SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

January 17, 2024

M E M O R A N D U M

To:	Seattle City Council
From:	Lish Whitson, Analyst
Subject:	Notice of ex parte communication on the rezone of 1620 16th Avenue (Clerk File 314400 and Council Bill 120739)

On January 16, 2024, the Seattle City Council, at its 2:00 meeting, received ex parte communication from Oliver Niska regarding the rezone of 1620 16th Avenue (Clerk File 314400 and Council Bill 120739).

At the meeting the following exchange occurred:

Oliver Niska: Hello. My name… Congratulations newly elected members, and welcome back to those who are returning. For the record, my name is Oliver Miska, I am a life long Seattleite, spent most of my time on Capitol Hill. I'm here speaking to Ordinance 120739 regarding the rezoning of a lot that includes the Conover House at 1620 19th Avenue. Sadly, I'm here to testifying in vain a bit to save part of Seattle that is pretty much condemned to be destroyed and forgotten. I used to live at 1620…

Council President Sara Nelson: Could you please pause…

Oliver Niska: … and there's a large rich …

Council President Nelson: I'm sorry, could you please pause… What item are you speaking to? Could you please repeat that?

Oliver Niska: Ordinance 120739. Regarding the rezoning of the lot at 1620 19th Avenue.

Council President Nelson: I'm sorry we can not accept public comment on quasi-judicial matters. So I will have to ask you to…

Oliver Niska: Well OK, well, the house is being destroyed under false premises and unfortunately it's been blocked…

Council President Nelson: I…

Oliver Niska: from being preserved as a historical landmark

Councilmember Dan Straus: Clerk…

Council President Nelson: Go ahead…

Councilmember Strauss: Point of personal privilege. This is a quasi-judicial matter of which we are receiving ex parte communications. I would ask if the public commenter can't speak to a different item, that we cut the microphone. And we will also need to confer as to whether or not we need to disclose ex parte communications regarding this item going forward.

Deputy City Clerk Emilia Sanchez: Oliver, are you able to… Oliver excuse me I'd just like to make sure…

Oliver Niska: I could hear that, thank you. I hope there remains to be transparency, but I… there was a misunderstanding that there was public comment on this. I encourage transparency moving forward. Thank you.

Deputy City Clerk Sanchez: Thank you very much.