



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON
PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU

Nick Fish, Commissioner
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February 25, 2010

Debbie Aiona
League of Women Voters of Portland
310 Southwest 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204-2310

Dear Debbie:

Thank you for your letter expressing the concerns of the League of Women Voters about the critical need for viable affordable housing solutions in the North Macadam urban renewal area.

I spoke in support of PDC's action at the February 24, 2010 Board meeting, fully acknowledging that the responsibility for overseeing strategies, resources, and staff to create affordable housing in the district now rests with the Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) under my direction.

I feel that eliminating PDC's obligation to build affordable housing on the air rights above a garage on Block 33 is the right thing to do because:

- The Block 33 affordable housing concept has long been regarded as infeasible due to the "loaded" costs of high rise construction and absorbing a proportional share of the parking obligation.
- PHB brings new rigor to the creation of the affordable housing units originally described in the North Macadam Housing Framework Plan, especially where a portion of those units will serve Veterans. This is a top priority of PHB and Commissioner Fish.
- PHB hopes to have a near-term North Macadam housing strategy within the next 30 days, which may include Block 49.
- Shortly, PHB will engage its partners, including the North Macadam URA stakeholders, in planning for additional housing to be developed in the district in the next 5 years, based on PDC revenue forecasts.
- The actions taken by PDC will return resources previously expended TIF resources so that they can be redeployed towards a feasible housing project.

Know that I share your commitment to creating as much affordable housing for low income renters in North Macadam and across the city. I would appreciate the opportunity to share my thinking about this, and get the League's perspectives in more detail, in the coming months. Please give me or Kate Allen, 503.823.3606, a call at your convenience to schedule a time to meet.

Best regards,

Margaret Van Vliet, Portland Housing Bureau Director

Cc: Commissioner Nick Fish
Scott Andrews, Chair, PDC Board of Commissioners
Bruce Warner, PDC Executive Director