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Main Street Program
gradually transforms
Hillsdale town center
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Portland, Oregon

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March 2013

South Waterfront finally gets affordable housing at six-story Gray's Landing

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The original vision for the South Waterfront was that it would be a community containing a mixture of income levels, including the lowest. Last year, with the completion of Gray's Landing, the City achieved at least partial, and long overdue, fulfillment of this promise.

The six-story structure at 0650 S.W. Lowell St. contains 206 apartments, including 30 two-bedroom units, 102 parking spaces, and a 5,000 square foot commercial space that is still awaiting a tenant. The ground floor is also the new headquarters of REACH Community Development, the project's principal developer.

The project was originally part of the development master plan for South Waterfront, and was to be undertaken by the developers Homer Williams and Dyke Dame, the builders of many of the condominium high-rises.

They had in fact gained design approval and even building permits, in 2008 when Williams and Dame declared that they were unable to gain financing

and walked away from the project.

It was revived in 2010 by the new Portland Housing Bureau, which issued a Request For Qualifications (an open bid) for a new developer. REACH was selected, and the \$50 million project went forward aided by funds from many sources, including \$23 million from the Housing Bureau.

To save themselves the time and expense of going through another design review process, REACH adhered to most of the original design, the permit for which was still good. ("If we'd been starting from scratch, we'd have done a number of things differently," REACH's Laura Recko told *The Post*.)

The biggest change involved the installation on top of the structure of an Eco-Roof, at 30,000 square feet the largest in Portland. This satisfied the City's requirement for on-site storm water treatment and, in turn, allowed them to convert a second-floor water treatment space into an open courtyard and playground.

The roof also contains solar panels. These and other features earned Gray's Landing a LEED Platinum rating for green building, the highest possible.

The housing units are reserved for

individuals and families earning 60 percent or less of median area family income – about \$30,000 for a single individual, more for family units. There are 42 units reserved for low-income veterans.

Among them is Dee Shuler, who

served in the Air Force installing and repairing communications equipment. After mustering out, and undergoing some reversals of fortune, she wound up in a Single Room Occupancy (with limited personal facilities) building in
(Continued on Page 6)



Dee Shuler enjoys living at Gray's Landing with her dog, Abigail. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

Wait a minute! Who are you and why are you in my house?

MAPLEWOOD NOTEBOOK

By Jillian Daley
The Southwest Portland Post

Surly men selling meat door-to-door, a house break-in and the Portland police's budget were among the topics at the Maplewood Neighborhood Association's February meeting.

Portland police Officer Scott Foster provided his usual update on recent crime reported in the neighborhood, and neighbors shared information on some suspicious local incidents.

One neighbor inquired about the status of the police department's budget. Foster said higher ranked police officials than him handle the budget, and the city's final budget for 2013-14 is a long way off from approval.

He did say police are not fully staffed, and if layoffs occur, it would affect services. *Editor's Note: Mayor Charlie Hales has asked all city bureaus to submit budgets with a 10 percent decrease from last year.*

Foster also mentioned a house break-in. The owner of a home in the 6800 block of Southwest 63rd Avenue returned home sick from work and stumbled upon a 26-year-old man in his home at about 11:45 a.m. Jan. 24.

Beau Daniel Rappaport allegedly grabbed some property and fled says a police report ["Police Blotter: Police arrest burglary suspect in Maplewood neighborhood," *The Post*, February 2013].

Portland police, with the aid of a K-9 unit from the Beaverton Police Department, discovered the suspect in a nearby backyard. Officers recovered the victim's property.

Rappaport, who lived a few houses away from the victim, was charged with first-degree burglary and booked into the Multnomah County jail. He was arraigned on Jan. 25.

Guys selling meat door-to-door?

Several neighbors told Foster that men selling meat door-to-door are being hostile to neighbors.

"They got arrogant if you didn't stop to talk to them," said Joan Frazer, neighborhood association secretary.

Foster said police get complaints about meat salesmen every year, and most are working for legitimate meat

companies. He added that many of them may simply be young workers who are unaccustomed to working with the public.

The association's Schools Committee chairwoman, Keena Hormel, joked that maybe everyone is a little grumpy right now on account of tax season.

Foster said police received 40 calls on issues such as noise complaints in the Maplewood neighborhood in January compared to 200 calls in the Multnomah neighborhood.

For information on crime tips, visit Portland's Office of Neighborhood Involvement Crime Prevention webpage at www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp.

Barbur Concept Plan to be voted on by planning commission

Maplewood Land Use Committee chairwoman Claire Carder announced that the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission on Feb. 26 will vote on whether to recommend the proposed
(Continued on Page 6)



Maplewood schools committee chair Keena Hormel discussed public safety issues during the association's meeting last month in the Maplewood Elementary School library. (Post photo by Jillian Daley)

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Letters to the Editor



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New officers, village construction, speeding and disaster preparedness

Greetings from the Multnomah neighborhood! Our next scheduled meeting of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association is on Tuesday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center (7688 SW Capitol Hwy) in Room 30. We encourage everyone to attend!

We had a productive February neighborhood meeting. We re-elected Moses Ross as chair and Katy Brumbelow as vice-chair of our Multnomah Neighborhood Association (MNA). The treasurer and secretary positions remain open.

We welcomed Beth Omansky as the new chair of our safety committee, joining Kay Durtschi as transportation committee chair and Susan Rudloff as land use committee chair. Parks, Schools and SWNI board representative positions remain open.

The Multnomah Village business district construction will begin soon in the block between Southwest 35th

and 36th avenues. The plan is to complete one side of the street at a time.

Alternative parking is at the Multnomah Arts Center lower lot. Although Multnomah Village Business Association requested electrical lighting conduit to be included in the sidewalk and tree plantings, Portland Bureau of Transportation has determined that it is not economically feasible, although letter-writing in support is encouraged.

Concerns about traffic speeds on Capitol Highway near the intersection at Southwest 40th were discussed. A motion was passed authorizing Chair Ross to submit a letter of support for these efforts to the City of Portland and PBOT.

Finally, on the topic of Disaster Preparedness, Multnomah residents Mike Ashland and Bob Cogan presented their concerns with actual neighborhood readiness and ability to respond to an actual disaster.

They advocate a strategy to inventory and plan at the individual, immediate neighborhood level (15-20 houses is encouraged); to identify those in each immediate area with medical expertise, special equipment and tools, etc.; to have standardized Earthquake kits in each home.

Mike will report back to the neighborhood on a regular basis to give updates and encourage involvement. More information about their specific local efforts can be found at www.TBoneReady.com.

Moses Ross
Chair - Multnomah
Neighborhood Association
MNAChair@gmail.com

Ghost hunting rant haunts Post reader

Regarding "Letters to the Editor: Ghost hunting in Multnomah Village simply a ploy to bring in traffic," by Anonymous, *The Post*, February 2013.

Boo to "Anonymous via e-mail." I have seen ghosts a few times but I don't believe in them. And I reserve the right to disrespect the differing opinions of others. But I am haunted by Anonymous' rant.

She really should get a life and lose sleep over matters of the living. Really? She takes the time to complain about a local, long-standing ghost story?

Poor Anonymous must be terrified of Edgar Allen Poe who sold books about the dead and Mary Todd Lincoln who bought séance time to see a dead son. Halloween must set Anonymous' hair on fire every October and I'll bet she's even ticked off at the Munsters.

Portland shops have been using dead presidents to sell merchandise every February for decades. Has she written a letter to Les Schwab and Car Toys too?

A ghostly legend of a dead lady in the basement of our local café' is harmless and it is a fun part of Keeping Portland Weird. "I ain't afraid of no ghost!" so why should Anonymous be afraid?

R.D. Bessmer

Capitol Highway, Macadam Avenue projects set for construction

NEWS

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Work on the Multnomah Village Streetscape Project will begin this month, according to Portland Bureau of Environmental Services spokesperson Joe Annett.

As described in a December *Post* article, the project will improve Southwest Capitol Highway between 35th and 36th avenues, with the addition of trees and sidewalks widened up to nine feet.

Work will be from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, and while the street will not be closed to traffic, at times it will be restricted, Annett said. The project should take about 90 days to complete.

Meanwhile, thanks to work related to the Sellwood Bridge, Macadam Avenue (Highway 43) should be booming – literally.

According to Multnomah County spokesperson Mike Pullen, crews will be using explosives for night-time work to remove part of the hillside west of the road to make way for a new right of way.

After each blast, the road will be closed for up to an hour to allow for the debris to be cleared, Pullen said.

Meanwhile, he said, crews will be working on the riverfront to remove the piers of the old bridge. Starting in July, they will begin the in-water work on the new bridge.

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Some projects mysteriously cut from the draft list; What about Hoot Owl Corner?

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Citizens, as well as officials, have weighed in on the Southwest Corridor Plan process. Last month project staff published a list of individual capitol improvement projects that would accompany the five alternative transit improvement projects recommended for the area.

These five include one light rail line from Portland to Tigard. The others are "bus rapid transit" routes from Portland to Tigard, Tualatin or Sherwood, plus a looser "hub and spoke" plan potentially providing enhanced bus service to other destinations.

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, recently appointed to represent Portland on the project's Steering Committee, asked why citizen groups were not consulted before the list was compiled.

Others are concerned as well. Roger Averbeck, Southwest Neighborhood, Inc. transportation committee chair, complained that some projects were on some alternative lists and not on others. "Hoot Owl Corner on Southwest Capitol Highway at 30th Avenue, the Southwest Garden Home Road and Multnomah Boulevard intersection, and Southwest Terwilliger Boulevard north of Barbur were not included at all," said Averbeck. Mostly, however, he was unhappy with the process.

"They didn't talk to us first, they just put what they wanted on the list," Averbeck complained. "This is public information, not public involvement."

SWNI board chair Marianne Fitzgerald had similar complaints. According to Fitzgerald, Metro staff first put forward a long list of potential projects within the corridor, and then released its final list in February.

"There was no public process at all

between the publishing of the first and second lists," Fitzgerald said. "Now they say we can remove things from the list, but we can't add to it. It just floored me."

Metro spokesperson Cliff Higgins agreed with Fitzgerald that Metro hadn't accepted public input on their list of projects and wouldn't add to it now. However, he told the Post, planners did receive a public buyoff on their methodology. Moreover, Higgins said, the list is merely being used to evaluate the five alternatives, and does not mean that other projects won't be funded as part of the Southwest Corridor.

West Portland Town Center designation reemerges in Barbur Concept Plan

As *The Post* goes to press, the Barbur Concept Plan is scheduled to be heard by the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission on February 26. However, the Plan's main point of controversy appears to have been smoothed over: a proposal to eliminate the West Portland Town Center.

The Plan is an effort to examine Southwest Barbur Boulevard, and adjacent streets, to decide what sort of development should go on different parts of it, and what sort of public improvements are needed to achieve these results.

The Barbur Concept Plan is a local counter-part to the Southwest Corridor Plan, a regional effort that will consider whether to put light rail, or some other mass transit improvement, through this corridor.

West Portland Town Center has been controversial since Metro so designated the area near the confluence of Barbur and Southwest Capitol Highway in 1996.

Metro's 2040 Plan calls for high density residential development as well as pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial uses in designated town centers.

The designation was a source of con-

flict during the Southwest Community Plan process between neighborhood activists who wanted to see such development occur and those who did not.

In fact, no such development has occurred in the intervening years, and City staff members have come to doubt that it ever will, even if massive amounts of money were spent on public improvements.

For that reason, a draft of the Barbur Concept Plan's final report suggested that Metro and the City "reconsider" the Town Center designation.

This alarmed activists such as Roger Averbeck, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc transportation committee chair.

"All the alternatives for high capacity transit go through the West Portland Town Center," he told the *Post*. "This is the big one."

Withdrawal of the "town center" designation could endanger the chances of securing funding for needed changes, he said.

The message was heard. City Project Manager Jay Sugnet shared a memo

with the *The Post* that said, "A town center planning effort should be conducted, in conjunction with an access and circulation study, to develop a community vision and strategic plan for the area."

Southwest kicks off Comprehensive Plan process

Multnomah Arts Center was the host last month to the first of seven public workshops on the proposed new Portland Comprehensive Plan. About 40 people attended the session.

The Comprehensive Plan will update a document in place since 1980, and will set regulations governing public activities and private development through the year 20-35.

Based on feedback received at the session, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff will prepare a draft plan for public review in the fall.

A large percentage of the written comments received addressed trans-

(Continued on Page 6)

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Main Street Program gradually transforms Hillsdale town center

THE COUNTRY STORE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The hamlet of Hillsdale is transforming: lighting has been enhanced; landscaping has sprouted up; visual storefront improvements assistance is available; and new signage will appear.

Kathryn, a 26 year-old resident of the Mississippi neighborhood had never heard of Hillsdale and had mistaken it for Hillsboro at first.

"It seems quite nestled in," she replied as she did her laundry. "Mississippi Street has been going through a series of renovations itself with the addition of new cafes, restaurants, food carts and small one-of-a-kind shops."

Her friend, Joe, explained that he liked the unique one-of-a-kind shops in Hillsdale and was going to the bakery shortly.

"I'd love to see more cafes and brewpubs and places to sit outside in summer," Joe suggested.

"Wouldn't it be cool to add a second floor [to the strip mall side]?" offered one employee.

"This area could be a great place for an early sixties retro look," replied another.

When asked if they had seen any changes since the Main Street program had taken affect, most had only noticed new trees and shrubbery.

There are the new, large planters, the red and white lamppost banners, and the new square between the bakery and the market.

There is talk of a plaza or posada being developed where currently the parking lot is between Key Bank and Casa Colima. Bricks will probably be sold in the future.

When all were asked about participating in the development of the town center, most replied that they were unaware of notices or unable to attend.

"Meetings are held at times when I have to get the kids off to school," exclaimed one business owner who did know about the meetings.

Hillsdale, along with two other communities, St. Johns and Alberta Street, received grants from the na-



Megan Braunsten, executive director of the Hillsdale Main Street program, displays one of the new planters along Capitol Highway. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

tional main street program in October 2010.

Megan Braunsten is coming up on two years of coordinating Hillsdale Main Street (HMS) after putting in three years as the Gresham Main Street executive director.

"Events like our recent 'Wine About Winter' and the annual Paella dinner," Braunsten explained, "are HMS products."

Governed by a 13-member board, HMS brings together the Hillsdale Business & Professional Associa-

tion, neighborhood association and residents on a regular basis to address five main objectives.

Design. This component focuses on physical improvements to the Hillsdale Town Center such as landscaping; the parking area up by the liquor store; the large, red planters along Capitol Highway; and storefront improvement such as painting or redesign.

"We have a variety of architects and designers available to our business owners," Braunsten said.

Promotions. Co-marketing of the holiday golden ticket program was a joint project with sister community, Multnomah Village. An online map-clicks.com site features 360 degree virtual tours and online information. A colorful up-to-date brochure features both retail areas.

Economic Restructuring. A business advocate program helps businesses with marketing such as upgrading Facebook pages and websites as needed. Up to two hours a week is available.

Organization. Websites, social media, monthly meetings, colorful posters and an electronic newsletter are incorporated to keep everyone linked in.

Sustainability. Helping restaurants to compost, sustainable energy audits, providing a process to recycle. Energy lighting assistance is provided at no cost.

Volunteers are the backbone of the program. Approximately 70 volunteers work a month with at least one event having over 200 volunteers on hand. "We couldn't do without them," said Braunsten.

But no program is without challenges. These projects tend to go through cycles. With many of the original volunteers burnt out, "friend-raising" is the art of getting new blood and, along with it, new ideas.

Plans are underway to network with Wilson High School, connect with the Key Club, and aid each other with fundraising needs. If you are interested in volunteering please call 503-896-9211, email volunterr@hillsdalemainstreet.org or visit www.hillsdalemainstreet.org.

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Dear EarthTalk: There's been a lot of coverage on the topic of organic foods and how they aren't actually any healthier than conventional foods. Is this true?

—Gina Thompson, Salem, OR

There is no doubt that organic foods are healthier—for our bodies individually as well as for the environment—than their conventionally produced counterparts. The question is how much healthier and does the difference warrant spending more on your grocery bill.

Conventional food is produced using synthetic chemical inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, hormones and antibiotics to repel pests, boost growth and improve the yield of marketable product. It stands to reason that trace amounts of these chemicals are likely to get ingested into our bodies.

Before such chemicals became widely available, most food was produced organically. Recent awareness about the dangers of synthetic chemicals and antibiotic resistance has triggered a renewed interest in organic food.

As a result organic farms constitute the fastest growing sector of the U.S. agriculture industry. Given that these farms are smaller and have more of a niche clientele, they must charge more for organic products. These costs get passed on to consumers willing to spend extra to be healthy.

But after surveying over 200 other studies comparing organic and conventional foods and in some cases their effects on the body, Stanford medical researchers found results to be marginal.

While eating organic produce can lower exposure to pesticides, the amount measured from conventionally grown produce was also well within safety limits.

They also found that organic foods were not particularly more nutritious than non-organic foods. The findings were published in the Annals of Internal Medicine in September 2012.

The one area where the team found a divergence was regarding antibiotic-resistant germs in meats.

While the chances of bacterial contamination are the same for organic

and non-organic meats, germs in conventionally raised chicken and pork had a 33 percent higher risk of being resistant to multiple antibiotics.

Many farmers and ranchers rely on antibiotics to fatten up their animals and keep them healthy until slaughter, but converting to more organic meat could help stem the oncoming tide of antibiotic resistance that threatens to make many of our medicines obsolete.

Of course, consumers may opt for organic foods despite the lack of much difference in nutritional content or chemical residues.

According to the Mayo Clinic, a non-profit medical care and research institution and a leading voice on public health and health maintenance, some people simply prefer the taste of organic food.

Others like organic food because it doesn't typically contain preservatives, artificial sweeteners, coloring and flavorings.

Meanwhile, others take a longer-term view and go organic for the sake of the environment, as organic agriculture reduces pollution and conserves water and soil quality. If you're trying to be both healthy and frugal, selectively buying organic is one option.

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) publishes its *Shoppers Guide to Pesticides in Produce* each year to let consumers know which produce have the most pesticide residues and are the most important to buy organic.

EWG's 2012 "dirty dozen" non-organic foods to avoid were apples, celery, sweet bell peppers, peaches, strawberries, imported nectarines, grapes, spinach, lettuce, cucumbers, blueberries and potatoes.

Contacts: "Are Organic Foods Safer or Healthier than Conventional Alternatives?" <http://annals.org/article.aspx?articleid=1355685>; Environmental Working Group, www.ewg.org.

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Faith Cadonau and Brady McKinnon enjoy hunting for Easter eggs at Alpenrose Dairy, 6149 SW Shattuck Rd. Alpenrose is celebrating their 51st annual Easter Egg Hunt. This event will take place on Saturday, March 30, with chocolate eggs, toys, candy, prizes and best of all there will be 14 six-foot grand prize Easter bunnies. The excitement begins at 10:30 a.m. for kids ages 3-5 and at noon for children ages 6-8. (Photo courtesy of Alpenrose Dairy)

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Gray's Landing at South Waterfront

(Continued from Page 1)

Vancouver.

"I had a three-burner stove, and only one of them worked," she told the *Post*. "The oven didn't work at all. You could hear your neighbor in the next unit; there was no privacy at all. You had to sign in guests, and there was a limit on the number of visitors allowed per month. The managers would come in at least twice a month to inspect."

Shuler secured a unit in Gray's Landing through the Veterans Administration. "This is a hundred times better," she said. "I love the neighborhood. I take my dog Abigail outside to potty at 3 a.m., and I feel totally safe. They have cooking classes, computer lab and happy hour."

Others share Shuler's affection for the building. According to Recko, when a trailer was installed to receive applications for tenancy, people camped in front of it overnight to be sure of meeting the quota.

The building was completely rented long before it was complete, half of the rooms were occupied as of mid-February and, Recko said, tenants are moving in at the rate of three or four a day.

A drawback for the building, and all of the South Waterfront, is a lack of retail services. On the other hand, the final stop on the Portland Streetcar is



Riad Sahli and Laura Recko of REACH Community Development show off the courtyard at Gray's Landing. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

15 feet from the front door. In exchange for providing operators with an easily accessible break room, TriMet gives all Gray's Landing staff and tenants annual passes for \$15 a year.

(The normal cost is \$100). Tenants can get the passes by attending a half-hour class. They are within walking distance of the tram to the Oregon Health and Sciences University and the nearby Veterans Hospital. They are also within a half mile of the planned MAX Light Rail line to Milwaukie, under construction and scheduled to open in

two years.

REACH is not a social service agency, Recko says, but they do have staff on site that address tenants' needs ("social service light," Recko says), and a representative from the Veterans Administration on premises.

How does this community fit in with its affluent neighbors? Recko says that REACH has done outreach to the managements of the Mirabella, the Matisse across the street, and the Southwest Charter School immediately to the south.

Southwest Corridor Plan

(Continued from Page 3)

portation issues, and the need for new infrastructure.

"We like the rural character, but our arterials and collectors need to be complete streets with transit service," one respondent wrote. Several people also called for the enforcement of both existing and future public plans and policies.

MAPLEWOOD NOTEBOOK

(Continued from Page 1)

Barbur Concept Plan (BCP) to the Portland City Council.

BCP, a subset of the Southwest Corridor Plan [which extends along Highway 99W from Portland to Sherwood], provides a long-term vision for Barbur Boulevard, detailing transportation investments, potential storm water upgrades and changes to land use policy and zoning.

The next step would be for the City Council to vote on a resolution to adopt the BCP. The resolution was not on the online future agenda list as of press time. The City Council's regular weekly meetings are at 9:30 am Wednesdays in Council Chambers, Portland City Hall, 1221 S.W. Fourth Ave.

To view a draft of the BCP, visit www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/55269.

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Montessori school takes issue with Terwilliger neighbors over dog poop

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Sunstone Montessori School is now ensconced in the old Terwilliger School building and grounds at 6340 SW Corbett Ave., and has inherited an old issue associated with the property: dog poop.

As Principal Kathy Newman told the South Portland Neighborhood Association last month, she met informally with nearby neighbors when her institution first moved in.

"I asked them if they had any particular concerns, and this came up," she said. By "this," Newman meant use of the school's two-acre front lawn as an off-leash dog park, an activity that has been going on for decades.

"I told them, 'You can do it if you clean up after yourselves,' and they haven't been," Newman said.

It was an issue also with the building's last occupant, the Portland French School. The principal assured neighbors and South Portland that the dogs would be welcome – then abruptly installed a fence to keep them out, permanently alienating much of the community.

In contrast, Sunstone Montessori School sought advice on how to proceed.

Ironically, South Portland representatives advocated taking a fairly tough stand with the transgressors, although they counseled meeting with them first. Board member Bill Danneman said, "I'd suggest having a meeting at the school" with the dog owners.

"Tell them this is irresponsible dog ownership, and put the onus on them. If that doesn't work, you may have to take draconian measures."

Board member Jim Gardner noted

that the site has long been viewed as public property, and therefore available for the public to use. He suggested posting signs spelling out the conditions under which the lawn can be used.

Danneman said that if there are still violations, Newman should call the police. A police officer present said, "It would only take one arrest for the word to get around."

Newman said she had considered installing a plastic bag dispenser on the lawn. However, she said that if this happened she would like to see contributions from locals toward the \$1,500 cost.

"I don't think it's right for us to foot the whole bill when it isn't even our problem," she said. South Waterfront resident Len Michon said that such stations exist in various places in the neighborhood, "and no one uses them." Newman said that some residents bag the feces, but then leave the bags behind.

South Portland board member Lee



Neighbors like to use Sunstone Montessori School's two-acre front lawn as a dog park. (Stock photo courtesy of Susan Frikken via flickr)

Buhler suggested engaging the dog owners and urging them to "self-police." Newman said that aside from

this issue, "The neighbors have been great to us, and the school has staged an open house."

City of Portland hopes to save \$25 million by cutting budgets

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Last month all City of Portland bureaus submitted fiscal year 2013-14 budgets that were 10 percent lower than their current ones, as ordered by Mayor Charlie Hales. They all reflected major cuts in operations and services.

The cuts are necessary to meet an expected shortfall in revenue of \$25 million. Some of this is due to the imposition of a new Library District for Multnomah County.

The Library District provides more stable funding for the county's library program. However, since it involves an

appropriation from the General Fund, and the law does not allow property taxes to increase beyond the rate of inflation, "compression" occurs-- meaning that funding elsewhere must be cut.

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement's cuts include elimination of the bureau's yearly stipends for neighborhood associations to cover printing, mailing and other communications costs, a staple of the budget since the office was created in 1974.

Also cut are the bureau's popular Neighborhood Small Grants program, most of its support for volunteer graffiti cleanup activities, some of its insurance coverage for recreational activities, and two of its 11 neighborhood crime pre-

vention coordinator positions.

Other bureaus have similar cuts. The Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission's budget calls for reductions in public outreach calls for such processes as the Portland Comprehensive Plan update and possibly the elimination of district planners who have worked with citizen groups on local planning issues.

The Bureau of Parks could see the elimination of some recreation programs and reduced maintenance at parks and facilities. All bureaus have also submitted add-back packages arguing for the re-addition to their budget of services they deem essential if the funds can be found.

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Neighbors want Newbury and Vermont bridges safe for bikes and peds

HILLSDALE NOTEBOOK

By Jillian Daley
The Southwest Portland Post

There's been a lot of debate centering on the Barbur Boulevard bridges project – and two local neighborhood associations are in direct opposition on the issue.

South Portland neighbors weighed in on the project in January [*Rehabilitation planned for Newbury and Vermont bridges on Barbur Boulevard,* by Lee Perlman, *The Post, February 2013*] and last month Hillsdale neighbors had their say.

The South Portland Neighborhood Association board voted in favor of widening traffic lanes while workers make repairs, but Hillsdale neighbors are going the other way. They want more room for bicycles and pedestrians.

Responding to community disapproval, Oregon Department of Transportation officials are reconsidering an initial plan to do major bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements while repairing the Newbury Street and Vermont Street bridges next year, said ODOT spokeswoman Jilayne Jordan. Hillsdale wants those major improvements.

The Newbury and Vermont bridges support Barbur Boulevard and are just south of the Southwest Capitol Highway on-ramp. The bridges are not in immediate danger of failing, but with-

out the repairs, ODOT would institute weight restrictions barring heavy trucks and buses, Jordan said.

Along with the structural repairs, the project will include improvements for walkers and bikers – just not to the extent that the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association asked for during its February meeting.

Neighbors approved a motion to submit a request to ODOT to either build new bridges or make traffic lanes smaller, so a bike lane or larger sidewalk could be added.

"It was our desire to have immediate action to help accommodate pedestrian bicycle space," said Glenn Bridger, the association's transportation committee chairman.

Jordan said repairing the bridges rings in at \$5 million, and replacing them would cost \$25 million. That's most of the annual project dollars for the ODOT region that covers Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Columbia and Hood River counties.

If a bike lane is added, the right traffic lanes and the median separating northbound and southbound traffic would get skinnier, said Jordan, who presented the plan for the bridges during the association's meeting.

"We took that proposal out to the public and it was not received well," she said.

ODOT does plan to install taller pedestrian safety railings and repair walkways, ramps and curbs on the bridges.

More signs warning drivers to watch for cyclists are another proposed up-



The Vermont bridge is located along Barbur Boulevard at Southwest Parkhill Drive. (Post photo by Jillian Daley)

grade. The drainage grates by the ramps will be moved and covered, Jordan said.

The repair project for the bridges, built in 1934, will begin in early 2014 and last more than eight months. The construction will close lanes, but the entire road will not be shut down at any one time.

There will be a couple of weekends when southbound traffic will need to find another way to get through.

"I'd rather be inconvenienced and have the road fixed," said Mikal

Apenes, Hillsdale Neighborhood Association chairman.

The original wood caps that support the bridge on either end will be replaced with steel caps, Jordan said.

The Newbury bridge needs new concrete around its joints, which support bridge users' weight. Both bridges will be repaved.

A public hearing is tentatively planned for May. To learn more, visit www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/pages/vermont_newbury/index.aspx.

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