



Amanda is a Registered Nurse, mother of three, and community leader in Portland, Oregon. She was the first candidate ever to qualify for Portland's Public Campaign Financing in her run for City Council in 2006.

All photographs on the blog are by Steve Fritz (Amanda's husband), unless otherwise noted.

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Mega-store proposal in Madison South

Posted February 15, 2007 - 4:31pm

Madison South is the [neighborhood](#) south of Sandy Boulevard and north of the Banfield, straddling 82nd Avenue in NE Portland. [Save Madison South](#) and the [Roseway Neighborhood Association](#) are teaming up to oppose an application for a huge shopping center on a site at NE 82nd and Siskiyou which is not zoned for such use. Rather than ask the Council to change the zone, the applicants are requesting permission for their project via a Conditional Use, which is a process that allows variations if a few criteria are met - and is generally easier to get approved than a zone change. Because the intensity of the desired use isn't allowed in the current EG2 zoning of the property, they're also having to ask for a [whopper](#) of an adjustment - increasing the amount of retail allowed from 60,000 square feet to 240,000 square feet. Remember what I [said](#) about trying to squeeze too much into a site not zoned for the intensity desired by market forces?

Neighborhood leaders are organizing a

Neighborhood Livability/Permit Protest Rally "Think Outside the Big Box"

for this coming **Saturday, February 17 at Glenhaven Park, next to Madison High School at NE 82nd & Siskiyou, from 10 am-12 noon**, rain or shine. Speakers will be addressing the group around 11 am.

The issue is zoning. Portland has a Comprehensive Plan Map which designates which areas of the city should have primarily residential, commercial, employment, or industrial uses, and the planned intensity of each type of use. The Map is carefully constructed to balance these uses and ensure we have enough of each, in the right places so the uses don't conflict with each other. Putting a major commercial/retail use on land that is supposed to be for industrial and employment uses could create problems, especially when not considered in proper context via a Zone Change request.

The EG2 zone is for General Employment. *"The General Employment zones ... allow a wide range of employment opportunities without potential conflicts from interspersed residential uses. The emphasis of the zones is on industrial and industrially related uses. Other commercial uses are allowed to support a wide range of services and employment opportunities....The area is less developed, with sites having medium and low building coverages and buildings which are*

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usually set back from the street," is the description in the Zoning Code. In the [Conditional Use](#) hearing, the most crucial approval criterion the proposal will have to meet is probably **"The proposed use will not significantly alter the overall desired character of the area, based on the existing mixture of uses and the effects of incremental change" (Zoning Code 33.815.128 C)**. Neighbors and the applicant will need to address this question.

I collaborated with the Roseway folks and other neighbors joining together as *Friends Of Neighborhood Zoning* several years ago, on the so-called "Skinny Lots" controversy. There too, the issue was zoning. Zoning sets the rules so everyone knows what to expect. Zoning is about **everyone's** property rights - the neighbors as well as the would-be developer's. If you buy a home in a neighborhood zoned for one house per 5,000 square feet of lot size, you have a right to expect the city not to allow two homes per 5,000 square feet, unless the Council changes the zone. Similarly, if you want to live near a Wal-Mart or other such mega-store, you buy a home near a lot zoned for that use, rather than one zoned for much smaller retail and employment developments.

I'll be watching as the application in Madison South moves through the hearing process and on to the almost-certain appeal to Council.

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Hmmm, I attended the Roseway board meeting this week and they mentioned nothing about a protest (I did arrive late, though).

Thank you for the heads up.

Submitted by Mark Oliver on February 15, 2007 - 5:18pm.

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I got the impression the rally was pulled together quickly when the application was ruled complete - I just received an email about it yesterday. Please post here if you find the information I posted needs correcting.

Submitted by Amanda Fritz on February 15, 2007 - 10:48pm.

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Oh, I see -- the developer had asked for the conditional use permit application to be deemed complete, even though it was not. Just one of the advantages that developers are granted (over neighborhoods) in the present system.

Submitted by Mark Oliver on February 16, 2007 - 8:24am.

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