

Submitter: Laura Fletcher
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2138

I object to this bill, not because of the need for higher density duplexes and triplexes (which I understand), but because of Section 22(1)(f) which currently requires (f) "Repealing requirements for demolition review for houses listed in the National Register of Historic Places." This section is unnecessary and will remove due process of needed reviews of demolition. I personally have experienced a neighborhood demolition in the neighborhood where I grew up that was done under the table when the developers didn't like what was happening. The result was a demolition of an architecturally historic building to be torn down, not because it was faltering but because a developer simply wanted the larger project of a whole new building instead of a renovation. This building was Riverdale Grade School, which carried the pedigree of having been designed by the two most acclaimed architects in the city's history (A.E. Doyle and Pietro Belluschi). Yes, it's possible the building might have been taken down after review, but the building did not receive the full time needed for the review. Section 22(1)(f) would allow such disasters to happen legally.
Please remove Section 22(1)(f) - we need to be sure that our history isn't removed in the name of progress, or at least that it is given its due review. As you know, having a review doesn't automatically mean the demolition will be denied, it simply means that the public benefit of retention vs replacement will be closely weighed.
peace. Laura Fletcher