CITY OF KIRKLAND
Planning and Community Development Department
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3225
www.kirklandwa.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Design Review Board

From: Jon Regala, Senior Planner

Date: January 8, 2013

Subject: LAKE STREET PLACE – ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT
FILE NO. DRV12-00921

The Lake Street Place project was continued from the December 17, 2012 DRB meeting. Attached are additional public comments regarding the Lake Street Place project scheduled for DRB deliberation on January 14, 2013.

These comments were received after the DRB packet was distributed yesterday and are being forward to the DRB for consideration.

Please email me at jregala@kirklandwa.gov or call me at (425) 587-3255 if you have any questions.

Attachments – Rohrback comments
Hart comments

CC: DRV 12-00921

City of Kirkland
Design Review Board
Lake Street Place Review

January 7, 2013

I hesitate to make comment at this meeting as I do not feel our concerns are being addressed. I went to great lengths to quote from the Design Review Board Guidelines regarding buildings close to residences and I don't feel my concerns have even been heard. More than that, I don't feel like the citizens were even treated with respect.

- The design review board lectured us on their purpose…to address design concerns, yet at the end of that lecture a comment was made by a DRB member something about this building being in the "best interest" of Kirkland. That didn't sound like a design concern at all.
- Some of our elderly citizens chose to come speak and a DRB member made one of them stand at the microphone while he gave that lecture on the purpose of the DRB. Clearly he had no regard for the fact that she struggled to even get to the microphone and then had to stand there and wait for him to finish talking.
- If, as suggested by the DRB, as long as the building meets code we have to allow and the fact that the Guidelines are selectively applied leads me to believe there is no need for a DRB in the first place.
- As far as this building being in the "best interest" of Kirkland, only 1 person I have talked to thinks a building that large in downtown Kirkland is a good idea and that person had a business relationship with the developer. Most people still don't know the design for this building is not the two-story with underground parking originally appearing in the news and they do not approve of such a large building in the downtown core.
- We spent a considerably higher amount of money to buy a place in Kirkland because the property values were higher due to the unique, quaint small town feel. If we lose that feel, we will lose property value as well and become just another eastside city.
- The original project was modeled after Peppertree Lane in Laguna Beach and now this one is modeled after Post Alley in Seattle. It seems like it would be best to model the project after the City of Kirkland…so we remain unique and not try to be Laguna Beach, Seattle or Bellevue or any other town. Wouldn't it be better to have other towns say let's model our project after downtown Kirkland, Washington?
- Through all the changes, only the color and pattern of the walls have been changed in regard to the South side of the East wall and the South wall. There has been no compromise offered to lessen the impact on the affected residents.
- My understanding of the original zero lot line rules in downtown Kirkland was more because it didn't make sense to do anything else when the walls had no windows, however, the nearby walls have windows, sunlight, decks and residents. Downtown residents should not be sacrificed due to the opinion of a few people as we believe the majority of Kirkland residents would not want this building in its current form. I believe the majority would want the building smaller and in keeping with the current downtown feel.

I also have another safety concern that I feel must be heard because the design of the building will affect the safety of many nearby residents.

- How will a fire truck get access to The Portsmith? There should be a fire lane behind the new building.

Sincerely,

Sandi Hart

Sandi Hart
109 2nd St S Apt 239
Kirkland, Wa 98033
shart5@comcast.net

Dr. and Mrs. Brian G. Rohrback
109 2nd Street South, Unit 237
Kirkland, WA 98033
425 836-8138
M: 206 235-0371
l.b.rohrback@gmail.com
brian_rohrback@infometrix.com

January 7, 2013

Mr. Jon Regala
City of Kirkland
Planning and Community Development Department
123 Fifth Avenue
Kirkland, WA 98033

Reference: Permit No. DRV12-00921 Lake Street Place Design Review

Dear Jon,

Below are some comments and questions for the Design Review Board in preparation for the January 14th meeting. Lisa and I continue to have exactly the same concerns about the proposal for Lake Street Place. With the information supplied on the proposed building staging, there are additional concerns. In review:

- ☑ The zoning regulations have been pushed to the limit at all levels making a whole that does not fit in the waterfront core.
- ☑ The building is huge, tripling the office space in the region bounded by the waterfront on the West, State Street on the East, Kirkland Ave on the North and 2nd Avenue S on the South.
- ☑ It also features a massive above-ground parking structure that is completely unprecedented in the Kirkland Downtown Business District.
- ☑ The parking garage features a 30' tall, 300'long blank wall placed too close to residences, only 14' away from Portsmith living spaces. There is nothing even remotely similar when considering the distances between buildings in Kirkland (or likely ***ANY*** other community in Washington State).
- ☑ The building is highly restrictive of the public pedestrian walkway generating a very narrow tunnel to the East and South, where it restricts the walkway to only 6 feet in width in places.

With the proposal for the Kirkland Waterfront Market as a starting point, the plan anticipates the construction of the garage, which may not be allowed due to traffic and safety issues (I understand this is not in your purview). The design leaves much of the North wall and all of the East wall blank. I believe some mitigation is needed either to add windows (that may later be removed if additional construction is to occur) or some sort of treatment that removes the warehouse-like appearance to the structure.

Thank you for confirming that letters were indeed sent to a subset of the neighboring residents. My complaint with this process is that it did not successfully reach all of the residents and I note that 7 of the 10 condominiums that are within 14 feet of the Eastern wall were not contacted (4 were not sent a letter, 2 were sent to the wrong address, one was deemed undeliverable by the postal service). Sending letters to corporate headquarters in Seattle (B of A) or Texas (Merrill Gardens) is an inefficient way of getting the word to the right people. In addition, fewer than half of the residents were contacted given that Kirkland residents who happen to be renters were completely ignored. We are no longer in the 17th century where only landholders have a valued opinion. The 101 Apartments and Merrill Gardens have a right to voice their concerns.

Thank you very much for allowing us once again to express our concerns. We appreciate your time in reviewing this matter more fully.

Best Regards,

Brian G. Rohrback

Cc: Mayor Joan McBride
Eric Shields