

Rebecca Berry

I've attached a pdf file with my comments

Part I: Context in support of my public comment

Part II: Comments regarding proposed clean-up plan and development

Part III: Core Questions

Part I:

I live my life in Skyway - *as a BIPOC woman and lifetime renter, displacement & new developments greatly and personally impact my family, my neighbors and families in Skyway*

- I raise my kids here, over 11 years we've built our community and network of support here;
- my kids attend schools in Skyway and I'm connected with hundreds of families here
- I walk, shop, eat, socialize, and engage daily in Skyway

I've invested my time volunteering & working in Skyway over many years - *I have deep engagements & connections to hundreds of families in Skyway via school, volunteering & work, growing authentic perspectives & spectrums of lived experiences & needs of my Skyway community*

- Volunteered building projects and programs to unite and empower families at Lakeridge elementary; as a result of my success and deep engagement in the community I was hired to work at the school engaging and empowering parents and families and coordinating community partners
- Advocated on behalf of families to Renton School Board for school zone & parking lot safety
- United with Skyway families to request sidewalk to increase safety for walking students
- I am still actively involved in several school, and community forums and groups

I am a trusted, publicly accountable & verifiable representative & leader in Skyway - *As director of Skyway Coalition, I'm honored to steward historic & current community-led planning & advocacy alongside several other organization leaders with expansive networks and impacts in our Skyway community*

- **Skyway Coalition is a trusted and valued representative of the Skyway community and are regularly called on** by King County Councilmember Zahilay, multiple King County departments, directors, and legislators including, Senator Saldaña and Representatives Santos and Harris-Talley to inform policies, funding and advocacy that serves and protects our unincorporated community currently threatened by displacement
- The Coalition leaders and organizations have engaged and listened to what our diverse, unincorporated community needs day-in-and-out for decades— and majority work from the perspective of having the deep ties and history of living their lives in the community
- We've successfully centered the needs and voice of the community and leveraged our trusted partnerships to lead community advocacy securing:
 - Over \$20 million for affordable housing, econ dev and a community center
 - Donation of local U.S. Bank building to community ownership (soon-to-be Skyway Resource Center)

Part II

I am not in support of the development as proposed at Skyway Mart/Boathouse. I am specifically concerned with:

- the 'lease-to-own' approach; King Co.'s 2021 Anti-displacement report recommends against 'rent/lease' and red flags it as a 'risky' impact on community; Skyway is actively facing high displacement already, this model will increase displacement of our residents
- the use of wider King County's area median income (AMI) v. Skyway's AMI; the unincorporated, and longtime underinvested in community of Skyway's AMI is significantly lower than our surrounding more affluent cities and communities; by using King Co.'s macro lens of AMI, the proposed project gives the impression of affordability, but will displace our residents
- the flier mailed to my home re: this clean-up and proposed development shared the development is planning for the minimum of 20% 'affordable rental units' as required by Dept of Ecology's to qualify for clean-up funding;

Skyway is widely known as the next Seattle area community to be gentrified pushing out generations of mostly diverse families most who have already been pushed out of the Central District, Beacon Hill, Columbia City and the Rainier Valley– proposing the minimum units of 'affordable' rental units using the high end of King Co.'s area median income is not a affordable housing development for our community already feeling the impacts of displacement and will directly contribute to increasing displacement our residents

- planning for the minimum 20% 'affordable' rental units required by Dept of Ecology, allows for approx. 200 market rate units that will contribute to push out families unable to afford to buy in their home community Skyway

I call for the Dept. of Ecology to be more intentional with, and accountable to, engaging with the community; taking action beyond the minimum requirement for community engagement re: communicating the impacts of the contamination and the clean-up process; as well as representing this government agency in public spaces with respect and professionalism. I am specifically concerned with:

- The processes, procedures of Dept. of Ecology, that minimally allows for only 1 month's notice for public comment
 - Notice via USPS only required to reach ¼ mile radius around site, despite impacts reaching across wider community
 - Notice shared to 'community organizations' transferring the uncompensated burden of deeper engagement to the small staffed grassroots organizations already working to

capacity investing in building up the community.

Very concerned with the Public Participation Grant program; this 'competitive grant program' offers an application window of 3/30/31-4/29/21, which not only doesn't apply to this 30 day window of public comment, but has been closed for three months; again it appears this gives the impression that their is intention to support authentic community engagement and compensated partnership with local, connected community organization– but falls embarrassingly short and bypasses actually supporting community engagement.

- A one month window for an unincorporated community that lacks adequate support and government representation and who speak dozens of languages, to review lengthy legal documents and technical overviews of contamination and proposed developments with undefined 'affordable' metrics is a disgraceful practice.

Further, when the Dept. of Ecology was contacted concerning an error their site listed for public comment closing, a member of your team shared - *"usually they get somewhere from 0-3 comments on the types of documents... because people think they don't have anything to add— especially the legal documents...but we will consider any comments people wanna make about those documents... how we communicate with the public and what would be a better avenue"*

This reads as well-intentioned and open and responsive to feedback, but it is also clear there is no history of deep feedback and no movement toward creating systems to more deeply inform, engage and support community/public comments.

- The Public Comment Hearing in Skyway, August 3rd.
 - I am disappointed in the aggressive, condescending tone the developer showed to our community, in his brief 3-5 minute 'presentation' of the proposed development
 - It is unbelievable Ecology moved along with the meeting without acknowledging or condemning the developer's blatant and disrespectful response to a Skyway resident's questions on experience with contamination clean-up
 - There were many questions left unanswered in the chat, mostly relating to the affordability metrics used and the contamination impacts;
 - While I understand and respect giving an option to not to include name or affiliation on public comment form, this also leaves plenty of room for individuals from outside of the impact of this project to share comments.

Part III

There are core terms that should be clearly defined:

- **Affordable Housing** - housing developments are not either affordable or not, there is a spectrum of affordability.
- Some important components that would help communities understand how to respond to development and whether it is affordable to its residents include:
 - a. Clear **percentage of affordable units**
 - b. which **area median income (AMI)** is used, and what % will be used (not a range)
 - c. Impact of model of the development (**rental, ownership, lease/rent-to-own**)
 - d. the consideration of the unique landscape of the community (displacement risk; AMI)

The proposed development indicates its position on the high end of 'affordability' and at the minimum required for affordable housing- which will actually bring in more market rate units than it provides 'affordable', and uses a model that has been studied as increasing displacement.