

From: Pete Holton <pwholton@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 3:40 PM
To: Stephanie Keyser
Subject: Re: June 21 meeting

Hi Stephanie, I live in Medina Heights where our current building height is restricted to 20 feet from original grade. I would like to keep it at 20 feet from original grade. As you know Medina Heights homes are built on a mildly sloped hillside and in order to preserve views the Preservation District was created. My opinion is that using average grade will result in higher rooflines thus restricting views. Let's keep the Preservation District as is.
Thank Pete

Sent from my iPad

> On Jun 20, 2022, at 12:52 PM, Stephanie Keyser <skeyser@medina-wa.gov> wrote:

>

> Hi Pete,

>

> Yes, all of the meetings are recorded. I'm not sure if any motions will be made tomorrow but regardless Planning Commission's recommendation will be brought to Council in September for another public hearing and possible adoption.

>

> Let me know if you have questions.

>

> Stephanie

>

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

> From: Pete Holton <pwholton@comcast.net>

> Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 4:49 PM

> To: Stephanie Keyser <skeyser@medina-wa.gov>

> Subject: June 21 meeting

>

> I can't attend the virtual meeting. Will it be recorded and available at a later date?

> Thanks Pete

>

> Sent from my iPhone

From: Steven Smith <stevensmith13@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 12:04 PM
To: Stephanie Keyser
Cc: Kathleen Bayley-Smith
Subject: Proposed Average Grade Amendment

To whom it may concern,

We have lived at 309 Upland Road, Medina for approximately 20 years.

We also own 8467 Midland Road, Medina.

We are submitting comments regarding a Proposal to change building requirements from the current "original" grade to "average" grade to determine available height for building.

This proposed change is a VERY BAD idea.

If this was the very beginning of the City of Medina in the 1950's, it could make sense.

Unfortunately, approximately 1/2 or more of the homes in Medina have been rebuilt over the last 65 + years under the existing "original" grade determination.

With flat, non-view lots, it may not make a significant difference.

But with view, sloped lots, such as Medina Heights it will be a catastrophe.

Over 1/2 the homes in these areas have already been rebuilt under the "original" grade determination.

Most of these properties have approximately 10' - 12' of slope over their building footprint.

This new proposal would enable any new rebuilt homes to be approximately 5' - 6' higher than previously allowed.

5' - 6' additional height would significantly negatively impact the view of any existing home or already rebuilt home under the "original" grade determination.

Especially Medina Heights which only has a 20' (original) 23' (finished) overall height available currently.

This would be approximately a 25% increase in height allowed.

The many homes already built to the "original" grade determination would likely seek financial remedy from the City of Medina for loss of view if the "average" grade proposal were approved.

It could be said that the already rebuilt homes could rebuild again higher with the proposed amendment.

That would be unlikely with a range of \$3M to \$10M in construction cost already spent in the rebuilt homes.

I am a long term homeowner, as well as a builder who has built many homes in Medina and Clyde Hill.

I understand the proposed amendment and STRONGLY OPPOSE it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Steven and Kathleen Smith

425-260-4595

425-260-4596

From: Richard Stevenson <richstevenson@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 10:03 AM
To: Stephanie Keyser
Subject: Average Grade

Hi Stephanie,

My name is Rich Stevenson and we(my family) have lived at 8214 Overlake Dr. W in Medina for 22 years. I have been in the construction/real estate business for over 40 years and would like you to know where I stand with regards to the new proposal of "Average Grade".

Medina is the first place I've lived or worked where "original grade" is standard practice for measuring structure height. I believe this to be a very antiquated, impractical and unfair means to determining the height of a structure with regards to equality to all residents and basic curb appeal for the neighborhood.

For what it is worth, I would like you to know that **I support the proposal of "Average Grade"**.

Sincerely,
Rich Stevenson
(206)619-6995

From: Bill Pollard <pollard@talonprivate.com>
Sent: Monday, June 6, 2022 8:36 AM
To: Stephanie Keyser
Cc: Jhpollard@comcast.net
Subject: Planning Commission "Average Grade" discussion

Stephanie:

I own a home in Medina Heights located at 8423 Midland Road. We did a major renovation approximately 3 years ago and had numerous height constraints because it was determined that our Original Grade was significantly lower than the current Average Grade. There are numerous lots adjacent to us that are ripe from re-development. If there was a switch to an Average Grade height determination, it would have major view implications and negative impacts on property values for all of us that have abided by the Original Grade code requirements. While I support progressive municipal regulation, it not appropriate nor equitable for the City to specifically modify a code to enhance the property values of some while having a punitive impact on those who have been abided by the existing regulations. I would also suggest that Medina Heights is unique within the City due to its topography. It might be appropriate to exempt Medina Heights from a punitive code modification which wouldn't have negative effects in the balance of the City.

Thank you for your consideration and please pass on my thoughts to the Planning Commission.

Bill Pollard

BILL POLLARD
MANAGING PRINCIPAL
[Download my vCard - Click Here](#)



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From: Andrew DeFlorio <DeFlorioa@baylisarchitects.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 2:35 PM
To: Stephanie Keyser <skeyser@medina-wa.gov>
Cc: Johan Luchsinger <luchsingerj@baylisarchitects.com>
Subject: RE: Average Grade - Proposed Code Amendment

Hi Stephanie,

This is great information, thanks so much for passing it on.

We're talking to our client about how they'd like to proceed, and this information about the code and possible timeline will be very helpful.

With regards to my experience with original grade on this site, we were able to get our grades back from the surveyor relatively quickly and they mostly matched what we were seeing in previous site surveys. The unknowns and seeming arbitrary value of original grade gives me pause since it seems much easier to determine existing grade, given that's what we're actually measuring.

A lot of the difficulty for us comes from the length and narrowness of our site, which also has a higher point in the middle, creating a more limited area where can locate the home, given current code using the low points. We're also in R-16, right on the cusp of R-20, so we don't get to take advantage of any bonuses.

It is true that an average grade plane calculation would allow a higher overall building plane for us, but we also lose the 36' horizontal height plane, which could have we could have benefited from on this site, given the slope. Overall, using an average grade plane allowed us a bit more freedom and flexibly with construction and design without an overall increase in maximum building height area.

I'm curious to keep this on my radar and would love to listen or attend the hearing if possible. Any chance the hearings are streamed online or are they only in person?

Thanks again for the information, this has been extremely helpful.

Andrew DeFlorio
Intern Architect

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From: laurelpr@seanet.com
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 4:12 PM
To: 'David Yee'
Cc: Stephanie Keyser
Subject: RE: building height

Dear Dr. Yee,

Thank you for your input. Ms. Keyser will circulate it to the entire Commission.

Just a remark regarding correspondence in the future...I know that I have told you that you are welcome to email me, and we appreciate hearing from you. Going forward, please send any messages that you intend for the entire Commission directly to Ms. Keyser. She will forward your message to all Commissioners. An independent email that includes a quorum could be perceived as a meeting, but the necessary public notification of a meeting has not taken place. So this is a matter of transparency. We cannot conduct substantive discussions via email.

I hope you understand and I do not in any way intend to discourage your input. Thank you again for your message.

Best,
Laurel

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

From: David Yee <davidyee2006@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 2:02 PM
To: laurelpr@seanet.com
Cc: del@davidlangworthy.com; mark@nelsonarchitecture.net; laurabustamante60@gmail.com
Subject: building height

Dear Chair and Commissioner Preston, Vice Chair and Commissioner Schubring, Commissioner Nelson, Commissioner Hsu, Commissioner Raskin, Commissioner Bustamante, and Commissioner Langworthy:

During a recent city council meeting, Commissioner Preston reported to the city council about the Planning Commission's work on building height. She noted that there was little public input and that she sought such public input. I am writing to comply with that request.

My observations by having an addition built for my house and by reading the proposal are:

1. The proposed code is overly complex. This increases costs to Medina residents. More than one architect has remarked to me that projects in Medina are costly because of many incremental costs associated with compliance. Increased costs harm Medina residents. One architect mentioned that he did not like to design projects in Medina because of the overly complex and legalistic requirements.
2. Overly restrictive and bureaucratic requirements generally do not benefit Medina residents. The larger lots and low density makes it possible to have a varied view, be it of the yard, trees, street, lake (in some cases), and other houses.

3. A sloped property already presents design challenges so additional challenges added by the city creates additional headaches and problems.
4. Land is not 2 dimensional unlike paper drawings. Land elevation varies not only along the length of the house but also the width and all the area within these lines.
5. Most of the time, it is trees, not houses, that block views. I say this as an offender, not a victim, as the many tall trees on my property block others' views.

I would find it acceptable if the maximum building height is measured by the highest point of the original grade where there will be a building. Any other parts of the building may equal this elevation as long as the difference between that maximum elevation and the excess over the maximum building height is less than or equal to one floor or 15 feet, whichever is lower. As floors are level, the undulations of the ground elevation are not replicated in the floor.

As an example, if the elevation of a property is between 5 ft. above sea level and 50 ft. above sea level, the height limitation would be 28 ft. (78 ft. above sea level, $50+28=78$) if the house is built where the land is 50 ft. above sea level. All other parts of the house could be at 78 ft. above sea level IF that area of the house was no more than 43 ft. ($28 + 15$) above original grade or one floor higher than 28 ft., whichever was lower.

I am copying the other planning commission members whom I have an e-mail address for. I do not have all of them.

Best regards,
David
David Yee, MD
3215 Evergreen Point Road