

THE NUMBER 1 GOAL: a retrospective

Harrison Apartments Case Study

Anyeley Hallova
Partner, Project[^]



background

OVERVIEW

- Senate Bill 100, Goal 01: Citizen Involvement
- Livability, citizen involvement and the housing marketing in Corvallis, OR
- Case of Harrison Apartments, a proposed mixed-use sustainable development two blocks from Oregon State University
- Effect citizen involvement had on the project and how it undermines the statewide land use goals



context

context

SENATE BILL 100

- Comprehensive land-use planning stems from pioneering legislation, Senate Bill 100 in 1973
- Local jurisdictions, special districts, and state agencies conduct comprehensive land-use planning to meet public interest goals
- Reaction to exponential growth - doubling of population from 1950-2000
- Sprawling development and the loss of prime agricultural land, forest resources, scenic vistas, places of social and cultural heritage
- Oregon represented an idea “an Eden where people prospected not for gold but for a better life” – Oregonian writer Brian Meehan
- Land use battle – property rights vs. protectors of the environment

context

LIVABILITY

- 19 statewide land-use planning goals, which include citizen involvement, urbanization, housing, transportation, agricultural land
- Partnership between the state and local jurisdictions
- Senate Bill 100, “gives us a process of full **citizen participation** in making decisions to maintain the **livability** of Oregon, providing a legacy to all future generations of sensitive care and respect for our land” - Governor Tom McCall
- Citizen participation prerequisite for livability?
- Livability is about the human experience, all the factors that add up to a community's quality of life
- Difficult to define, gives citizens both a beacon of hope and tool for opposing projects

context

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

- “Its no coincidence that *Citizen Involvement* is the first among Oregon’s 19 statewide planning goals. Extensive citizen participation has been the hallmark of the state’s planning program from the outset” - Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)
- Benefits in comprehensive planning scale - identify, prioritize, implement
- Not limited to planning, review of site-specific development to code
- Harrison Apartments received public scrutiny as a part of the Planned Development Overlay

context

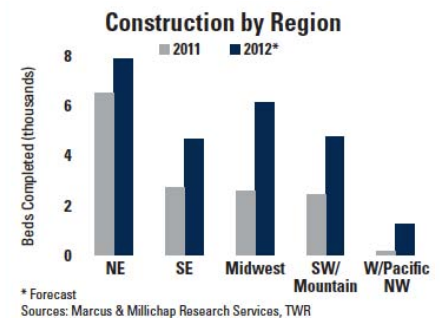
CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN CORVALLIS

- City of Corvallis implemented Goal 1 in 1998 through the Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI)
- CCI not a key influencer, Neighborhood Associations form cornerstone
- 25 associations mostly active around OSU, lay mostly dormant until 2011 with townhouse development around the university
- Protecting their own turf, battle against bad development, NIMBY
- Harrison Apartment antagonist - College Hill Neighborhood Association, middle-class neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places bordering OSU

context

STUDENT HOUSING MARKET

- Nationally: 1990 to 2000 enrollment increased by 37%
- Oregon State increased by 13% in one year from 2010 to 2011
- State passed legislation in 2011 to ensure by 2025 “40% of all Oregonians have a bachelor's degree or higher” from 28% in 2009
- Nationally, large student housing developers meet demand by high-density off-campus projects and public-private partnerships
- West / Pacific Northwest region lags – significant barriers to entry such as constrained land supply/ownership, building complexities, entitlement challenges and citizen opposition
- Corvallis has a 1%-2% vacancy, aging housing stock
- Infill townhouses replacing single-family houses



context

HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING



- Harrison, 7th Street Station, Sather's property, and Witham Oaks
- (9.7.3) "City and OSU shall work toward the goal of housing 50% of students who attend regular classes on campus in units on campus or within ½ mile of campus"
- (11.7.7) – "approximate opportunities for increasing residential density...along existing and proposed transit routes"
- (14.3.1) "Infill and redevelopment within urban areas shall be preferable to annexations"
- The only one to pass without much fight was Sather's, greenfield, cottage homes that expanded the city limits – added 33 acres to City
- Difference? other projects had strong neighborhood associations against them

context

GROWING PAINS

- Vocal residents – new development are driving up rents, reducing affordable housing, forcing renters to live in neighboring communities and commute
- Densification, which is permitted, is not “compatible” with historic neighborhoods and increase traffic and lack of parking
- The real problem - 1% vacancy / lack of supply
- 1998 Buildable Lands Survey defined areas of medium and high-density as “needed development”
- (9.6.3) “The redevelopment review process shall not result in the exclusion of needed housing at densities permitted by underlying district designations or results in unreasonable cost or delay”

harrison apartments

harrison apartments

ORIGINS

- Partnership between Samaritan Health Services and project^
- 2.11 acre set home to the Corvallis General Hospital built in 1920's, expanded by Samaritan Health Services to 146 beds and 82,400sqft
- Converted to nursing home in 1975, which closed down in 2009
- Deteriorated and unusable with current zoning requirements
- Two year entitlement resulting in 79,086sft, 68 units, 151 parking stalls
- Transit/pedestrian-oriented, sustainable (first LEED certified housing)



harrison apartments

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

- Sought public opinion early and often, 6 neighborhood meetings
- Had issues with the timing of development around OSU, used Harrison Apartments as a place to vent
- Gross misunderstanding of the intent of the urban growth boundary as a tool to limit development inside boundary
- NIMBY, “We again express our concern that this proposed development may be the **right building** but it would be in the **wrong location**”
- Discrimination against students, “to promote the development of long-term, multi-family housing servicing all types of families, senior citizens, and individual renters of all ages”



harrison apartments

PUBLIC OPPOSITION

- Historic compatibility, height, density, parking, solar access, materials, setbacks, architectural style
- Opposed regardless of meeting the code
- Denied by Planning Commission, appealed to City Council, withdrew and resubmitted
- Not based on “clear and objective standards”

Harrison Apartments - Get the Facts

<i>existing</i>	<i>corvallis code</i>	<i>proposed</i>	<i>compare</i>
HEIGHT			
35 feet	65 feet allowed	42.75 feet	↓ 34% below code allowed
BUILDING SIZE			
82,400 sqft	n/a	79,086 sqft	↓ 4% less than existing building
LOT COVERAGE			
82% coverage	75% allowed	61% coverage	↓ 14% less than code allowed
PAVED AREA			
37,300 sqft	n/a	31,376 sqft	↓ 16% less than existing site
CAR PARKING			
70 spaces	145 spaces required	151 spaces	↑ 4% above code required
BIKE PARKING			
--	123 spaces required	124 spaces	↑ 1% above code required
GREEN AREA			
18% green area	25% required	39% green area	↑ 14% above code required
LANDSCAPED AREA			
--	10% required	25% landscaped	↑ 15% above code required
OUTDOOR SPACE			
--	21,164 sqft required	21,680 sqft	↑ 2% above code required
TREES			
14 trees	~ 41 trees required	63 trees	↑ 450% more than existing site

results

Did citizen involvement create a better project?

When compared to the original proposal the final project does not live up to some of the key goals of the Comprehensive Plan that promote compact/efficient development and increased reliance on transit within the urban growth boundary making Oregon more “livable”

results

#1: REDUCES “NEEDED” HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING

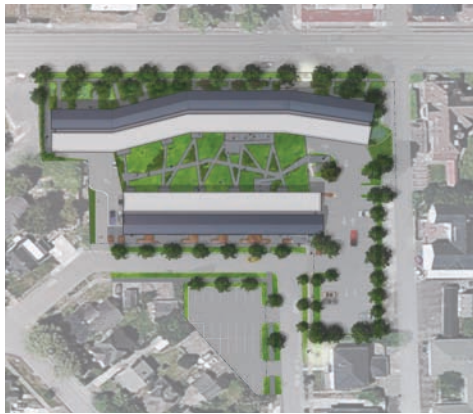
- Providing “needed housing” is a matter of statewide importance
- Pressure from neighborhood association on the Planning Commission reduced density
 - 43 units / acre to 32 (code minimum 20) - 24% reduction in density
- Does not fully contribute to reducing the 1% vacancy
- Note: Harrison Apartments is smaller than existing building onsite

Comp Plan: “efficient use of land”, “opportunities for increasing residential density”, “promote clustering and multiple stories”





Existing site with hospital



Original proposal

Approved design

results

#2: PROMOTES GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT

- Pressure on greenfield development on the periphery (Sather's)
- Development won't occur in Corvallis but in neighboring towns increasing commuting, traffic, and affecting air quality
- Reduces tax base and economic development potential in City
- (14.31) "Infill and redevelopment within urban areas shall be preferable to annexations"

Comp Plan: "emphasize efficiency use of energy and other resources", "emphasize compact urban form" "limit unnecessary increase in percentage of Corvallis' impervious surfaces"



results

#3: INCREASED DEPENDANCE ON VEHICLES

- Harrison – 2 blocks from campus, 4 bus lines, walkable to services
- 58 less people living on Harrison Apartments site, due to public process
- Need to live further from close-in destinations that are on major public transportation routes contributing to traffic, parking, and environment
- The problem plaguing existing residents are the things they are perpetuating through their actions

Comp Plan: “actively promote use of modes of transportation that minimize impacts to air quality”, “higher densities located close to essential services and transit”



results

#4: INCREASES TRAFFIC AND PARKING PROBLEMS

- Greater parking does not reduce traffic problems – build it and they will come
- Easy, free, readily accessible parking – incentive for people to own car
- Instead need transit-oriented building with ample bike parking and car-share onsite

Comp Plan: “encourage the development of high-density uses that are significantly less dependent on automobile transportation”



results

#5: UNDERMINES PLACEMAKING

- Original design had building frontage on major streets, advocated in Comp Plan and exceeds Pedestrian Design Oriented Standards
- Revised design increases surface area covered by parking, pushed the building from being close to the street –project almost didn't meet code
- Surface parking replaced groundfloor, porches, “eyes on the street”

Comp Plan: “neighborhoods shall be pedestrian oriented”, “priority to pedestrian based scales and experiences and interaction of private and public areas”, “buildings close to the street, main entrances oriented to public areas”, “building and street portion provide sense of enclosure”



results

#6: COMPROMISED “CLEAR & OBJECTIVE STANDARDS”

- LUBA and Comp Plan – “needed housing” is not subjected to subjective procedures, since they can discourage needed housing through unreasonable cost or delay
- “Compatibility” discussion about architectural style with historic district rather than about land use code
- Example: Had to reduce building height to 22 feet below code allowed

Comp Plan: “shall not result in the exclusion of needed housing at densities permitted by underlying district designation or result in unreasonable costs or delay.”

before



after

results

#7: REDUCED AFFORDABILITY

- Reduced density, increased parking costs, loss of income from housing revenue and costs associated with delays (legal fees, consultant fees, redesign (3+ times), application fees, and changing permit fees
- Either quality of the project goes down or revenue goes up
- 3% increase in original proposal rents



Floorplan	Type	Starting Monthly Price*
PRAIRIE	2 bed / 2 bath	\$695
SAVANNA	2 bed / 2 bath	\$705
FIELD	2 bed / 2 bath	\$705
FIELD w/ porch	2 bed / 2 bath	\$715
HARDWOOD	4 bed / 3 bath	\$625
WOODLANDS	4 bed / 3 bath	\$635
OAK	4 bed / 3 bath	\$635
DOUGLAS	4 bed / 3 bath	\$635
FIR	4 bed / 3 bath	\$645
RANCH	4 bed / 4 bath	\$645
UPLAND	4 bed / 4 bath	\$665

*Per bedroom pricing. \$15/month upgrade for master bedrooms. Subject to change based on availability. Requires a 12-month lease: September 20, 2013 to August 31, 2014. Property management offers subletting and roommate matching services.

results

THE AFTERMATH

- College Hill Neighborhood Association took their fight elsewhere
- Collaboration Corvallis - neighborhoods, OSU, and City
- November 2012 – changed parking requirements for 4 & 5 bedroom apartments (almost 1 parking stall per bed)
- Said to solve parking and traffic problems but targeted to eliminate townhouse development, ripple affect makes development on infill sites near impossible
- Reduces density
- Lack of visualizations about what this type of ratio would do the form of the city – “missing teeth in a smile”, “holes in a well knit fabric” against the historic grain of the city as a walkable community
- Infill harder to develop, greenfield development– cycle continues

conclusion

How can we support Citizen Involvement (Goal 1) while supporting the other statewide planning policies and city's comp plan to create a livable, compact, efficient, transit-oriented Corvallis.

1. Have clear and objective standards that have been vetted by real planning expertise and studied for their impact on the community in relationship to the statewide goals (visualization)
2. Judge projects based on those pre-defined standards – code not opinion
3. Ensure any new land code changes are not made in reaction/isolation but for the long-term effects they will have on a community
4. Don't take Goal 1, as the #1 goal – use effectively as a tool / educate

Harrison Apartments changed to “The Union”





The Union

APARTMENTS

