



Northwest District Association

August 18, 2019

Dear Mayor Wheeler, Commissioners Fritz, Fish, Hardesty, and Eudaly,

The Northwest District Neighborhood Association (NWDA) shares the City of Portland's goals of welcoming diversity and seeking inclusion of all communities. As a Millennial renter myself and a NWDA Board member, I am proud of the steps we have taken to further those goals.

The NWDA welcomes the guidance of the OCCL, as stated in Code 3.96, to help and support us in achieving greater diversity and inclusion. The NWDA has already made great strides in revitalizing our social media outreach and have plans in the works to do even more outreach to renters by going into the many apartment communities, such as my own, that the Northwest District neighborhood contains. Every meeting now has a corresponding Facebook event with a banner that reads, in no uncertain terms, "All are welcome!"

However, the NWDA stands opposed to the change in Code 3.96 as currently written. The NWDA believes that open meeting requirements and public record obligations enhance civic engagement and must be preserved and even enlarged. The NWDA would suggest that the definitions for neighborhood, business, and district associations be maintained, and that minimum standards and functions be articulated in Code 3.96.

The NWDA further believes that the timing of this proposal is out of sequence with the Charter Review, which will occur in 2020. This puts the proverbial cart before the horse. The Charter Review should take precedence and the place of neighborhood associations should fit into that.

The NWDA is also concerned about the open hostility and bias against neighborhood associations reported in the August 9th Oregonian article by Gordon Friedman. In light of this, the NWDA would request that Mayor Wheeler consider reassigning the OCCL to a different commissioner.

As such, the NWDA would ask you to reject this proposed change as written, should it return to the Council calendar. As Chair of the NWDA Code 3.96 Committee, I would be happy to discuss the NWDA's position in depth with each of you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cole
Chair, NWDA Code 3.96 Committee