

Statement in Favor of Keeping the Ground Floor Side Yard Zero Setback per the Metro Everett Code

Rockefeller Square Phases 1, 2, & 3 (2607 thru 2623 Rockefeller Ave.)



Current State of Rockefeller Square

Phase 1 – 10/20/21



Location of Phase 2 and 3

if request approved

Request:

We **SUPPORT** the Everett Planning Staff Report that recommends reinstating the ground floor zero setbacks at interior side yards for these reasons:

- From communication with Everett Planning, believe this change was not made intentionally. We believe the city's intent is to still promote density in this area of downtown Everett.
- Our development team has plans to build three 30-unit buildings on the block. These buildings are eligible for the affordable housing requirements of the MFTE program. We support the city's goal to promote the construction of affordable and market rate housing in downtown Everett. These buildings are a good mixture of market rate and affordable housing.
- **IMPORTANT. If this zero-setback allowance is not reinstated, the third building will not fit.** Planning for the three phases was done with the understanding that the current setback requirements were not expected to change. Five feet lost for three buildings amounts to 15 feet. This will kill the third building which is 74 feet wide.

Background:

In 2000, members of the development team purchased the first property in Everett on Rockefeller Avenue. In that same period, other properties on the block became available and we purchased them to develop into better downtown housing. It took many years, but we finally received a development loan in 2020. To lessen the scale of the development, we split it into three phased projects. The design work for these phases was done in 2019 under the Metro Everett Code.

The Metro Everett Code had a provision in it for side yard ground floor zero setbacks. This provision was there to promote multi-family development density in the Metro Area. Our phased projects incorporated this provision along portions of the north property lines of each building. This provided articulation along the north side of the building and helped with internal circulation at the lobby and ADA lift.

The Rethink Zoning changes were passed just a few weeks before our team submitted Phase 2 plans for permit. We were given notice of the reorganization of the code coming but were not told there were to be substantial changes to setbacks and landscape requirements. Our reading of the available city documents and conversations with the city staff led us and our consultant team to believe that the changes were a mere reorganization. We were not made aware that certain setback and landscape provisions had changed until permit response letters came to us some months later.

Thank you,

Rockefeller Square Team

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