

## Zachery Cardoso

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**From:** Marissa Theve <marissatheve@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 13, 2021 5:52 PM  
**To:** Zachery Cardoso  
**Cc:** Virginia Stapleton; Tom Andersen; Trevor Phillips; Jackie Leung; Jose Gonzalez; Chris Hoy; Vanessa Nordyke; Jim Lewis; Chuck Bennett  
**Subject:** public comment on draft UDC Amendments (HB2001) for the Salem Planning Commission meeting on June 15th 2021

First I want to thank all the Planning Commission members and city staff for their efforts and for allowing for public input.

If we take a step back, the reason the City must update its code in order to comply with House Bill 2001 is because when written, our zoning did not have future growth in mind. In order to capture the true spirit of HB2001, we must eliminate parking minimums to the greatest extent possible, be it within 0.5 miles from transit (as the state of California is poised to do) or preferably citywide.

Having visited metropolitan areas in most states, I would argue that we do not have a parking shortage in Salem. We have an identity problem. Folks who live in our city, the second most populous in the state, act as though they live in a suburb. That is probably because until now it's how we've been zoned, with 60% single family residential. That's a LOT of yellow for Oregon's capital city. How can we possibly grow densely and equitably if we literally do not allow it? Well, now we have to and it's a good opportunity to look at ALL our other exclusionary practices, not just the ones HB2001 requires we update.

On dog walks in Grant and Highland neighborhoods, I often see single family house owners use driveways for boats or RVs and reserve city-owned street parking for their second and third modes of transportation, relying on parking minimums required by new developments to make up the difference. In Grant, we see the parking panic manifest with [churches buying up property](#) for parking. Is housing vehicles once a week the highest use of land? Shouldn't housing people come first?

These are the same folks who claim there is a parking shortage and attempt to block developments so they don't have to share street parking. That is not fair to the community that hasn't yet arrived due to the lack of new home building or to the community that is being pushed out by high rent, both well documented [results from parking minimum requirements](#). Both phenomena exacerbate the homelessness crisis. Fear over sharing on-street parking with newcomers is what [nearly stopped DevNW from being able to convert Evergreen Church into affordable housing](#), which is the issue that drew me to learn more about Salem's zoning and to participate here. I heard this phenomenon explained recently by journalist [Mathew Iglasias using an elevator as a metaphor](#): a person doesn't notice when it stops for them and they can get on, but if the elevator has to stop to let anyone else on, it's a huge inconvenience. That attitude has shaped the exclusionary zoning and housing shortage that we have today, which HB2001 is seeking to fix. We have a choice as a city: we can do the bare minimum, or we can use the opportunity to update our code to do what is truly equitable.

I heard comments throughout this process from people who are using *sunlight and parking* as an excuse not to stop the elevator and let [generally poorer, BIPOC] people in. That is classic Not In My Backyard attitude, and is unacceptable in the era of Black Lives Matter. The status quo and scraping by with minimum change is exactly what has encouraged the Proud Boys to use our city as a backdrop to their messages of hate. Parking minimums are exactly the kind of subtle and confusing exclusionary barrier that built the housing shortage we are tangled up in today.

Once again, thank you to the commission members for all their time and thoughtfulness.  
Marissa Theve, YIMBY (yes in my backyard) single family house owner  
Gaines Street NE Salem, OR 97301

Embedded links above:

- "A megachurch is buying up a Salem neighborhood. Here's why.:  
<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/2019/08/19/salem-alliance-church-salem-oregon/1960365001/>
- "The High Cost of Residential Parking: Every time a new building includes space for cars, it passes those costs on to tenants.": <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-11/how-parking-requirements-make-housing-less-affordable-in-2-charts>
- "More affordable housing is on the way after Salem City Council approves church property conversion": <https://www.salemreporter.com/posts/3232/more-affordable-housing-is-on-the-way-after-salem-city-council-approves-church-property-conversion>
- "The Best of Homelessness and How To Fix It": <https://megaphone.link/VMP8672090654>

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Marissa Theve  
Pronouns: she/her/hers