

6/29/18

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: The proposed Wildfire Development Standards as well as the proposed Appendix W of the Oregon Residential Code:

We live in the Wildland-Urban Interface where wildfires are a real and valid concern so we understand the need for increased diligence and potentially, additional regulations to keep people and property safe in Ashland.

Our concerns are regarding the extremity of the proposed regulations. We would encourage limiting new regulations on infill construction. Is it realistic that in a town that is almost completely built up that drastic new regulations placed on a tiny fraction of the town will actually decrease the chance of catastrophic wildfire? Are there studies to show the effectiveness of such regulations?

Conifers and ornamental plantings are integral to the feel of our town. Deer and drought pressure already limit plant selection. Banning such a large number of plants will make this even more difficult.

The Wildfire Development Standards and Appendix W requirements will greatly limit design flexibility. In addition, there can be significant cost increases to building using fire-rated building materials which will impact the aesthetic that defines Ashland building and landscape architecture.

Construction costs have skyrocketed in the last few years. Additional community development requirements like fire protection plans and maintenance schedules further increase the cost of construction and financial barriers to entry for housing.

Alternatively, we would encourage the City of Ashland to focus efforts on community outreach and facilitate citizens understanding of the importance of fire resistant building and landscape design in both new and existing homes. We would support the City putting additional resources towards more site visits and recommendations in regards to building protection, reduction of fuels and creation of fire-resistant landscapes.

We believe it would be more beneficial to help large swaths of the town make incremental fire prevention measures through thoughtful design and landscaping rather than putting a large burden on new homes and substantial remodels which make up a relatively tiny percentage of Ashland's land area.

Thank you for your consideration of these very important issues in our community.

Sincerely,

Jason and Kelly Eaton Conscious Construction Inc.

Julie O'Dwyer Julie O Design

Michael Hodgins Coleman Creek Construction

Milo Shubat Ashland Design Solutions

Josh Barnes Barnes Construction