

June 28, 2006

Mayor Kathy Keolker
City of Renton
1055 S. Grady Way
Renton, WA 98057

Re: Burying the Hatchet

Dear Mayor Keolker:

On behalf of the Highlands Community Association (HCA) Board of Directors and the hundreds of members of the HCA, I want to express our appreciation for your commitment to abandon the City's use of the Community Renewal Act and its provision for declaring neighborhood blight and condemning private property for redevelopment.

As you know, the HCA is a strong advocate for the revitalization of the Highlands community. By shelving the threat of eminent domain, the City and the community can now move forward on several positive fronts to achieve what I believe is a shared vision for a safe, healthy, vibrant and affordable Highlands community.

As you know, the HCA has been working closely with owners in the Highlands neighborhood to upgrade their properties. Owners are reroofing, painting buildings, and doing other maintenance; tenants are mowing the grass, cleaning up their yards, and planting flowers. I believe Inez showed pictures at a recent council meeting of some of this clean-up work. We pledge our continued leadership and cooperation with the City to help upgrade those properties that have deteriorated.

We seek a new dialogue with City staff to explore the numerous opportunities that are available for neighborhood revitalization.

- We should look jointly for funding to provide low income property owners with grants or low interest loans to make improvements to their properties.
- We should work together to identify owners whose properties are in violation of City building codes and take action to bring those properties into compliance.

- We should find creative ways to provide a greater police presence in our community.
- We should establish zoning that encourages private redevelopment and preserves the rights of existing owners.
- We should coordinate our efforts to identify neighborhood infrastructure in greatest need of repair and expedite those improvements.

We are confident that, working together, the Highlands community will be revitalized; and we look forward to getting started on these joint goals as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Persson". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Terry G. Persson
President, HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

cc: Alex Pietsch
City Council