

## Olivia Dias

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**From:** Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie  
**Sent:** Monday, November 23, 2020 6:56 AM  
**To:** Olivia Dias  
**Cc:** Kimberli Fitzgerald  
**Subject:** Fwd: Written Comment - 905 and 925 Cottage Street Appeal

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

- Lisa | 503-540-2381

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**From:** Tracy Schwartz <schwartzpreservation@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 23, 2020 6:43:57 AM  
**To:** citycouncil <citycouncil@cityofsalem.net>  
**Subject:** Written Comment - 905 and 925 Cottage Street Appeal

To the Salem City Council:

Thank you for taking my written testimony regarding the rezoning of 905 and 925 Cottage Street NE in the Grant Neighborhood. I have lived in the Grant Neighborhood for two years and selected my home because of the neighborhood - its historic preservation potential and the close proximity to state agency office buildings and downtown. After attending neighborhood association meetings and watching projects unfold, I recognized that Grant has many unique challenges because of the traits that made Grant desirable for me. The future of the Evergreen Church at 905 and 925 Cottage Street is one of those challenges and I urge the City Council to vote no on high-rise residential zoning.

I know that my fellow neighbors will make far more eloquent and thoughtful points regarding density, parking, and consultation. Instead, I want to focus on the building. High-rise residential zoning does not make sense for this historic building. It is my understanding that the Evergreen Church has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places through the Section 106 process (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and implementing regulations 36 CFR 800) and I assume its significance lies in the architecture and design. The historic Bethel Baptist Church has palladian windows, gothic entry ways, and brick quoins, and, even with some modifications, a high level of exterior historic integrity. Yet, the design is somewhat unique for a church (flat roof and no bell tower) and it was one of the many churches that used to occupy this area of Salem. It tells an important story about church design for the time, but also about churches in a City with deep and complicated missionary roots.

As a historic preservationist I understand the need for adaptive reuse and by no means am I calling for the building to remain a church. There are examples all over Oregon, including in Salem, of former churches being rehabilitated and starting new chapters. This often requires zoning changes. However, instead of letting the economic equations and pencilled out formulas dictate that zone, we should let the building have a say. Housing units make sense for the Evergreen Church. But nineteen units do not and this many units based on the current proposed layout appears unreasonably high given the design, size, and nature of the existing buildings (both the church and adjacent house). Therefore, high-rise residential zoning seems unreasonable as well. Evergreen Church, a historic property within Salem, should be zoned so that adaptive reuse can happen. But that zoning should also make sense given the significance and integrity of the property.

Historic buildings offer remarkable and untapped opportunities for affordable housing. And I would love to see Salem be on the forefront of appropriately rehabilitating and reusing historic properties for this use. It would show the City's commitment to both housing and historic preservation, and, yes, it would require rezoning. But in order to do this in a way that protects these properties for the long term, the zoning will have to be appropriate not solely for the economics, but for the building and the significance. High-rise residential zoning is not the answer for this property. But there is an answer. There are zoning options that will work for the goals of the project and developer - housing for some of the most vulnerable in our community - and the building. These are the options that should be explored.

Thank you for taking my testimony and for your service to the City of Salem.

-Tracy Schwartz  
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