

**From:** [Lisa Tall](#)  
**To:** [Robin Proebsting](#)  
**Subject:** East Seattle development comments  
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Hello, I am a lifelong Mercer Island resident who has resided in the same East Seattle neighborhood of Mercer Island for most of my life. The East Seattle School property has special significance for me, as I attended 1st through 6<sup>th</sup> grades at the school from 1964-1970, walking to and from school daily as all students did since there was no bus service for the school. This property was always the center of activity for our community during my childhood years, but its history extends so much farther back than that. Others can recount the details of the history of this site better than I can, but as the core of the first significant settlement on Mercer Island, this site deserves to be commemorated and preserved in some way.

The details of the sale of this property still rankle me. As I recall it, there was a desire to move the Boys and Girls Club housed in the old school building to a location nearer to the middle of the Island and closer to the High School and the public library. In order to finance that move and the construction of a new building for the Club, the decision was made, rather abruptly it seems to me, to sell the East Seattle School property to a developer at below-market rates because the sales agreement included a moratorium on development of the property for a number of years. This achieved the raising of the funds needed to build the new Boys and Girls Club building, but it also had the benefit of insulating the roster of City politicians from public backlash since the property was not going to get developed during their personal tenure on the City Council (or whatever jurisdiction was responsible for this terrible decision). The whole way that this property sale happened strikes me as short-sighted corrupt city politics at its worst.

Now that the building moratorium period has passed and the developer is now trying to finally make some money on his purchase, the City is contemplating allowing the development of 14 tightly packed homes on the site, completely out of character with the rest of the neighborhood. This is a further travesty and I vehemently oppose it. Please do not allow this degree of housing density to utterly change the character of this historic neighborhood. The other homes in the area all have outdoor space and back/side yards, which are completely missing in the proposed development. A site as large as this needs to have an access road going through it instead of the private driveway servicing only 3 home as presented. And there really needs to be some sort of park with historical reference to the rich history of this site.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not allow another travesty to ruin this neighborhood.

Lisa Tall

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