarily negative effects:

1. It would reduce commercial space and make the downtown area less attractive to consumers
2. It would increase car traffic on a road that cannot provide more capacity and already has an unsafely high speed limit
3. It would negatively impact property values by taking away from Moss Bay's esteem

We love our Kirkland home and want to see the our neighborhood's charm maintained. Please represent us and our neighbors by denying this developer's application.

Sincerely,  
Chris and Chi Meyer  
811 Kirkland Way  
425.765.2804

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Robert Fahl <rcfhnl@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 10:24 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Cc:** ROBERTA KRAUSE; Father Abbott; Donald MacPhee; Al Link; Linda Hussein  
**Subject:** Fw: Fwd: MRM Private Amendment Request File No. ZON11-00006

We are currently traveling but care very deeply for the future of our very special Kirkland community and would like to be heard.

One of the most beautiful and popular destinations in the US is the island of Kauai. A place that you or some of the commissioners may have had the opportunity to visit. Change is inevitable but thoughtful and insightful change that protects the beauty, grace and character of a place over the greed of money requires courage and the ability to take a stand.

Local lore and guide books say that the monstrosity that is now the Lihue Marriott (which is grandfathered), moved the powers to be to take action so that another blight on irreplaceable beauty lost should never again scar the landscape. A law was passed that no building may be built that is taller than the coconut palms surrounding it. The St. Regis Hotel in compliance with this law, built their luxury property into the hillside, building down; proving that businesses can prosper without variances.

We invite developers who want to do business in Kirkland to Kirkland but, no special concessions or variances should be given. They must be required to fit into our community, not detract or destroy it.

When one variance is given, where does it stop? Please do not let it start; NO to the request for variance File No. ZON11-00006. Do NOT turn Kirkland into another Bellevue or Redmond; help us to keep its character and beauty intact.

May the commissioners become part of the Kirkland history that says NO to over/bigger buildings and yes to preserving the footprint of our beautiful community.

Respectfully -

Robert and Vera Ellen Fahl  
602 5th St. #3002  
Kirkland, WA 98033

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 2:29 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: Building at 434 Kirkland Way

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**From:** Gibbons, Tammara [<mailto:Tammara.Gibbons@vmmc.org>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 14, 2014 7:55 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** Building at 434 Kirkland Way

Ms. Ruggeri-

I am opposed to allowing MRM to build an eight story building on the 434 Kirkland Way site. My reason is that Kirkland has not accommodated for the increase in traffic. We live close to downtown Kirkland and the increase in population and building density has increased traffic volume making Kirkland an unfriendly town in which to navigate. In addition, allowing this project to proceed will change the future landscape of what has been a great place to live and raise children. Kirkland still has that small town feel-don't ruin it.

Sincerely,

Bill and Tammara Dempsey  
11015 NE 96<sup>th</sup> ST  
Kirkland, 98033

Confidentiality Disclaimer:

The information contained in this e-mail may be confidential. If you received this in error, please call the Virginia Mason Privacy Officer at (206) 223-7505.

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If you need emergency attention, call 911.

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Eric Shields  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 4:02 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: 8-story apt building

Eric Shields

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**From:** Carl Atienza [<mailto:atienza@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 3:06 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** 8-story apt building

Hello:

I am a resident of Kirkland for many years living a single family home. I have two kids that I want to attend public school in the future that is close to our house, but understand because of overcrowding they will have to win the lottery to attend. Recent, election results show that residents are not in favor of raising taxes to fund any more public schools and overcrowding will just compound that problem. Please keep Kirkland a beautiful city by not having overcrowding, which leads to more crimes and less opportunities for current residents. Thank you!!

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 2:30 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: 8 story buildings

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**From:** Cheryl Nelsen [<mailto:cherylnel@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 10:52 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Cc:** Cheryl Nelsen  
**Subject:** 8 story buildings

I understand there is discussion of additional 8 story buildings in the Kirkland Park Place shopping area. I am opposed to allowing more and more 8 story building permits. I believe it changes the character of the community and it will lose its distinctive quality as such.

Cheryl Nelsen  
Kirkland Highlands Resident

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Eric Shields  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 25, 2014 1:15 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: 8 story apartment building

Eric Shields

-----Original Message-----

From: Karen Fitzpatrick [<mailto:dfitzpa01@aol.com>]  
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2014 1:32 PM  
To: Planning Commissioners  
Subject: 8 story apartment building

I am a concerned citizen, concerned about the proposal to put another multi person dwelling in the city sector. First, the visual impact will start to create a sterile city look instead of a hometown feel that we have uniquely in Kirkland. My biggest concern is the traffic impact into that area. Has anyone on the planning commission been on the downtown area streets at 3:30pm to 6pm weekdays? Weekends can also be miserable for local residents due to the influx of traffic coming into Kirkland. Please stay to a beneficial plan for current residents and vote, NO!

Thank you,  
Karen Fitzpatrick

Sent from my iPad

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Chuck Pilcher <chuck@bourlandweb.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 10:02 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Cc:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** MRM PAR

Angela and team:

Please accept my sincere apology for my comment in point #6. That kind of language is unprofessional, and I am sorry I included it.

And thank you all for serving in this difficult volunteer position, as did so many who worked so hard on the initial zoning decision on this project.

Chuck Pilcher

Dear Planning Commission Volunteers:

Thanks for your thoughtful debate on the MRM PAR on Thursday night. After listening to the presentations and your own thoughts, here's my additional input:

1. A couple of you acknowledged all the hard work that went into the zoning as it currently exists for that parcel. You inquired why - now - that hard work should be considered invalid. That is a very valid question, and I contend that the hard work should be upheld, and the PAR not granted.
2. You mentioned the concern when Touchstone was (under what amounts to threats to the City) granted 8 stories, that citizens worried this would lead to a domino effect, and that Touchstone was just the first domino in downtown Kirkland becoming another Bellevue. That too is a very valid point, and the MRM PAR proves that the citizens' concerns were well-founded.
3. This has now become an issue of TRUST. Can we trust our City government to do what they say they will do, or must we expect that any policy, plan, or code can be over-ridden by a persistent developer? We cannot continue to develop this City by PAR's. That's why we have plans and codes.
4. The PAR program specifies that there must be a compelling public benefit for a PAR to be granted. No compelling public benefit has been demonstrated, and in fact a lot of public detriment has been suggested.
5. 8 stories could be a fine height for an office, residential, or mixed use development, but **downtown is the wrong place**. Put it in Totem Lake. That **MUST** be our new Central Business District.
6. You'll look really foolish and will have lost the respect of the citizens if you fall all over yourselves trying to find an excuse to approve this PAR request. Just look in the mirror and practice saying "No." Don't even bother messing with 6 or 7 stories.
7. MRM will still make some very good money at 5 stories, and the result will be a nice transition between the neighborhood to the south and the excessive height of the new Park Place.

Chuck Pilcher  
[chuck@bourlandweb.com](mailto:chuck@bourlandweb.com)  
 206-915-8593

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2014 10:31 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: MRM Permit No. ZON11-00006

**From:** Dan Ryan <[dan.ryan@gmail.com](mailto:dan.ryan@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** April 16, 2014 at 11:28:09 PM PDT  
**To:** <[PlanningCommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:PlanningCommissioners@kirklandwa.gov)>  
**Subject:** MRM Permit No. ZON11-00006

I forwarded some specific comments before the last hearing of the Commission. Having listened to the hearings, I was surprised by some of the discussion and would like to add some remarks.

I was shocked by how many of you were comfortable 'land-banking' this site for office development that is far in the future, if it ever happens at all. It's indifferent to how the downtown remains blighted by open parking lots. I live downtown, and I love living here. I moved here to be close to an active urban center. The Commission's willingness to contemplate having this parking lot and substandard building land-banked for many years to come is terribly disappointing.

There is a significant opportunity at hand for a building that meaningfully moves the city forward.

The design shared by MRM relates well to Kirkland Ave (in my earlier comments, I worried that a driveway proximate to Kirkland Ave would be a mistake. But the townhouse frontage is vastly better).

A large high-quality retail space would significantly increase foot traffic around Park Place, and assist in driving redevelopment there. Currently, I think QFC is the only meaningful destination retail anywhere in downtown; Park Place would promptly become a failed mall like Totem Lake if QFC ever reconsidered their presence.

And finally, a substantial number of residential units would meaningfully assist the economic viability of downtown. Which is one reason to support the requested height, but I'll return to that point.

It's unfortunate that commercial office development hasn't been more successful in the CBD. We all recognize the benefits of increasing daytime activity in the CBD. But residential development at MRM doesn't affect those constraints at all. Apart from the vast land-bank at Park Place, there are many other sites that remain available. The derelict Antique Mall and the Post Office site are just two of the larger sites that come readily to mind.

The management of Park Place has been determinedly searching for office tenants for several years now, and their informed opinion is that it's a lost cause for the foreseeable future. The McLeod development too was substantially downsized after it failed to prelease space. The Industrial Areas study was one more reminder that you are unlikely to see the commercial development you seek. Nobody is seeking urban office space at scale in Kirkland; they are seeking it in Bellevue and on the East-Link corridor. Even Google opted out of downtown Kirkland to build a suburban-style office park on 6th.

Absent a constraint on available space, why would we prevent residential development when the market exists to build today? Is residential so inferior that we'd prefer the status quo of an ugly one-story building (perhaps soon to be vacant) and an under-utilized parking lot that neighbors have to traverse to reach Park Place?

Finally, a couple of comments on height. The applicant has made a compelling case for higher elevations on the portion of the building that is stepped back from the Avenue and the Park. The proposed buildings is lower than Park Place, lower than the Emerald building, lower than the buildings on the bluff above. Lower than everybody other than Park buildings (which are accommodated by generous setbacks), and a handful of outdated buildings to the southeast. Given the scale of the setbacks, and the width of the Avenue, those are hardly impacted at all.

Finally, there was some commentary about the Park Place precedent. There's an odd idea that the discussion of Park Place established it was unique and the height precedent shouldn't be extended. This makes little sense. MRM was not considered in the Park Place discussion, and deserves a fair hearing on its own merits. How many residents are even aware that MRM isn't part of Park Place?

Dan Ryan

493 2nd Ave S, Kirkland

425.260.9441

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Friday, April 18, 2014 10:53 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: Kirkland Way apartment zoning

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Chris Meyer <[Chris.Meyer@microsoft.com](mailto:Chris.Meyer@microsoft.com)>  
**Date:** March 14, 2014 at 5:14:42 PM PDT  
**To:** "[planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov)" <[planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov)>  
**Subject:** **Kirkland Way apartment zoning**

Hello, my wife and I are writing today to voice our opposition to the Planning Commission granting a height increase to the developer who owns the soon-to-be-razed building currently occupied by Microsoft Game Studios. We live just up the way at 811 Kirkland Way and are concerned that converting any more of the Central Business District from commercial to residential would have three primarily negative effects:

1. It would reduce commercial space and make the downtown area less attractive to consumers
2. It would increase car traffic on a road that cannot provide more capacity and already has an unsafely high speed limit
3. It would negatively impact property values by taking away from Moss Bay's esteem

We love our Kirkland home and want to see the our neighborhood's charm maintained. Please represent us and our neighbors by denying this developer's application.

Sincerely,  
Chris and Chi Meyer  
811 Kirkland Way  
425.765.2804

ERIC C. EVANS  
2472 173<sup>rd</sup> Place NE, Redmond, WA 98052 Tel. 425.429.8168

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March 13, 2013

Kirkland Planning Commission  
**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
123 Fifth Avenue  
Kirkland, WA 98033

RE: MRM Private Amendment Request (PAR)  
City of Kirkland File #ZON11-00006/SEP13-00554

Dear Kirkland Planning Commission Members.

Please accept this letter of support for the MRM Private Amendment Request. For the past 25 years, I have been developing market rate and affordable housing throughout the Pacific Northwest. In addition, I have had the pleasure of developing both market rate and affordable communities in Kirkland. From the South Kirkland Park & Ride with its 185 market rate residences, 6,000 square feet of commercial and 58 affordable residences to the Francis Village Community in Totem Lake, I can personally attest to the need for additional affordable and market rate housing options in Kirkland.

I can also personally attest that these opportunities would not have been possible without the support and leadership of the City of Kirkland to include a mix of housing and commercial opportunities within the City. These efforts in addition to being consistent with a wide variety of Comprehensive Goals and Policies and the Vision of the City of Kirkland, the City's actions are working to bring a diversity of housing and commercial opportunities that will strengthen our economic base and enable more of Kirkland's residents and its employment base the opportunity to enjoy the quality of life that is uniquely Kirkland.

I firmly believe that the MRM Private Amendment Request represents another unique opportunity to further vision of the City by providing additional housing supply in a tight market that can help sustain and compliment the growing retail and economic base downtown with little or no impact to the surrounding community.

Kirkland has been and continues to be a great place for me and the firms with which I have done business. One of the reasons for this is that the City has demonstrated a keen insight in seizing opportunities. Be it the Kirkland Cross Border Trail, or the South Kirkland Park & Ride, the City has proven to be quite nimble in adapting to new ideas that will make the City and the quality of life for its residents more dynamic, more livable, more Kirkland.

We are blessed with a strong economic base, finding creative ways to support that economic base with housing options close to jobs, great schools and vibrant retail is something that Kirkland has a proven track record accomplishing and I encourage you to help support that inventory with your recommendation today.

As a participant in the City's recent ARCH Housing workshop, I was asked what Cities can do to make housing more affordable to all. Your actions today can help bring about more housing options for our community and help ease some of the pressure and provide a great opportunity at the heart of Kirkland.

I appreciate your consideration, support and continued leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric C. Evans". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "E" and a long, thin tail extending downwards.

Eric C. Evans

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 2:30 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: MRM rezone to 8 stories - ok with retail and traffic mitigations

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**From:** Owen Paulus [[mailto:owen\\_paulus@hotmail.com](mailto:owen_paulus@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 8:19 PM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** MRM rezone to 8 stories - ok with retail and traffic mitigations

Hi,

I just heard about the possible rezone at 434 in park place. I think that a change to 8 stories should require retail space be included on the ground floor. It may also require additional traffic mitigations. I also think it should require pedestrian accommodations to enable easy, safe access to park place from Kirkland way.

Thanks,  
Owen Paulus  
Everest

Sent from Windows Mail

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Eric Shields  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2014 8:21 AM  
**To:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Subject:** FW: NO to 8 story buildings

Eric Shields

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**From:** Hae Sue Park [<mailto:haesuepark@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 10:15 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** NO to 8 story buildings

To whom it may concern,

Kirkland has been my beloved home for 17 years now having moved here from New York City. The beauty and charm of Kirkland will be destroyed if this 8 story building gets built.

Please deny MRM's request to build this monstrosity.

Thank you,

Hae Sue Park & Pete Ada  
Highlands family

[Print](#)

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From: **Judy Williams** (williams.ray@comcast.net)  
Sent: Thu 3/13/14 1:26 PM  
To: Jeanne Large (jeannemlarge2010@hotmail.com)

**From:** [Judy Williams](#)  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 11:05 AM  
**To:** [Paul Stewart](#)  
**Cc:** [Penny Sweet](#)  
**Subject:** Comments from Ray and Judy Williams on the proposed MRM developmnet of an 8-story apartment building. at Parkplace.

Good morning, Mr. Stewart:

We have not been able to successfully email the Kirkland Planning Commissioners regarding the MRM proposal for an 8 story apartment in Parkplace, and staff advised that we might send our comments to you and you would see that it reached the Planning Commissioners before tonight's meeting.

Dear Planning Commissioners:

My wife and I plan to attend the meeting this evening, but we thought it might be helpful to provide you our comments and concerns before the meeting. We urge the Planning Commissioners to ensure that any approved variations from code and/or the Comprehensive Plan should not come free of costs to the developers. Parkplace offered significant offsetting benefits to the City and residents when it requested variations. That seems to us to be the route the City should take with all developers, including MRM, who request a variation to the City's vision. It is not the City's job to make the developers more financially profitable. Rather, it is the City's responsibility to promote and protect its comprehensive vision and to carefully negotiate with developers a fair quid pro quo that provides the City and its residents with innovative and substantial offsetting benefits when full compliance is not possible. We would not want variations to code to become a cheap coin in this realm.

We are also hoping to see at this meeting the proposed design of the MRM building to assess whether the people opposed to the MRM proposal have fairly represented actual MRM design plans.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Ray & Judy Williams  
225 4th Ave, A-204  
Kirkland, WA 98033  
(425) 889-5044

Planning Commissioners,

We are writing to protest the allowance of the eight story MRM building in downtown Kirkland. Please do not approve this project in its current 8 story form.

Developments like MRM diminish the character of Kirkland which is what makes Kirkland so desirable. If you allow this development you will forever change what has always been the best part of Kirkland, the small town feel. Please DO NOT allow MRM to put 8 stories in that location. Stick to the current regulations. Too much sky in downtown Kirkland has been given up in the name of development and revenue.

How does an 8 story building in this development benefit the residents of Kirkland? There are no benefits but the loss of our town's character, the added traffic on overloaded roads and the additional costs for updated firefighting equipment will be ours to bear when the development is done.

We asked neighbors to come to this meeting and their response was, "It won't make a difference." They are resigned to big money winning out every time, just like it did with the Portsmouth building. (An ugly scar on our town's face.)

Please consider the long term impact this development will have. If you allow it, you may as well merge Kirkland with Bellevue and adopt its name.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Larry and Cindy Springer  
121 6th Ct. Kirkland, WA 98033  
206-499-0866  
larryspringer52@gmail.com

**Angela Ruggeri**

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**From:** Angela Ruggeri  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:39 PM  
**To:** Planning Commissioners  
**Subject:** FW: No to 8 Story Building

-----Original Message-----

From: Rafael Villavicencio [<mailto:rafaelvillavicencio3@gmail.com>]  
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 5:31 PM  
To: Angela Ruggeri  
Cc: Anna Rising  
Subject: No to 8 Story Building

Hi Angela,

Please do not allow 8 story buildings in Kirkland. We don't want Kirkland to be another Bellevue.

Thank you,

Ralph & Guia Villavicencio

Sent from my iPhone