



December 18, 2024

Rico Quirindongo, *Director*
Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development

RE: One Seattle Comprehensive Plan

Dear Rico Quirindongo,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment and feedback. The Magnolia Community council and Magnolia/Interbay Land Use Committee have reviewed and discussed the Comp Plan updates and have prepared our comments, concerns, and recommendations. Our focus is on the three proposed Neighborhood Centers and SE Magnolia. Please see itemized comments below:

1. Magnolia Village Neighborhood Center:

We strongly support increased density within the heart of Magnolia Village, which has seen little development over the past 30 years compared with other neighborhood centers. We believe it is important to increase the height of buildings permitted in the Village from 55’ to 65’ in order to attract more development. However, we are concerned that the recommended land use for adjacent neighborhoods (LR3) covers too large an area and will dilute the efforts needed to ensure that the Village itself is developed. The area that has been recommended to be increased to 65’ should be expanded to include the entire village along McGraw and 32nd Ave W.

We recommend the following:

- Expand 65-foot height Neighborhood Commercial NC-65 zone to include lots on the South side of McGraw, from 30th to 35th Street.
- Include Neighborhood Commercial NC 65 zoning in the heart of the Village along 32nd from the Bartells Center property and north to Smith St (CVS pharmacy).
- Consider low-rise multifamily LR3/LR2 (50-foot/40-foot height or 5- to 4-stories) ONLY on the streets immediately adjacent to NC 65’ zones (half block).
- Transition areas outside of the immediate Village Core should be zoned to just LR1 (30-foot height or 3-stories), no more than LR2. (Note: 40’ tall Townhome development already exists as the south buffer of the village). This would be an ideal transition to the adjacent Neighborhood Residential NR zones.
- Scale down gradually from LR2 to LR1 where currently showing large areas of five-story LR3 multifamily zones (east of the Magnolia Village). There are significant trees on the cul-de-sac just south of the Village, that is currently slated for LR2. This cul-de-sac area is physically separated from the village, and adjacent to residential NR zoning. We strongly recommend that NR zoning be maintained for this area in order to maintain the significant tree canopy and match the scale of the adjacent neighborhood.

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- Consider LR1 Zoning on 32nd south of the intersection of Clise Way, across from the existing townhomes, which would act as a gateway to the Village.
- Consider increasing zoning along 34th. This street faces the park/playfields, and is a link from Magnolia Village to the new North Magnolia Neighborhood Center. Townhomes are already being developed, so consider LR2/LR3 closer to the Village, and keep LR1 along 34th until it meets the new North Magnolia Neighborhood Center (LR2/LR3/NC 65).
- Transit frequency should be considered along with development.

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2. North Magnolia Neighborhood Center

The North Magnolia Neighborhood Center (with existing commercial businesses) is immediately adjacent to single family neighborhoods to the East and West. We support increasing density along 34th, but maintain that at this time the adjacent neighborhoods should remain NR, or at the most LR1 zoning to include townhomes.

We recommend the following:

- Expand the Neighborhood Commercial area NC-65 one block to the south.
- Limit NC-65, LR3 and LR2 zoning to one block in width (on both east and west side of 34th)
- South of Elmore Street, the first blocks immediately East and West of 34th should be LR1, not LR2 or LR3
- Large areas East and West of 34th should be LR1 and/or maintained as residential NR, in order to continue development of higher density housing such as townhomes and apartments along 34th Avenue W., while maintaining an appropriate scale within the existing neighborhood.
- LR3 is acceptable in area North of Elmore St. to Government Way, which is consistent with existing structures. The intersection of 34th and Government could be considered for NC-65 as there are already existing multistory structures there.
- Consider transitions of LR2 and LR1 as buffers, and a narrower LR3 zone—east and west of Metropolitan Market along 34th Avenue W.

3. SE Magnolia (28th & Blaine Neighborhood)

- We agree with recent comments from neighborhood groups who maintain this area does NOT qualify as a Frequent Transit Service Area Neighborhood. The remaining 3 bus lines (24, 31, and 33) that serve Magnolia (down from 4) do not run frequently as defined by State law.
- The heart of this portion of the neighborhood is single family homes with no commercial space or services. We support the Neighborhood Residential NR zoning, which will already offers the potential for vastly increasing the existing number of residential structures.

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4. Interbay Station

- New multifamily structures in this neighborhood rise to 65'. Please consider allowing MR zone 85' height in more areas within this high capacity transit-orientated area (similar to central Ballard) to ensure maximum density near/next to the future light rail station.
- NC 65' is acceptable at the Interbay playfield.
- Zoning along 20th should be increased to match the core Station Area. The current low-rise zoning (45') is not sufficient to attract development and there are a number of empty buildings and older one-story commercial/industrial buildings that are within 2 blocks of the proposed station.

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Please feel free to contact us. We look forward to continuing to engage with OPCD and focusing on the proposed changes coming to Magnolia and our Seattle communities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Alison Kan Grevstad
President, Magnolia Community Council

Scott Surdyke
Chair, Magnolia/Interbay Land Use Committee Trustee
Magnolia Community Council