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August 9, 2014

The Honorable Ed Murray, Mayor
Council Member Nick Licata, Chair Finance and Culture, and Budget-Select
Committees
City Hall
600 Fourth Avenue.
Seattle, WA 98104

Regarding: Disposition of the Old Fire Station 39

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Member Licata:

Lake City is working to build a strong, healthy community through collaboration across our neighborhood organizations, which represent a diverse group of individuals, families, and businesses. The Lake City Neighborhood Alliance (LCNA) is a major organizing force behind this collaboration. The successful launch of Lake City Future First (LCFF), an *Only in Seattle* project awarded by the Mayor earlier this year, attests to the productive partnerships within our community. The Lake City Urban Design Framework (UDF) team, administered by Katie Sheehy from DPD, is an outgrowth of LCFF. The UDF will be incorporated into Lake City's revised Comprehensive Plan. The current Comprehensive Plan expires this year.

One important partnership we are developing is with the Pierre family. Lake City residents and businesses are engaged in an energetic conversation about our future in the context of the Pierres' intention to redevelop their holdings in Lake City. At the Pierre Visioning Workshop in May 2012, more than 60 Lake City residents plus City officials, representatives of the Pierres, and UW Architecture and Planning students exchanged ideas and visions for redevelopment of the Pierre properties. This workshop was one of the first events to bring the larger Lake City community together to work toward a better future. One area that received special attention was Lake City's "civic core," the area that includes the Lake City Library, Lake City Neighborhood Service Center, Bank of America, and the new and retired Fire Stations (FS) 39. Because the old FS 39 site is in the Hub Urban Village and a block off Lake City Way NE, it has great potential as an important part of the core of our community.

Just one month following the Visioning Project, in June of 2012, the City's Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) proposed without community input to repurpose the old FS 39 into a 100-percent extremely-low income (ELI)/homeless housing project. Our fears were that our community's larger vision would be preempted. This conflict was a catalyst for Lake City neighbors to shape our future and forge a better relationship with the City. In fact it was the galvanizing force behind the formation of LCNA. The previous Administration recognized our concerns and FAS's proposal was dropped.

At our June 12, 2014 LCNA meeting, Hillary Hamilton of FAS announced an agreement in process between the City and the Pierres whereby the Pierres would lease the building from the City for 2 years, using it to store large auto parts. LCNA is very supportive of this agreement as this 2-year lease allows the City to generate some

revenue from the building, while also keeping development of the site on hold pending the many ongoing planning efforts taking place in Lake City.

We were told that while in use as a storage-only facility the building would not have a visible business presence. Thus, this lease also provides us with an opportunity to use the building exterior to energize that corner. A forward-looking community presence at that site is appropriate in light of its symbolic and physical prominence. One idea that exemplifies the spirit of what we would like to see on the site is an artful and durable display of images of people in Lake City.

At the May 28th kick-off for the LCFF *Only In Seattle* grant, attendees were asked to fill in a card saying "In my future Lake City there will be _____," and have their pictures taken with their statement. Dozens of attendees participated. The same exercise was done at the Lake City Court Father's Day event on June 14th. (Please see photos and schematic that follow.) Displaying an artist's conception of these images (for example) on the building would create a positive statement of community and beautify that corner. The idea of working with the City and the Pierres to arrange for community use of the building's exterior was proposed by LCNA to Ms. Hamilton in a June 24, 2014 letter. Once the City approved of the exterior use, we would seek funding through a Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant or other source to bring this project to fruition. Despite multiple follow-up email and phone messages, we have not heard back from Ms. Hamilton about the status of the lease agreement or our proposal for exterior building use.

We recently learned that the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) has requested that your office proceed with the former proposal for ELI/homeless housing at the site. LCNA and the Lake City community want to work with advocacy groups to help create low-income housing, but as part of a larger plan that encourages mixed-income development and respects the changing context of our neighborhood rather than aggregate 100-percent ELI housing. A mixed-income housing model may be harder to achieve, but the consequences of concentrating poverty as well as not providing equity of services and infrastructure is a known recipe for generational poverty. The Pierre Visioning Workshop proposed multiple high-rise apartment buildings along Lake City Way NE that could potentially generate more low-income units than one 100-percent ELI building. Aggregate 100-percent ELI housing goes against the stated principles of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Seattle Housing Authority.

Mr. Mayor and Council Member Licata, we urge you to finalize this 2-year lease with the Pierres for old FS 39. It is critical that Lake City be able to determine what our strong, healthy community should look like. The community's unifying vision through our UDF efforts and plan for achieving it via the updated Comprehensive Plan will make our community stronger and healthier in all respects, including but not limited to housing. This lease would give Lake City the breathing space we need to incorporate the old FS 39 site into our planning efforts and utilize the building exterior to engage our residents.

LCNA representatives would like to meet with you both to discuss our concerns and answer questions. I will contact your staff to arrange a mutually agreeable time. Thank you for your time and efforts on Lake City's behalf.

Very sincerely,



Sandra Adams Motzer

Chair

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206.819.8056

cc: Council Members Burgess, Bagshaw, Clark, Godden, Harrell, O'Brien, Rasmussen, Sawant; Katie Sheehy, DPD; Hillary Hamilton, FAS; Christa Dumpys, DON; Don Moody, CBRE

EXEMPLAR PICTURES TAKEN AT THE MAY 28, 2014 LAKE CITY FUTURE FIRST LAUNCH EVENT



EXEMPLAR PICTURES TAKEN AT THE JUNE 14, 2014 NORTH SEATTLE FAMILY CENTER-SPONSORED FATHER'S DAY EVENT



RENDITION OF OLD FIRE STATION 39 EXTERIOR FOR ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY TO ENVISION A FUTURE LAKE CITY

