

Michael Sullivan

From: andrea weiner <akweiner@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 8:05 AM
To: planning
Subject: PA-T2-2024-00053

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Good morning Ashland Planning Division,

This letter is in response to planning action PA-T2-2024-00053 for 231 Granite Street. While we are not opposing the variance requests presented in this planning action, we do have concerns with one specific topic pertaining to “flag drives”.

Additional Preliminary Flag Lot Partition Plat Criteria, 18.5.3.060 C:

“Flag drives shall be in the same ownership as the flag lots served. *Where two or more lots are served by the same flag drive, the flag drive shall be owned by **one** of the lots and an easement for access shall be granted to the other lot or lots.*” This criterion cannot be met as the “flag drive” in this case is an easement owned by FOUR other lots. While this may be irrelevant, it introduces the real concern for us. The application information available for review does not mention plans for remediation if/when the improved portion of the flag drive that we own and manage is damaged in the process of this development. Would it be possible to address this issue prior to any planning action approvals? Thank you - we appreciate any insight you can provide.

Respectfully,

Andrea and Dan Weiner
243 Granite Street

Len and Karen Eisenberg
223 Granite Street
Ashland, Oregon. 97520

February 27, 2025

RE: Planning Action PA-T2-2024-00053
Subject Property. 231 Granite Street

Community Development Department
Ashland Planning Commission
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon. 97520

Greetings,

There are significant errors and omissions in the application submitted for Planning Action PA-T2-2024-00053. For these and other factors in this application, detailed below, we ask that the City of Ashland Planning Department decline to grant the variances requested. A much smaller building footprint and far fewer trees removed could address most of these problems.

Chapter 18.3.10 Physical and Environmental Constraints > 18.3.10.090 Development. Standard for Hillside Lands - Section A General Requirements Subhead 1 Buildable Area.

Applicant states "There are no slopes greater than 35 percent within the areas of proposed development". This is contradicted by the Site Slope Analysis Map 1 which shows three areas of slope greater than 35% within the proposed development envelope. There is about 1000 sq ft in the middle area of the proposed house footprint with slope greater than 35%. About 400 sq ft of slope greater than 35% exists in the northwest part of the proposed driveway/parking area, and about 400 sq ft of slope greater than 35% exists on the south side of the proposed lounge/outdoor dining area.

Chapter 18.3.10 Physical and Environmental Constraints > 18.3.10.090 Development. Standard for Hillside Lands - Section D Tree Conservation and Removal

Tree Removal

Applicant states that "...of the 75 trees in the vicinity of the area of disturbance, four (4) significant trees are proposed for removal,..." This statement is incorrect. There are 5. The fifth tree is a 30" dbh madrone near the northeast corner of the flag portion of the lot, and **is not plotted on any of the tree survey or tree removal plan maps.** This 30"dbh madrone appears to straddle the property line on the north side of the flag, about 13ft west of the northeast corner of the flag. The proposed location of the driveway where it turns out of the flag varies from map to map in applicants proposal, but in all cases it runs through this 30" madrone. Photo attached identifies this tree, trees which are included on the tree removal plan, and property boundaries.

There is a 24ft-wide gap between this 30" madrone and the next tree down slope, another large madrone. A less curved driveway transition from the flag to the existing unimproved driveway on Eisenberg's property TL 702 could be constructed if it passed through this 24ft-wide gap. Not only would the 30" madrone be spared, but also a 16" oak and a two-stem 10- and 12" madrone.

The tree protection fence should be extended to protect the 30" dbh madrone

One of the significant trees proposed for removal is a five-stem Madrone, the stems being from 18" to 24". This is a significant tree that deserves to be preserved. It is located in the proposed lounge/outdoor dining area. A modification to the footprint of the proposed home (make it smaller) and patio area could easily be designed to preserve this significant tree. Applicant would benefit by having this significant five-stem madrone frame the patio area.

Chapter 18.3.10 Physical and Environmental Constraints > 18.3.10.090 Development. Standard for Hillside Lands - Section H Exception to the Development Standards for Hillside Lands

Applicant states, in justification of the variance requested to the continuous horizontal building plane standard, that 'the design...minimize(s) the mass and scale (of the home)." It should be noted that the 4800 sq ft house plan submitted is nearly twice the size of adjacent homes to the north and northeast, and more than twice the size of the home adjacent to the east. The bulk and size of the proposed home are not compatible with the neighborhood. A more modest size and design would better serve.

Chapter 18.3.10 Physical and Environmental Constraints >18.3.10.050. Approval Criteria

Paragraph 15

and Chapter 18.3.10 Physical and Environmental Constraints > 18.3.10.090 Development. Standard for Hillside Lands - Section B Hillside Grading and Erosion Control > No. 8 Site Grading

Applicant states "The building pad area is the minimum area of the site to allow for the construction of a single story with basement home..." A home 4800 square foot two story home is not required at this site, as this statement implies. The average size of a typical three bedroom two bath single family home is about 2000 square feet. A home considerably smaller than 4800 square feet could easily be accommodated on the lot.

Planning Application Submittal >Findings of Fact - New Residence in Environmental Constraints - Hillside Lands>Project Description

Applicant here and at several other places in the text of the submitted proposal refers to an existing access and utility easement. The numbered reference to said easement is not included in the text, and is not posted on any of the proposal maps, so this statement could not be verified.

Before variances can be granted or construction plans approved, the existence, location and conditions of this easement should be confirmed by the Planning Commission.

Fire Hydrant Location

Mark Shay <mark.shay@ashland.or.us>

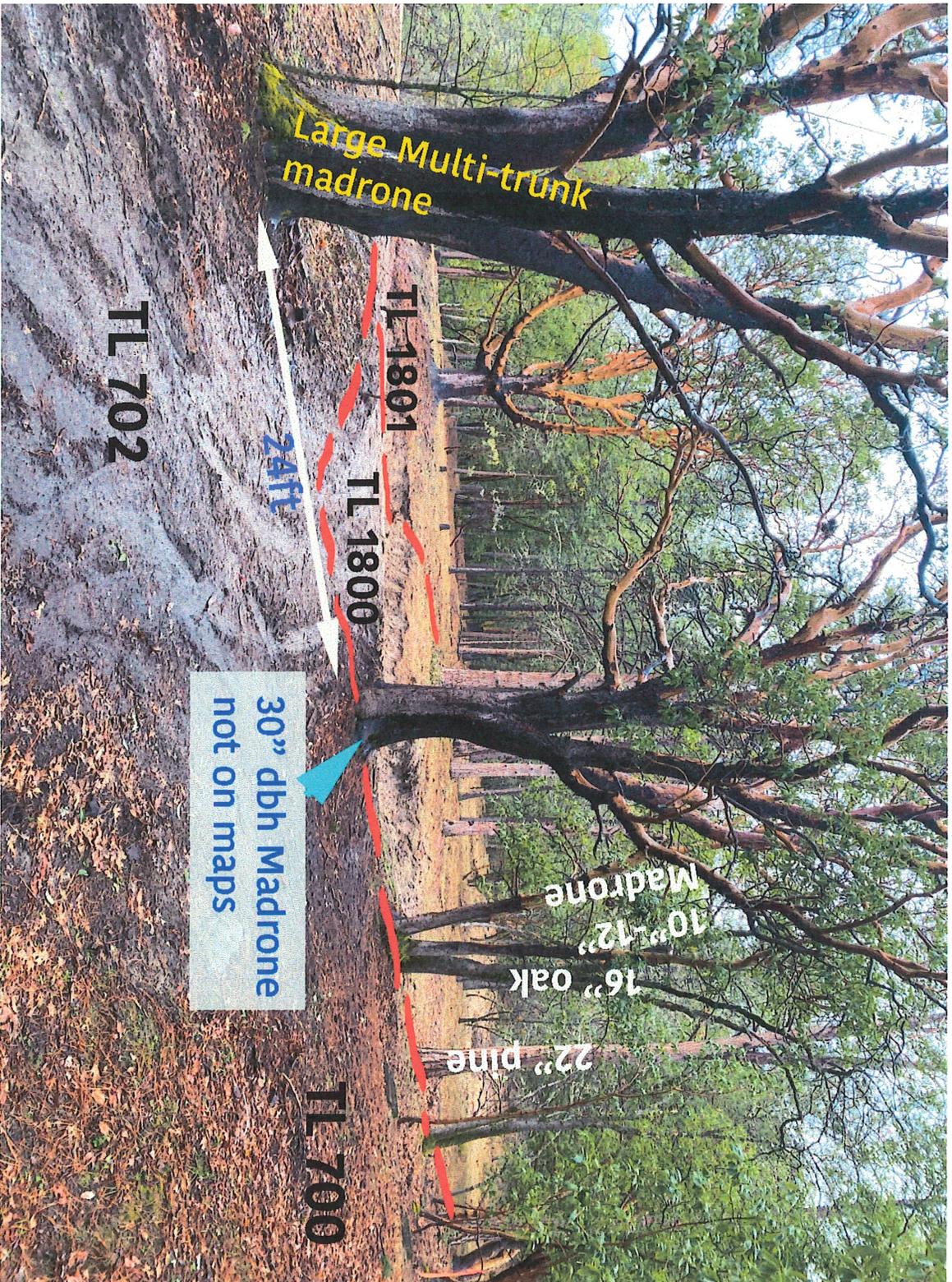
To: "carlos@carlosdelgadoarchitect.com" <carlos@carlosdelgadoarchitect.com>

Fire Chief Shay asks for the distance to the private hydrant 'already on the easement road.' To our knowledge there is no hydrant on the driveway down to Granite St. There is a hydrant on the private driveway off Strawberry Lane, near 234 Strawberry Lane. Is this the hydrant referred to and does it being on a separate driveway affect the fire chiefs view?

Conclusions:

There are significant errors and omissions in the application submitted for Planning Action PA-T2-2024-00053. For these and other factors in this application we ask that the City of Ashland Planning Department decline to grant the variances requested. A much smaller building footprint and far fewer trees removed could address most of these problems.

Len and Karen Eisenberg
223 Granite Street
Ashland, Oregon. 97520
evogeneao@gmail.com



Looking southwest at northeast corner of flag portion of TL 1800

PA-T2-2024 50053

Sarah Sameh & Jay Reeck
230 Strawberry Lane
Ashland, Oregon, 97520

March 6, 2025

Ashland Planning Commission
Ashland Community Development Department
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, OR 97520

Subject: Formal Objection and Concerns Regarding Planning Action PA-T2-2024-00053 – for
231 Granite Street

Dear Ashland Planning Commission,

We are writing to formally express concerns regarding the proposed land use application PA-T2-2024-00053 for the construction of a new single-family residence at 231 Granite Street. Upon reviewing the submitted Findings of Fact and Notice of Application, we have identified several potential conflicts with existing City of Ashland and State of Oregon statutes, particularly regarding environmental impact; hillside ordinance compliance; wildfire risk mitigation; seasonal restrictions on power equipment; potential impact on the Talent Irrigation Ditch; variance requests; and fire hydrant, water supply, utility access, and driveway screening issues. Our concerns are as follows:

1. Environmental Impact and Hillside Ordinance Compliance

- The project falls under **Ashland Land Use Ordinance (ALUO) 18.3.10.090**, which governs development in environmentally constrained areas. The proposed removal of 67 trees, including four significant trees, raises concerns about erosion control, stormwater runoff, and soil stability. Specifically, **ALUO 18.3.10.900 D. 3. b.** states that "Building envelopes shall be located and *sized* to preserve the maximum number of trees on site while recognizing and following the general fuel modification standards if the development is located in Wildfire Lands." This lot and the development are located in the Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone. A smaller sized building envelope (structure and pad) should be considered to preserve trees.
- The site disturbance is stated as 18,738 square feet, and while the application claims this meets the minimum retention of natural land, the extent of vegetation removal and grading should be reviewed under **ALUO 18.3.10.050 (Approval Criteria for Physical Constraints Review Permits)** to ensure adverse environmental impacts have been minimized. The Planning Commission should consider the entire application, with particular attention to trees and excavation, to ensure that, per **ALUO 18.3.10.050 C.**, "...the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to reduce the adverse impact on the environment. Irreversible actions shall be considered more seriously than reversible actions."

- The application does not include an analysis of tree removal impacts within 200 feet of the property, as required by **ALUO 18.5.7.040 B. 2. b.** A full assessment of the environmental impact on the surrounding area should be included, particularly as it relates to the 36-inch dbh Madrone on the north property line, sitting just 6 feet from the proposed development setback.
- **ALUO 18.3.10.090 B. 8. a.** states that "No terracing shall be allowed except for the purposes of developing a level building pad and for providing vehicular access to the pad." The plans show a large outdoor space between the terraced/tiered retaining wall and the house, which actually increases excavation beyond what would be needed if the retaining wall were closer to the uphill side of the house. This outdoor space could be reduced or eliminated to reduce excavation and preserve uphill trees, including the five-stem Madrone of significant value.
- The Planning Commission should consider that, with regard to Hillside Lands Development, **ALUO 18.3.10.090 B. 8. c.** states that "...swimming pools...are discouraged. As much of the remaining lot area as possible should be kept in the natural state of the original slope."

2. Wildfire Zone Hardening Compliance

- The project is located in a **Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone (ALUO 18.3.10.100)**, requiring strict adherence to fire prevention measures.
- The application does not fully specify fire-resistant materials and mitigation strategies and instead defers providing this information. Exact material specifications, as required by **Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) R327.4**, should be finalized before approval to ensure compliance.
- The proposal allows for thinning and tree removal, but significant vegetation removal could increase wind exposure and erosion risks, potentially exacerbating wildfire spread.
- The application does not delineate a required **Fire Management Plan** for fire safety and mitigation, which is required under **ALUO 18.3.10.100 A. 4. a.**
- The application does not indicate whether there will be adequate water pressure for residential use and fire suppression systems. The applicant should provide data on water pressure availability and plans for ensuring adequate supply during site work and occupation.

3. Compliance with Seasonal Restrictions on Power Equipment

- Ashland enforces seasonal restrictions on power equipment use during high wildfire risk periods, particularly for hillside developments.
- The application does not address how the construction timeline will comply with these restrictions, which should be required as part of **ALUO 18.3.10.100 (Development Standards for Wildfire Lands)**.

4. Impact on Talent Irrigation Ditch

- The Talent Irrigation Ditch runs near the property, yet no direct assessment has been made regarding how excavation and grading could impact its structural integrity.
- There is no referenced hydrological study or geotechnical analysis that specifically assesses the ditch's potential vulnerability to runoff or erosion caused by new development. This is a significant concern under **ALUO 18.3.10.090 4.**, which requires that development not alter hydrology in a manner that negatively impacts adjacent properties or waterways.

5. Variance Requests and Legal Justifications

- The project requests a **Variance** for driveway slope exceeding 18%, citing **ALUO 18.5.5.060 F.**
 - The engineering letter states that the 153-foot-long driveway will have a slope of 23%, while the topographic map and the applicant's landscaper's map indicate a **27%** slope in this area (even going as high as **29%**). Given the steepness of the existing slope, detailed information on how a decrease in slope will be achieved should be included in the application, per **ALUO 18.5.5.060 F.**
 - While the applicant justifies the variance based on pre-existing nonconforming conditions, the increased steepness will likely pose access issues for emergency services, particularly during fire season. Furthermore, the steep nature of the driveway and lot access may cause engineering issues with sewage drainage. Notably, this proposed driveway is very steep, approximately the same slope as the lower portion of Strawberry Lane between Scenic and Granite.
 - **ALUO 18.5.5.050 A. 3.** states that "The proposal's benefits will be greater than any negative impacts...and will further the purpose of this ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan of the City." The benefit of the placement of a single-family residence is not greater than the negative impacts of the hillside excavation and loss of trees. Furthermore, the fact that the City of Ashland had entered an agreement to purchase the subject property to preserve its natural state as part of the Comprehensive Plan of the City demonstrates the greater benefit of preservation.
 - **ALUO 18.5.5.050 A. 4.** states that "The need for the variance is not self-imposed by the applicant or property owner." In this case, the need for the variance is self-imposed by the applicant/property owner, as the need for the variance was known before the purchase of the property. The topography and land use ordinances were already in effect prior to the purchase of the property.
 - The applicant does not provide an emergency vehicle turnaround, as required in **ALUO 18.5.3.060 J.**, and there is no exception provided from the Staff Advisor and Fire Code Official. This, compounded with the very steep driveway, will likely interfere with emergency vehicle response, particularly during fire season.

- The applicant should demonstrate that construction equipment can feasibly access the construction site, given the steep driveway.
- A snow removal plan for winter access should be provided prior to development.
- The applicant seeks an exception to the **Hillside Development Standards (ALUO 18.3.10.090. E. 2. d.)** for exceeding continuous horizontal building plane limits.
 - The request to exceed the 36-foot horizontal plane limit with offsets of only 4-5 feet rather than 6 feet sets a precedent for allowing excessive structural massing on steep slopes, undermining the intent of the hillside regulations.
 - The application does not include proposed color selections for compliance with the neutral color requirements of **ALUO 18.3.10.090 E. 2. g.**

6. Fire Hydrant, Water Supply, Utility Supply, and Flag Driveway Screening Issues

- The application references a fire hydrant on the private drive from Granite Street, but this is not shown on any application maps. This is required as set forth in **ALUO 18.3.10.100 A. 2. d.**
- Local neighbors indicate no fire hydrant exists on this private driveway.
- If the applicant refers to hydrants on a separate private driveway, the applicant does not have legal access.
- **ALUO 18.5.3.060 (Flag Lot Partition Criteria)** requires that flag lots demonstrate adequate public facilities, including utility access, before approval. If utility easements or shared access agreements are necessary, they must be clearly delineated in the application. The current application does not adequately demonstrate the easements or provide access agreements.
- The application does not include specifications for the required 4- to 6-foot-high screen of sight-obscuring fence, wall, or fire-resistant broadleaf evergreen for the flag driveway, as mandated by **ALUO 18.5.3.060 N.**

Requested Actions

Given the concerns outlined above, we respectfully request the following before any approval is granted:

1. Demonstrate clearly how the benefits of this hillside development are greater than the negative impacts in this area, especially given the Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone.
2. Consider a smaller sized building envelope (structure and pad) to preserve trees.
3. Review the extent of vegetation removal and grading.
4. Analyze tree removal impacts within 200 feet of property.
5. Review the nature of the terraced retaining wall and living space uphill of the house, which increases the building pad size and increases environmental impact.

6. Review the inclusion of a pool in the building pad, which increases the building pad size and increases environmental impact.
7. Mandate finalization of wildfire-resistant materials and construction measures before approval, rather than allowing a deferred submittal.
8. Require a complete Fire Management Plan, including demonstrating adequate water pressure during and after construction.
9. Ensure compliance with seasonal construction restrictions, particularly regarding power equipment use during high fire-risk months.
10. Require a hydrological and geotechnical study to determine excavation and construction impacts to the TID, ensuring minimal negative impacts to adjacent properties or waterways.
11. Reevaluate the necessity and precedent-setting nature of the requested variances, particularly the request for variance of driveway slope, variance of no emergency vehicle turnaround, and request to exceed the 36-foot horizontal plane limit with offsets of only 4-5 feet rather than 6 feet; demonstrate how these variances are not self-imposed.
12. Require color selections for compliance with neutral color requirements.
13. Clarify fire hydrant location and access rights, ensuring adequate water pressure for fire suppression and residential use.
14. Require a complete snow removal plan.
15. Ensure compliance with required flag driveway screening, per Ashland's requirements.
16. Require demonstration of utility easements and shared access agreements prior to approval of application and demolition or excavation of any part of the property.

Please note that while we do not know the applicants personally, we are familiar with their other properties and genuinely appreciate their tasteful aesthetic and attention to detail. We value the work the applicants and their teams have already conducted on this project. We have worked with some of the contractors listed in the application and have a deep respect for their expertise. All of that said, **we have significant concerns enumerated above about the development of this particular property.**

As stated above, prior to the applicant's acquisition of this property, the City of Ashland had arranged an agreement to purchase the property for preservation. We concur with the City's assessment that preservation of this property in its natural state brings the most benefit to the city and its residents.

We appreciate your attention to these critical issues. We urge the Planning Commission to deny this application in its current form and to ensure all relevant municipal and state standards are fully addressed before approval of this project.

Sincerely,

Sarah Sameh & Jay Reeck

Michael Sullivan

From: Jane Andrianova <spiritualdances@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 09, 2025 7:50 PM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: March 11, 2025 Hearing Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hi,

This email is regarding the possible construction at 231 Granite Street (Stephanie and Bryan DeBoer).

I would like to express my concerns about allowing the construction to take place and the lack of care for the environment as proposed by the architect and the owners. This area has already been over developed in the last couple of years with more houses being constructed on the hills above Lithia Park near the TID trail. This is a very beautiful area that many people enjoy and hike on a weekly basis, lots of trees as well as wildlife there. It seems like the city does not care much about construction taking place there and tree cutting and pushing animals out of their natural habitat and keeps selling the land to others. This area is turning into something that you would see in a bigger city and is very disappointing. Cutting so many trees so someone can have a mansion is completely disrespectful to the environment and inhumane. More and more animals are starting to move closer to the city streets now because of constructions and then they are being killed (like the case with the cougar last year) because we are destroying their habitat. The areas above Lithia Park are enjoyed by many, including the tourists, and nobody wants to see more houses being built there, that's the whole reason why people move to Ashland, to be closer to nature and hiking trails. Also, allowing someone to violate the hillside and access rules doesn't seem right and will prompt other people to ask for exceptions as well. Cutting trees will make the area more susceptible to mudslides as we've seen with many trees after this year's rain. The rules are the same for everyone, no matter how much money you have.

I hope the city will make the right decision and won't allow this project to take place and will start caring more about the environment instead of allowing people to destroy things.

Jane Andrianova

Michael Sullivan

From: Travis Rigby <travisrayrigby@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 09, 2025 7:25 PM
To: planning
Subject: Opposition to Planning Application PA-T2-2024-00053

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Travis Rigby & Glenn Splieth

198 Logan Drive

Ashland, OR 97520

March 9, 2025

Ashland Planning Commission

City of Ashland

1175 East Main Street

Ashland, OR 97520

Subject: Opposition to Planning Application PA-T2-2024-00053

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Planning Application **PA-T2-2024-00053** and urge the City of Ashland to reject this proposal. The City and several organizations had previously planned to preserve this property as open space, which aligns with Ashland's long-term Comprehensive Plan and the community's environmental values. It is deeply concerning that this plan appears to have changed without adequate explanation or public engagement. Given the original intent to protect this land, I believe the City should uphold its commitment to preservation.

The proposed development raises several significant concerns under the Ashland Land Use Ordinance (ALUO), particularly regarding environmental protection, safety, and adherence to zoning standards:

1. Tree Removal and Environmental Impact

The project calls for the removal of approximately **70 trees**, including **four significant trees**. ALUO **18.3.10.900 D.3.b** requires that building envelopes be located to preserve the maximum number of trees while adhering to fuel modification standards for Wildfire Lands. Removing this many trees in a designated Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone raises concerns about soil stability, erosion, and increased stormwater runoff.

2. Large-Scale Site Disturbance

The proposed site disturbance of **18,738 square feet** is excessive. ALUO **18.3.10.050 C** mandates that applicants take all reasonable steps to minimize environmental impact, with irreversible actions considered more seriously. Removing trees and excavating hillside terrain is an irreversible action with long-term consequences.

3. Height and Massing Violations

The request to exceed the **36-foot horizontal plane limit** with offsets of only **4-5 feet** rather than the required **6 feet** sets a dangerous precedent for excessive structural massing on steep slopes. This would undermine the purpose of hillside regulations and negatively impact the visual character of the area.

4. Fire Safety and Wildfire Protection

The site is located in a **Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone** (ALUO **18.3.10.100**), requiring strict fire prevention measures. The application lacks a detailed **Fire Management Plan** as required by ALUO **18.3.10.100 A.4.a**, putting both the property and the surrounding neighborhood at heightened fire risk.

5. Driveway Slope and Emergency Access

The proposed variance for a driveway slope exceeding **18%** is concerning. The engineering report states a slope of **23%**, but the topographic map indicates a slope reaching **27-29%**. This steep incline would make access difficult for emergency vehicles, creating a serious safety risk.

6. Lack of Proper Screening and Turnaround

The application fails to provide the required **emergency vehicle turnaround** (ALUO **18.5.3.060 J**) and the mandated **4-6 foot sight-obscuring screen** for the driveway (ALUO **18.5.3.060 N**). This represents a direct violation of city codes intended to ensure safety and privacy.

7. Unjustified Variance Request

ALUO **18.5.5.050 A.4** requires that variance requests not be self-imposed by the applicant. The applicant was fully aware of the site's topography and the applicable zoning restrictions when the property was purchased, making the request for a variance unjustified.

8. Precedent for Terracing and Site Alteration

The plans include extensive terracing and outdoor spaces, which violate ALUO **18.3.10.090 B.8.a**. Terracing should be allowed only for building pads and vehicular access — not for creating large outdoor living spaces.

9. Failure to Analyze Tree Removal Impact

ALUO **18.5.7.040 B.2.b** requires an analysis of tree removal impacts within **200 feet** of the property. The application fails to include this analysis, leaving the broader environmental impact unexamined.

10. Lack of Demonstrated Benefit

ALUO **18.5.5.050 A.3** states that the benefits of a proposal must outweigh the negative impacts. A **4,800-square-foot single-family residence** on this sensitive site offers minimal public benefit compared to the environmental and safety risks it introduces.

Finally, it is important to remember that the City of Ashland had previously considered acquiring this land to preserve it as open space. This approach aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and the long-standing community goal of environmental stewardship. Reversing course now would be a disservice to the residents of Ashland and to the city's environmental legacy.

For all of these reasons, I urge the Planning Commission to reject Planning Application **PA-T2-2024-00053** and prioritize the preservation of this land as open space. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Travis Rigby & Glenn Splieth

Michael Sullivan

From: Dea Collins <deanasoncollins@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 10:51 PM
To: planning
Subject: 231 Granite Street

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

I am writing in opposition of the single family home project proposed for 231 Granite Street.

My understanding is that the project falls under the ALUO which governs development in environmentally constrained areas, however this project is requesting multiple variances to the ALUO. I question the purpose of the ALUO if large projects such as this that do not adhere to the stipulations stated in the ALUO are allowed to proceed.

For example:

The ALUO stipulates rules regarding terracing, the site plan shows a significant amount of terracing. What will the environmental impact of that hillside disturbance have on the TID above the project and the run off below the project, as well as the impact of the proposed removal of 70 trees?

The project requests a variance for driveway slope exceeding 18%, the project maps and site plans indicate a slope of 23% - 29% which is ridiculous. Wouldn't that make it exceedingly difficult for emergency vehicles to access the property? Particularly if there is no emergency vehicle turnaround?

The ALUO discourages pools on hillside properties. The site plan for this project includes a pool.

Furthermore, the City of Ashland had entered into an agreement to purchase the property in question to preserve its natural state as part of the Comprehensive Plan emphasizing preservation which seems more appropriate for this particular lot that is not suitable for building according to the ALUO.

The rules and regulations set forth in the ALUO should apply to all of us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dea, Robb, and Sadie Collins
Ashland residents and trail users

Sent from my iPad

Michael Sullivan

From: Paul Rostykus <prostykus@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 11:28 AM
To: planning
Subject: PLANNING ACTION: PA-T2-2024-00053 - SUBJECT PROPERTY: 231 Granite Street

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Planning Commissioners,

As a long time frequent user of the Ditch Trail which runs through the upper portion of this taxlot (1800), I recently learned of this proposed project, basically by word-of-mouth.

I, along with my family and friends, have been regular users of the Ditch Trail for the quarter century that I have lived in my current residence. This Ditch Trail, as an extension of the Ditch Road between Strawberry Lane and Grandview Drive, offers a level and scenic pedestrian path used by neighbors, other Ashland residents and visitors to the city. I would hate to see access to this great community resource be lost.

I understand that the Ditch Trail is on the TID easement and the relevant property owner may allow public access or not. I would like to see the current public access be continued into the future. The property owner is asking for variances regarding tree removal, the steep slopes and the flag drive. As a condition of granting the requested variances, I would like to see that public access to the Ditch Trail on this property be made permanent.

Thank you for your consideration and your commiission work.

Paul Rostykus
436 Grandview Drive, Ashland, OR

Michael Sullivan

From: Moneeka Settles <sneekam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 12:41 PM
To: planning
Subject: PA-T2-2024-00053

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed development of the property between Strawberry Lane and the Granit Street Trail. I strongly oppose many aspects of this project. I believe the property should be sold or donated to the City and preserved in its natural state, as originally planned. It feels really wrong to have so many of the safety and environmental elements be dismissed in the proposal of this new development. Please remember to focus on the values of environmental and safety stewardship when making this decision.

Best,
Moneeka Settles
Ashland Resident

Michael Sullivan

From: Catherine Ellison <cmellison@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:54 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: Proposed DeBoer home in Ashland

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Council:

I have come to love Ashland dearly. These monstrosities within our city limits are not in keeping with the sweetest ambience of a quiet Shakespeare focused community. I do not live on the affected streets, but the DeBoer family can certainly tone it down, be more community friendly & not overpower us. We certainly know about your wealth in the valley. Take it somewhere else!!!!

This reminds me so much of the blockade at the upper Lithia park where the trail ends in honor of private property, not allowing for the public (& the world which visits us not just for OSF & the plays).. this needs to end & allowances for those of us who live here & love it here to enjoy our land need to override the whims if the wealthy landowners.

I hope the City of Ashland will somehow say NO to the monstrosity that is proposed.

Thankyou.

Catherine Ellison, MD

295 Iowa St (which has a 24% grade)

Ashland OR 97520

Sent from my iPhone. Catherine

Michael Sullivan

From: Rochelle Jaffe <rochellegjaffe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 6:15 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: DeBoer project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Council Members,

Regarding the DeBoer proposal that you are considering tonight:

Please do not allow the exceptions that would permit the removal of 67 trees (!!!), building on an exceptionally steep slope, and impacting the recreational use of the area.

Thank you for your consideration,
Rochelle Jaffe

Michael Sullivan

From: Peter Killefer <peterkillefer@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:25 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: Proposed DeBoer project

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

I guess wealth does have its privileges. And, it seems, in trade for the DeBoer's largesse directed at the Ashland community, it comes with a certain quid pro quo to turn a blind eye to laws and city building codes the rest of us must abide by.

When my wife and I purchased our lot back in 2009 on the steepest portion of Nob Hill St our property had similar 25% grades on portions of our property. We were told we could NOT build on them. I designed our home and had to accommodate those grades by positioning the home so as to not violate that restriction.

Then again, I'm sure some nice work-around will be arrived at by the council and building commission to give the DeBoers everything they want. Oh, that's right, the same as was done with their property across from Lithia park next to where the skating rink is in Winter.

Practice makes perfect!

Please, do the right thing. Make the DeBoers abide by the same laws and regulations all the rest of us must abide by.

Sincerely,

Peter Killefer

Michael Sullivan

From: Molly Killefer <mollykillefer@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 9:57 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: March 11, 2025 Hearing Testimony

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

This proposal is absolutely inappropriate for that area (too steep, WAY out of character for the immediate surroundings, it will ruin the neighbors' lives for a couple of years while it is being built, it will ruin a very important wildlife area). You absolutely know the DeBoers will shut off that segment of the ditch trail putting hundreds of daily users and their dogs off of a trail used for many decades, just for the sake of two people who already have an enormous house less than .25 mile away. Yes, perhaps the DeBoers are large donors to the area but I am tired of them throwing their money/status around. Would an average Ashland citizen be able to develop this piece of property like this? Unlikely.

M. Killefer

Michael Sullivan

From: Nadine <nadine@woodhamlet.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 4:50 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: Over the top huge house taking out 67 Trees

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello. Just wanted to check in about the ‘

Nearly 4,800-square foot house would require removal of 67 trees, building on steep slope’

I and my family and friends all regularly use the ditch trail where this home is planned to be located. Hardly seems right that our public access should be impeded by one such large single family home. Also, there was such work deciding whether or not to remove just a couple trees in order to install our Japanese garden. It was a long, productive, community process that ended with keeping the trees. Here we have ONE wealthy property owner planning to take out 67 for their own personal use. Not right. Not how I see our Ashland community. I encourage the planning committee to refuse permits for this. Thank you for considering my thoughts. - Nadine Lefkowitz

333 N Main St.
Ashland, OR
Sent from my iPhone

Michael Sullivan

From: Suzanne Leslie <leslie.suzanne0@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:35 AM
To: planning
Subject: Opposition to Planning Application PA-T2-2024-00053

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Suzanne and Tim Leslie

190 Logan Drive

Ashland, OR 97520

March 9, 2025

Ashland Planning Commission

City of Ashland

1175 East Main Street

Ashland, OR 97520

Subject: Opposition to Planning Application PA-T2-2024-00053

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Planning Application **PA-T2-2024-00053** and urge the City of Ashland to reject this proposal. The City and several organizations had previously planned to preserve this property as open space, which aligns with Ashland's long-term Comprehensive Plan and the community's environmental values. It is deeply concerning that this plan appears to have changed without adequate explanation or public engagement. Given the original intent to protect this land, I believe the City should uphold its commitment to preservation.

The proposed development raises several significant concerns under the Ashland Land Use Ordinance (ALUO), particularly regarding environmental protection, safety, and adherence to zoning standards:

1. Tree Removal and Environmental Impact

The project calls for the removal of approximately **70 trees**, including **four significant trees**. ALUO **18.3.10.900 D.3.b** requires that building envelopes be located to preserve the maximum number of trees while adhering to fuel modification standards for Wildfire Lands. Removing this many trees in a designated Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone raises concerns about soil stability, erosion, and increased stormwater runoff.

2. Large-Scale Site Disturbance

The proposed site disturbance of **18,738 square feet** is excessive. ALUO **18.3.10.050 C** mandates that applicants take all reasonable steps to minimize environmental impact, with irreversible actions considered more seriously. Removing trees and excavating hillside terrain is an irreversible action with long-term consequences.

3. Height and Massing Violations

The request to exceed the **36-foot horizontal plane limit** with offsets of only **4-5 feet** rather than the required **6 feet** sets a dangerous precedent for excessive structural massing on steep slopes. This would undermine the purpose of hillside regulations and negatively impact the visual character of the area.

4. Fire Safety and Wildfire Protection

The site is located in a **Wildfire Lands Overlay Zone** (ALUO **18.3.10.100**), requiring strict fire prevention measures. The application lacks a detailed **Fire Management Plan** as required by ALUO **18.3.10.100 A.4.a**, putting both the property and the surrounding neighborhood at heightened fire risk.

5. Driveway Slope and Emergency Access

The proposed variance for a driveway slope exceeding **18%** is concerning. The engineering report states a slope of **23%**, but the topographic map indicates a slope reaching **27-29%**. This steep incline would make access difficult for emergency vehicles, creating a serious safety risk.

6. Lack of Proper Screening and Turnaround

The application fails to provide the required **emergency vehicle turnaround** (ALUO **18.5.3.060 J**) and the mandated **4-6 foot sight-obscuring screen** for the driveway (ALUO **18.5.3.060 N**). This represents a direct violation of city codes intended to ensure safety and privacy.

7. Unjustified Variance Request

ALUO **18.5.5.050 A.4** requires that variance requests not be self-imposed by the applicant. The applicant was fully aware of the site’s topography and the applicable zoning

restrictions when the property was purchased, making the request for a variance unjustified.

8. Precedent for Terracing and Site Alteration

The plans include extensive terracing and outdoor spaces, which violate ALUO **18.3.10.090 B.8.a**. Terracing should be allowed only for building pads and vehicular access — not for creating large outdoor living spaces.

9. Failure to Analyze Tree Removal Impact

ALUO **18.5.7.040 B.2.b** requires an analysis of tree removal impacts within **200 feet** of the property. The application fails to include this analysis, leaving the broader environmental impact unexamined.

10. Lack of Demonstrated Benefit

ALUO **18.5.5.050 A.3** states that the benefits of a proposal must outweigh the negative impacts. A **4,800-square-foot single-family residence** on this sensitive site offers minimal public benefit compared to the environmental and safety risks it introduces.

Finally, it is important to remember that the City of Ashland had previously considered acquiring this land to preserve it as open space. This approach aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and the long-standing community goal of environmental stewardship. Reversing course now would be a disservice to the residents of Ashland and to the city's environmental legacy.

For all of these reasons, I urge the Planning Commission to reject Planning Application **PA-T2-2024-00053** and prioritize the preservation of this land as open space. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Suzanne and Tim Leslie

Michael Sullivan

From: James M. <jmccarthy.consulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:27 AM
To: planning
Cc: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: PA-T2-2024-00053

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello,

I'm an Ashland resident and regular user of the Granite Street Trail and would like to express my opposition to PA-T2-2024-00053. This is a misguided proposal. As the impacts and costs of climate change mount on our small city we should not be giving special exemptions to allow construction of massive residences on erosion- and wildfire- prone slopes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim McCarthy

Ashland Planning Commission
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, OR 97520

March 10, 2025

Subject: Planning Action PA-T2-2024-00053 – 231 Granite Street

Dear Ashland Planning Commission,

The parcel in question has not been built on in the past because the prior owner and everyone else recognized that it was not a building site per City ordinances. The exceptions/variances required to build there are so significant and numerous that to approve them makes having the ordinances meaningless. The details of this have been provided in letters by others.

The Planning Commission should also take into account its larger duty of community planning. The Ditch Trail, which runs through the property, is a de facto city park. It has been listed for years as a public trail by Parks and Rec. Parks has listed the property in question as a “park property to acquire” as part of a cohesive preserved area. It is a beautiful place populated by owls and other wildlife. Efforts were underway to purchase the property for the City when the Deboers bought it. Degrading this place that is used by so many would be a harm with no corresponding benefit to the community. (Planning Division’s website states: “The proposal’s benefits will be greater than any negative impacts on the development of the adjacent uses and will further the purpose and intent of this ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan of the City.”)

Stopping this development is NOT an example of a government “taking.” The Deboers knew that they were purchasing a property that could not be developed [by anyone without unfair influence] when they bought it. It is likely that funds can be gathered to purchase the property back from the Deboers and turn it over to Parks as open space.

Lastly, all should be reminded that no easement is in place for this portion of the trail. The prior owner placed a gate on the trail several years ago to retain the right to close it. There is a history of trail closures by individual landowners on this and other Ashland trails.

This project should not be allowed to proceed. It violates too many ordinances and thwarts the open space plans of the City’s Parks Department.

David Paul Oursler
252 Strawberry Lane
Ashland, Oregon, 97520



Michael Sullivan

From: A. Rosen <motherdivine888@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 6:05 AM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: Proposed huge dwelling near park

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Please do not allow these people to interfere with access to this hiking area, and please don't allow them to cut down sixty-seven of Ashland's precious trees. Trees absorb carbon; we need as many as we can get. And there's so little natural land in Ashland compared to the concreted city, it's too precious to lose to people who want to build an outrageously large home. Why do two people need so many rooms? What are they going to do in all of them? I think it's gratuitous luxury and Ashland shouldn't have to pay for it in loss of trees and access to our rare hiking land.

Please don't allow exceptions to the city code for this wealthy family. Thank you.

A. Rosen
Ashland resident

Michael Sullivan

From: pickedandpressed@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 12:37 PM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Subject: House

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Please just let us have our hiking trail! That's all I ask.

Thanks,
Shelly Jillson
Sent from my iPhone

Michael Sullivan

From: Joyce Stanley <stanleyj@mind.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 1:48 PM
To: Planning Commission - Public Testimony
Cc: R Stanley
Subject: Proposed DeBoer Home on the Hart/Granite/Strawberry Trail

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

We will be unable to attend the meeting tonite, but would like our comment to be put into the public record.

We live on Scenic Drive and regularly hike in Lithia Park on what folks call the 'Ditch Trail'. We access it from Strawberry or Granite or from the Harts Trail. It is a beautiful part of our environment and it would be horrible to remove any access to that trail by building a house over it.

We are surprised that the DeBoers who love Lithia Park and who have always been pillars of our community would want to destroy this public access trail.

Please reconsider the location or design so that public access to the trail is not destroyed.

Regards

Richard and Joyce Stanley
44 Scenic Drive
Ashland OR 97520
541292 3457