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The Southwest Portland Post

Volume No. 25 Issue No. 7

www.swportlandpost.com

Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

May 2017

Wetland restoration celebration at April Hill Park

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Rain clouds parted just as festivities began for a long-term restoration project at April Hill Park. Held on April 9, over a hundred guests enjoyed educational exhibits, speeches, and tours of the wetland improvements.

The Robert Gray Middle School Marching Band came striding into the main field as the celebration kicked off.

Snuggled in the Maplewood neighborhood, April Hill Park is located at Southwest 58th Avenue and Miles Street.

The park has a large playing field, a small playground, and a port-a-potty, but the main attraction is the restored wetland which lies to the south and lower part of the main park.

The wetlands had been damaged by off-leash dogs and the spreading of invasive wetland plants and soils. According to neighbors and community activists, wildlife and water quality were threatened.

The park's wetland had also been neglected for years ruined by lack of trails and seasonal flooding.

In 2009, Portland Parks and Recreation prioritized a plan for a boardwalk, observation platforms, and natural areas. Due to the recession at the time, repairs could not begin right away.

The Friends of April Hill Park, under the guidance of Jill Gaddis, looked for other ways to help restore the habitat. In 2013, the group obtained a small



Mike Abbate, Portland Parks and Recreation director, and Metro Councilor Bob Stacey help local children with the grand opening ribbon cutting ceremony. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

start-up grant from Metro.

"We also received over 400 individual donations," Gaddis said. "Portland Parks and Recreation provided \$498,000 [from a voter approved bond measure] to help bring this project to fruition."

"The Friends of April Hill Park held silent auctions and an 'Arf-in-the-Park' fundraiser," said Gaddis. "We had many volunteers help with various tasks and projects."

Drummers of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde community welcomed the participants. They reminded everyone of the land that once belonged to several tribes: the Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, and the Multnomah - a band of the Chinook Tribe.

Cultural protection specialists shared baskets and traditional foods of nuts and roots of the native peoples.

Of course, no celebration is without political dignitaries. Metro Councilor Bob Stacey and Parks Director Mike Abbate both spoke.

"I'm much honored to be here," Stacey said. "Metro was just a small partner to help protect the wetlands. I believe this is the first time we have had a marching band join festivities!"

After the speeches subsided, Stacey and Abbate helped coordinate the ribbon cutting ceremony inviting children up to help.

Afterwards, guests wandered down the new path littered with fallen branches from a recent wind storm. The new wooden boardwalk seemed to float over the wetland. Frogs croaked, trilliums were in full bloom, and new fiddle necks popped up from the mucky mud.

Old cedars draped the pathways with their embracing foliage. Some of the children were warned not to leave the trail as they were tempted to wade in the shallow water.

Park officials hope that everyone, including dogs, can enjoy the beauty of the area,

while remaining on the footbridges and trails. The spirits of the native people would like that.



Visitors enjoy a serene setting overlooking the wetlands on the new boardwalks in April Hill Park. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)



Carol McCarthy (left) listens to a story by a Native American cultural specialist. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

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Are developers ruining Multnomah Village? Neighbors' complaints go unheeded

COMMENTARY

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

If the April meeting of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association had a theme, it would be called "Developers Ruining Multnomah Village!"

According to many, if not all members of the association, these developers have been given the green light from the city for their various infill projects.

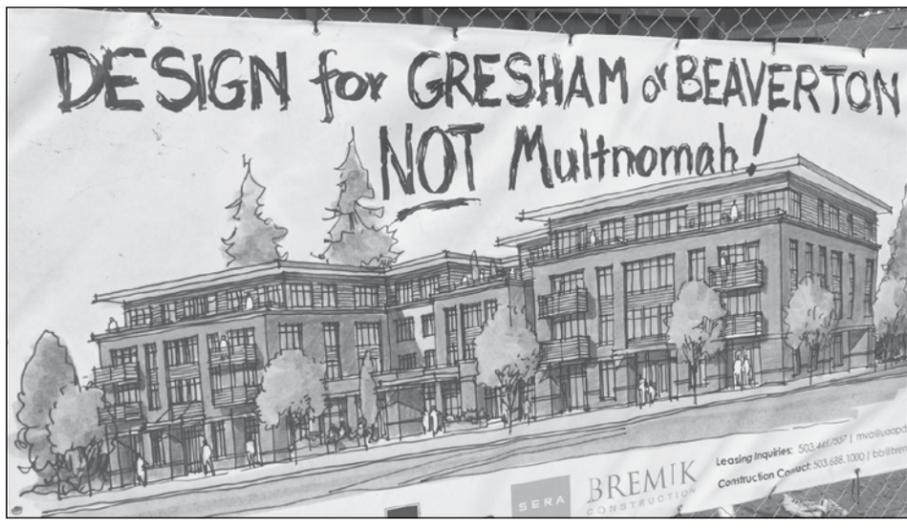
At the same time, they create havoc on infrastructure and road destruction, and test neighbors' patience from complaints that go unheeded.

Covering this community for almost five years, this reporter witnessed an immediate transformation while walking to the recent monthly meeting.

On one street, yet another infill project has begun with dump trucks lining up, pulling dirt away and blocking the small street. Three town homes are planned.

At the end of this same street, a medical-recreational marijuana dispensary has a permit to open.

Construction workers were busy on the roof but oblivious to the major potholes on the road directly in front of the future business.



After this graffiti was discovered, banners came down from the construction site. Some say that the 71-unit Multnomah Apartments building looks nothing like what was proposed in the artist rendering. (Photo courtesy of Amelia Ellis)

On Capitol Highway and 33rd Avenue, the fourth floor has been recently added to the large 71-unit Multnomah Apartments the association tried to stop, or at least scale back.

A resident, Jan, lives right behind the project. She shared that a strong chemical type smell was emitting from the project on April 11. She and a few others were experiencing physical symptoms from the odors.

All people wanted to know what was that smell and how the company would mitigate future potential harmful issues. It was suggested to call both city and county environmental health services and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

"I investigated reports about a strong chemical odor reported to us on April 11," said Trevor Ritchie,

the project engineer for Bremik Construction.

"Workers were waterproofing and caulking windows without masks. I also checked all plumbers and framers and found no problems. Painters were not on site that day. I spoke to the DEQ over the phone who had inquired," Ritchie said.

"I went over all safety data sheets and found there were no hazardous conditions." Ritchie said that the project is slated to be completed by December.

As in all Multnomah meetings, the land use report gets a lot of airplay. A local amateur historian wants to do a documentary on the destruction of Portland.

One of the last previous areas in Multnomah, the Hutchinson property at 4144 SW Canby Street, has been sold to developer Vic

Remmers of Everett Custom Homes. "The property is just west of the Multnomah post office," land use chair Jim Peterson said.

According to city records, the property is valued at over \$2 million. Remmers is no stranger to the Multnomah neighborhood.

"Remmers has been a thorn in our side since 1970," said Chair Martie Sucec. "Especially his father who swore he'd never build in Multnomah again."

Jan Newman, a Multnomah member who comes to meetings occasionally, asked if a class action lawsuit ever could be filed? Sucec said everyone was looking for some kind of hope.

Everett Custom Homes is also working on a variety of other houses near Southwest 46th Avenue and Carson Street. Residents from that area, Jeff and Cheryl Caines, were in attendance.

"What can we do about the Everett trucks destroying the unmaintained streets?" Jeff Caines asked. "I've contacted Everett Homes and have had no communication."

Caines said he contacted his representative in Salem.

"These trucks have made an unimproved road even worse with ruts and mud holes," added Houston Markley who also lives in the area.

"How we can hold the developer accountable?" asked Caines. He was visibly frustrated. "If they're building \$750,000 homes, wouldn't they want to fix the street?"

Sucec said she would invite Commissioner Dan Saltzman, or

(Continued on Page 6)

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The Post has a circulation of 7,000 in Multnomah Village and the surrounding neighborhood business districts including Burlingame, Capitol Hill, Garden Home, Glen Cullen, Hillsdale, South Portland, Raleigh Hills, West Portland and Vermont Hills. The Post is published on or about the 1st of every month. Back issues are \$2.50 each when available. All major credit cards accepted.

The Post is printed on recycled newsprint using soy-based inks.

Hate crimes focus of town hall meeting at Jewish community center

By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

We're living in crazy, paranoid times. Events that seemed unlikely are becoming more commonplace. Are we alone in our feelings?

Is President Donald Trump at the root of much of the negativity and cruelty that's happening locally, nationally, globally?

A recent town hall meeting at Mittleman Jewish Community Center, which featured an all-star panel of politicians, counselors, academics, religious leaders and law enforcement officials, did much to alleviate concerns and offer some relief through dialogue, discussion, discourse.

The center itself was the site of a bomb threat in March.

The meeting was timely for a variety of reasons — a global increase in hate crimes, several bomb threats at Jewish community centers, increased media attention on hate and hate crimes and an uptick in anti-Semitic graffiti.

The New York Times has launched "This Week in Hate," a column devoted to the topic.

The mood at the meeting was hopeful and cautiously optimistic. It wasn't loud. It wasn't rowdy. It wasn't a protest. It was a gathering created to encourage listening and learning.

Most everyone on the panel agreed that changes picked up speed in the weeks before and after the presidential election and that "haters" are feeling more emboldened.

For some on the panel, including Rabbi David Kosak from Congregation Nevah Shalom, David Molko, a counselor from Jewish Child and Family Service, and Professor Steve Wasserstrom from Reed College, there's a growing sense of "here we go again."

According to Wasserstrom, "Hate crimes aren't new, but they seemed to go away after 9-11. "Now, it's coming out of the woodwork since the presidential election."

Acknowledging that children may be more vulnerable and frightened was the focus of remarks from Douglass Ruth of Jewish Child and Family Services.

Ruth talked about how to talk to children from a "Trauma Informed Approach" to create a sense of safety. He encouraged kids to ask questions and stressed that adults don't always have the answers.

"Many groups feel targeted," said City Commissioner Nick Fish. "My advice: form alliances and coalitions with local groups who share common values like Muslims and the LGBT community. We must continue to have gatherings like this," said Fish.

The law enforcement community was represented by the FBI, Portland police and the State of Oregon Attorney General's office.

"We have the commitment of the department to pursue investigations," said Bill Williams, the United States Attorney for the District of Oregon.

Scott Goldman from the FBI concurred, saying that hate crimes were a priority for his bureau. "There's a new sense of urgency," said Goldman. "People are feeling emboldened."

Once the panelists offered their perspectives, the floor was opened up to community members in attendance who expressed concern, gratitude and hopefulness. About 100 people attended the meeting.

"We are in a unique situation in Oregon," said one audience member, looking for guidance from representatives of U.S. senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley.

"Our challenge for those of us

who want to be activist outside of Oregon is to broaden our reach. What can we do to make a difference in our country?"

The Senators' representatives freely shared their business cards and encouraged community members to contact them directly to learn more about what we all can do to make a difference outside of Oregon.

Reporter's Note: The U.S. Senate was in session and both Wyden and Merkley were in Washington, D.C. Merkley was leading a filibuster protesting Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch at the time of the town meeting in Portland.

This writer was impressed by the Rabbi Kosak's passion, deep knowledge of the issues, and comfort in sharing his own personal experience with frightening incidents.

Kosak offered both spiritual and community approaches as he talked about resilience, fear, hatred, friendship, and carving time to make new friends.

"What we know is that when people encounter someone from a



An all-star panel of local officials was featured at a town hall meeting on hate crimes at Mittleman Jewish Community Center in April. (Post photo by Jack Rubinger)

minority group and have a positive experience then they are less likely to harbor hatred," said Kosak. "We can indeed make a positive impact before the hate begins."

One resident brought up a recent graffiti incident at Grant High School. Commissioner Fish offered his perspective on the incident.

"It's my view that we must act very quickly to remove the graffiti," said Fish. It cannot be allowed to stand. I share your concerns about graffiti."

Fish went on to say, "I urge you to reach out to (Portland Mayor) Ted Wheeler and my colleagues to tell them why this is important because this is a line item in the budget and your feedback will have an impact on decisions that are made."

(Continued on Page 6)

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THE COUNTRY STORE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Fanno Creek Clinic celebrates 20 years in Hillsdale



Medical director Gregg Coodley, M.D. and office manager Kelly Henry at Fanno Creek Clinic.
(Photo courtesy of Kelly Henry)

Fanno Creek Clinic, a primary care, multi-specialty clinic is celebrating 20 years in Hillsdale this May and 50,000 patients.

The health care center was formed by a group of physicians and nurses who left Oregon Health & Science University in April 1997 to form an independent clinic. Long time clinic staff noted that they were told that they wouldn't last six months.

Since then, contrary to their belief, the

clinic has grown to include 12 primary care physicians, two psychiatrists, and three other mental health therapists. A variety of specialists also practice at the clinic including a podiatrist, rheumatologist, a women's health nurse practitioner, and a colorectal surgeon.

The health center offers on-site x-ray, lab, ultrasound, and stress testing.

With over sixty employees, all who own a part of the business, Fanno Creek Clinic is one of the largest employers in the Hillsdale and Multnomah area. Many clinic employees have worked at the clinic for over decade.

"Fanno Creek Clinic has long been known for its innovations," said medical director, Gregg Coodley, M.D. "We were the first Oregon medical clinic to install solar power in 2005."

The clinic has developed a number of programs to help the local community over the years including giving grants to local elementary schools and helping businesses provide energy saving light bulbs.

According to clinic staff, previous grants went to pay for arts and science programs at Rieke, Maplewood, and Stevenson elementary schools as well as science textbooks at Robert Gray Middle School.

The clinic's most innovative program included teaming up with Neighborhood House to pay for health insurance for uninsured people in exchange for volunteering at Neighborhood House.

Gurton's Plant Shop opens in French Quarter

Gurton's Plant Shop, a new boutique featuring houseplants, succulents, and cacti, will be holding its grand opening on First Friday (May 5) in the French Quarter boutique mall in Multnomah Village.

Owner Julina Abbott, a mother of three boys, grew up in Portland and attended college in Seattle. She became a pediatric oncology nurse but recently moved back to Portland to chase her dream job.

"This boutique has been seven generations in the making," Abbott explained. "My great-great-great-great grandfather, Henry Gurton, was the florist at Buckingham Palace in the mid-1800s."

Henry Gurton moved to Canada in later years and his descendants made it to the United States.

"This is a family business," she explained as she held her three-month-old son with one hand and a delicate air plant in the other.

"Even Grandmother Gurton is helping out," she said. "She's been busy arranging succulent gardens and she will be at the opening."

Gurton's joins five other businesses that have been operating in the New Orleans-themed boutique mall. Property owner Yves Le Meitour has been working with various city bureaus to bring boutiques, food carts, and a farm stand to where former Keith's Auto Service once operated.

"I'm excited to grow my family business in the neighborhood I grew up in and where I'm lucky enough to raise my family," Abbott said.

Located at 3530 SW Multnomah Blvd, Gurton's Plant Shop will be open Friday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Julina Abbott (left), owner of Gurton's Plant Shop, holds her son, Justin. Abbott's mother Jackie Troutman is also helping out with the family business. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

Anne Bocci Boutique moves from Multnomah to Pearl District

Anne Bocci Boutique, which had been in the heart of Multnomah Village since 2007, has emptied and moved to the Pearl District.

"Loved our ten years in Multnomah Village," owner Anne Bocci told The Post. "We have gotten to know you, your family members and hear your personal stories. Many of you are now our closest friends."

According to Bocci, after 10 years, the store had grown and needed a bigger, brighter space to better celebrate the artists and designers.

"The new space," Bocci said, "actually has heat, air conditioning, and a bathroom which the Multnomah Village store never had."

"Mention the Southwest Portland Post in our new Pearl District store and get a discount," Bocci said, "Thank you for 10 wonderful years!"

For more information, visit the new store at 416 NW 12th Ave. or annebocci.com.

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COMMUNITY LIFE

By KC Cowan and Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

2 Gardening Fun: Kids love the dirt, but take them to the learning garden to find out about plant parts and life cycles, seeds, flowers and pollinators, the role of insects, and much more. Each time features new topics and projects. Growing Gardens will bring supplies for the hands-on lessons. For kids in grades 2-5. Tuesdays: May 2, 16, and 30 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Capitol Hill Library, 10723 SW Capitol Highway. For more information call 503-988-5123.

5 Oregon Landscapes: Our state is so beautiful, who wouldn't want a painting of it to hang on the wall? Artist Jeanne Chamberlain will exhibit her oil paintings: "Oregon Landscapes," at the Multnomah Arts Center Gallery beginning May 5. An opening reception will be held in the gallery Friday, May 5, 7-9 p.m. The exhibit will be on display throughout the month.

Cinco de Mayo Fiesta: It's one of the nation's most spectacular celebrations, with fireworks, fire dancing, and luche libre wrestling on May 5, 6 and 7 in Gov. Tom McCall Waterfront Park in downtown Portland. Visit cincodemayo.org for more information.

First Friday: Come to First Friday, on May 5, and enjoy this monthly event in Multnomah Village with music and merriment and stores staying open late, some until 9 p.m. For more information, visit www.multnomahvillage.org.

6 Local History: Even if you've lived here a long time, there's a lot about this side of town you probably don't know! Learn about the history of outer Southwest Portland, from donation land claims to the early 1900s, in a visual presentation by Tim Lyman from the Multnomah Historical Association. Saturday, May 6, 2-3 p.m. at Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd. Free. For more information, call 503-988-5123.

Pancake Breakfast: A fundraiser pancake breakfast to benefit the Southwest Community Health Center is being held at the Lucky Labrador Public House, 7675 SW Capitol Highway, on Saturday, May 6, from 8-11 a.m. Visit <http://swch-pdx.org> for more information.

Spring Cleanup: Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. is sponsoring a spring cleanup on Saturday, May

6, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Portland Christian Center's parking lot, 5700 SW Dosch Road. Acceptable items include bulky waste, scrap wood, scrap metals, household items, and furniture. No curbside recycling accepted. Call 503-823-4592 for details.

7 Historic Preservation: A special meeting will be held by the Multnomah Historical Association, on Sunday, May 7, 1-3 p.m., at Riversgate Church, 7634 SW Capitol Highway. This meeting is for anyone with an interest in historic preservation or local history. Contact www.multnomahhistorical.com for more information.

13 Happy Trails: Now that the weather is improving, the Southwest Urban Trails walk that was postponed due to weather in January is getting a do-over! This six-mile walk will start at Wilson High School and travel up into the West Hills. Meet behind the bleachers, near the food carts, at Southwest Capitol Highway and Sunset Boulevard, on Thursday, May 13, at 9 a.m. Well-behaved dogs are allowed. For more information, or to volunteer to lead a walk in your neighborhood, contact Sharon Fekety, fekety@hevanet.com. Or visit www.swtrails.org.

Rock 'n' Roll: Musician Mo Phillips is so entertaining you won't know whether to laugh or dance, so do both! Catchy fun time jams rooted in the American folk rock tradition.



Rocky Creek Light is one of many paintings by Jeanne Chamberlain highlighting Oregon's beauty. See Oregon Landscapes event at the Multnomah Arts Center Gallery beginning May 5.

This free event takes place on Saturday, May 13, at 1 p.m. at the Garden Home Community Library Annex, 7306 SW Oleson Road. Contact the library for details.

20 Free Medical/Dental Clinic: Need a checkup? Bring your friends and family to this annual free medical and dental clinic at Wilson High School, 1151 SW Vermont St. Free refreshments and smiles! For details visit www.compassionsw.org.

23 Holocaust Remembrance: As part of an international project, Jewish centers are painting ceramic butterflies to

commemorate the children lost to the Holocaust. The local completed Butterfly Project will be unveiled at an installation ceremony on Tuesday, May 23, at 6:30 p.m. at Mittleman Jewish Community Center, 6651 SW Capitol Highway. Holocaust survivors will speak, as will teens involved in the project. There will also be a tour of the installation.



Butterflies painted during Good Deed Day at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center will be put in a new holocaust remembrance installation this month.

Multnomah neighborhood activist works to get stop sign installed

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Lorrie Biggs and her family have been living in Multnomah Village for almost three years now. Her home lies at the corner of a somewhat busy intersection.

Biggs has had some near-miss collisions, as have other neighbors, but more importantly, she has witnessed motorists speeding over 40 miles per hour.

The intersection, at Southwest Moss Street and 28th Avenue, is at the crown of a blind hill. Some of the corner homes have overgrown shrubbery and fences. Biggs trimmed back their own bushes last summer.

"It is difficult to see anyway and it makes it especially dangerous when people are flying by," Biggs said.

"The speed limit in residential neighborhoods is 25 unless posted," said John Biggs, her husband.

In September 2016, she had seen enough. She picked up the phone and called Portland Bureau of Transportation.

"Something had to be done," Lorrie said. "I kept calling them, and bugging them."

She spoke with her neighbor, Megan Schneider, and several others. Biggs had orchestrated a stop sign installation over by Lewis and Clark College, where the couple used to live.

"It doesn't help that there is an app for shortcuts through communities," Schneider said. "Trying to beat the traffic on Multnomah Boulevard? No problem, the app will help you navigate a shortcut to beat the congestion or to save time."

The neighbors have seen increased traffic lately.

Eventually, the city said they would conduct a traffic survey. City staff arrived the first day of spring break. Biggs said the city would send their results in eight to 10 weeks but within a few weeks, the stop signs were in place.

According to the transportation bureau, stop signs are installed at intersections where motorists cannot safely apply the right-of-way rule or when crashes sometimes occur as a result.

City traffic engineers consider a number of street characteristics when determining effective placement of a stop sign as a traffic control device.

According to the transportation bureau's website, "Stop signs may often seem like a good solution to neighborhood speeding, but traffic studies and experience show that using stop signs to control speeding doesn't necessarily work."

A restricted view is a main reason a stop sign is installed.

"Whether it was because of foliage or speed or both, it doesn't matter," Lorrie said. "This intersection will be safer because of it."

How does one request a stop



John Biggs poses with daughter Abigail, son Adam, wife Lorrie, and neighbor Hudson Schneider at their new stop sign. Lorrie has been pressing the city for months to help improve the safety of the intersection. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

sign? Call the City of Portland Bureau of Transportation at 503-823-SAFE.

Hate Crimes

(Continued from Page 3)

The complete list of panelists: Nick Fish, Portland City Commissioner; Steve Goldman, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Branch, FBI; Officer Brian Hubbard, Criminal Intelligence Unit, Portland Bureau of Police.

Rabbi David Kosak, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Nevah Shalom; David Molko, Counselor at Jewish Family & Child Service; Jagjit Nagra, JD, Office of Senator Jeff Merkley; Brian Pinsky, Office of Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici.

Douglass Ruth, Counselor at Jewish Family & Child Service; Grace Stratton, Office of Senator Ron Wyden; Professor Steven M. Wasserstrom, Reed College; Bill Williams, U.S. Attorney, State of Oregon.

COMMENTARY

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his staff, to the next neighborhood meeting. Saltzman is head of the transportation bureau.

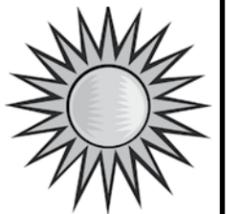
It was also suggested to invite newly elected City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, or staff, as well to the next meeting regarding housing issues. Eudaly is head of the housing bureau.

A motion was passed that the land use committee investigate and find a solution to the destruction of the road and that it be at least reverted to a pre-construction condition.

An amendment was added to state, "To a minimum of city street standards of a paved, usable street." A subcommittee was asked to work on this and report back to the neighborhood association.

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Advisory committee considers community development along future light rail line

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Public comment opens each community advisory committee meeting of the Southwest Corridor light rail line. David George, a property owner on Barbur Boulevard, was first to speak at the April meeting.

"I heard that the Trump administration was canceling funding for federal projects," he said.

"We'll have to wait and see," said Eryn Kehe, Metro project spokesperson. "We're taking one step at a time."

Fifty percent of the funding for this project would come from the federal government.

Another property owner asked when owners would know if their property would be taken (purchased) for the light rail project under laws relating to eminent domain.

Kehe said that the area is being studied with an environmental impact study.

"The study will be released at end of year," Kehe said.

Eric Engstrom, a principal planner for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, said that most committee members considered transportation issues the highest concern of the project.

"Various land use plans are already in place," Engstrom said. "Many of you were involved with the Barbur Concept Plan in which engineers focused on redevelopment and transportation routes.

"These were led by Metro, Oregon Department of Transportation, and Multnomah and Washington counties."

Surveys from years past suggested medium level development was the favorite with mixed-use buildings. Engstrom showed various road designs such as parallel, or

frontage roads, main streets, and perpendicular streets.

One committee member reminded the group that other plans have been designed: a Barbur Boulevard streetscape review in 1999, the Southwest Community Plan in 2000, and a high-crash corridor safety project along Barbur Boulevard in 2012.

"We found that this corridor is auto-oriented," Engstrom said. "Few stop to shop and stroll and there are lots of gaps in sidewalks.

"Additionally, there is a soft lease and rental market in the area."

On top of all of this, the report found, topography, stormwater, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety are inadequate.

"Our goal is to turn Barbur Boulevard into a safe, vibrant, and enjoyable place to live, work, shop, and learn," Engstrom said.

According to project managers, seven different focus areas are under design.

One of these is the Southwest Kelly Street area in South Waterfront. This area will improve connections to Oregon Health & Science University and the National College of Natural Medicine and to redesign the Ross Island bridgehead area.

In the South Portland neighborhood, Southwest Hamilton and Corbett streets is a possible main street keeping in mind the historic nature of Lair Hill.

The Woods is the third focus. "This area would include a park-like setting, recreation area, and involve traffic calming," Engstrom said.

Metro planners are proposing a perpendicular street at the intersection of Terwilliger and Barbur boulevards with



TriMet's MAX Orange light rail line train stops in Milwaukie. (Photo illustration courtesy of Metro)

development centering on the Fred Meyer supermarket. Stormwater and wildlife enhancement projects south of the grocery store would be included.

The Safeway supermarket will anchor a new main street area at Capitol Hill Road. Barbur Boulevard Rentals is for sale and will be eventually redeveloped.

At 19th Avenue, the Golden Touch Restaurant will be torn down to make way for a large apartment complex featuring Natural Grocers store as retail anchor. The Tryon Creek headwaters near 26th Avenue is another focus area.

"Will this area have more housing or commercial property?" asked a member of the audience.

"Those details don't go that far," Kehe said. "It will most likely be a mixed-use design. We'll have a housing person come back to respond."

The Crossroads, (Capitol Highway, Barbur Boulevard, Taylors Ferry Road, and Interstate 5), will have freeway onramps reconfigured, have a new Barbur Transit Center, and develop a town center which would include 7 to 10 story buildings.

"This area will see major bike and pedestrian improvements," Engstrom ensured. "This will tie in configurations to the Southwest highway project."

A smaller scale project at 53rd Avenue will have pedestrian and bike improvements and better

access to the Sylvania Campus of Portland Community College. "But 53rd (Avenue) will keep its barrier at Barbur (Boulevard)," Engstrom said.

Several committee members raised concerns about access to Hillsdale and Multnomah Village. Kehe explained that this had been vetted years ago with each community and that the main development would take place along Barbur Boulevard. Bus routes will be enhanced in each of these communities.

Project construction is scheduled to begin in 2021 and will last approximately four years,

Community Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled the first Monday of the month at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Highway, starting at 6:30 p.m. Meetings are open to the public and a comment period is scheduled for the first 10 minutes.

The next (completely separate) Southwest Corridor Steering Committee meeting will be held on Monday, May 8, at 9 a.m. at the Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave.

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Dear EarthTalk: Is the extraction of lithium for lithium-ion batteries really worse for the environment than fracking?

– Mitch Newhouse, Oak Park, IL

In a world of modern technology, lithium-ion batteries are hard to escape; they're in cell phones, laptops, and basically anything else with rechargeable batteries.

In fact, the demand for lithium-ion batteries rose from zero percent market share in 1991 to 80 percent in 2007, and the European Commission expects the tonnage of lithium used in batteries to double between 2010 and 2020.

With no viable alternatives anywhere near mainstream production, Li-ion batteries look like they're here to stay for a while.

But thanks to some misinformation on the Internet, lithium extraction has gotten a bad rap.

As Mark Sumner points out on Daily Kos, a pair of photos released by the community group Saskatchewan Proud shows a badly scarred and stripped mine site on the top along with the text "This is a

mine where lithium is extracted for electric car batteries."

On the bottom is a photo of a neat and orderly fracking drill site surrounded by vibrant-looking green forest and lakes with the text "This is an oil sands site in Alberta...Tell me more about how your electric car is better for the environment."

But Sumner points out that the top image in fact depicts one of the world's 10 largest copper mines (BHP's Escondida Mine in Chile) and has nothing to do with lithium extraction.

Lithium extraction does take an environmental toll, from the process of pumping briny groundwater containing lithium carbonate out of the ground and leaving it in pools so the excess water can evaporate.

But the main environmental consequence of this is large amounts of water used to bind to the lithium to facilitate extraction.

"There's nothing you would think of as mining," reports Sumner. "No blasting. No trucks driving around carrying loads of crushed rock. No sprays of sulfuric acid."

While it's true that chemicals are used to refine lithium after it is collected, potential dangers pale compared to those from fracking, which involves pumping harsh chemicals underground to break up shale layers to free natural gas, which can lead to groundwater pollution and even cause minor earthquakes.

Currently lithium-ion batteries' biggest problem may be their tendency to combust—remember



Almost a third of the world's lithium comes from the Salar de Uyuni of Bolivia's Altiplano. (Photo by Leonora (Ellie) Enking, FlickrCC)

the recall of 500,000 hoverboards and then the infamous early version of Samsung's Galaxy Note 7?

The ions inside lithium-ion batteries can react if the wall between them is compromised, generating enough heat to potentially catch fire.

Manufacturers have mitigated such issues in most applications, but the problem can still rear its ugly head when improperly discarded lithium-ion batteries are exposed to pressure and heat in a landfill or recycling facility that can stimulate combustion.

This is why it's so important to properly dispose of lithium-ion batteries (or products containing them) at hazardous waste or battery recycling locations.

Of course, alternatives to lithium-ion batteries do exist with huge potential, but none are economical enough to produce yet to be anywhere

near ready for mass production.

Some of the most promising include batteries made from sodium-nickel chloride, silver zinc or aluminum graphite.

But the expense of the raw materials and the immaturity of the production processes will keep these emerging battery technologies on the drawing board for years to come while lithium ion continues to dominate the market.

CONTACTS: Saskatchewan Proud, <https://www.facebook.com/SaskatchewanProud/>; Daily Kos, <http://www.dailykos.com> (Someone is lying about electric cars on the internet).

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