

Overlook Neighborhood Association General Meeting

November 20, 2007

Board Members Present: Eric Gale, Warren Cassell, Claire Paris, David Chott, Brad Halverson, George Spaulding, Cynthia Sulaski, Alan Cranna

Secretary: Kal Shobaki

Meeting convened @ 7:06 P.M.

I. Community Policing Report

Officer Eric Zajac presented a report and addressed a variety of topics:

- There have been two recent homicides in the neighborhood and one just across the freeway. Office Zajac spoke with the lead detective, who said that given the closeness in time to the crimes and the fact that the investigation is under way, the police cannot give out any more information than what is currently available in the press.
 - A vehicle was stolen during the suspected burglary in the Callaway case, the car has been recovered and hopefully there will be progress from there.
 - There have only been two other burglaries in the last thirty days in Overlook, so residents should not be concerned that this is some sort of serial burglary situation.
- Larceny remains the most common criminal activity in Overlook.
- A resident asked whether the police knew anything about the person who drove their car off of the bluff (on Halloween?). Officer Zajac did not have any information, but said that the resident could call him and he would find out.
- A resident voiced a concern that criminal activity in Patton Park has been driven out towards the corner of Interstate & Sumner. He reports seeing drug deals, violent behavior, lots of activity. He reported that he calls 911, but is then told that he must speak to a non-emergency line and is transferred to a recording. Officer Zajac believes that the calls are getting routed to the Bureau of Emergency Communications, a county-wide clearinghouse that deals with fire, police, hospital, and other calls. This is an unfortunate and very inefficient system – Officer Zajac said that the police are aware of this problem and are looking for ways to be able to get information from the streets to officers in a timeframe where they can actually react. He noted that Council Member Leonard is the individual responsible for these services.
- The same resident complained that there is a great deal of drug activity on Killingsworth between the freeway and PCC. Officer Zajac said that residents can expect this to get worse because the exclusion zone has been phased out by the City Council.
- Officer Zajac noted that as a result of the expiration of the exclusion zones, the amount of drug activity in various parts of the city has increased. He cited the example of Old Town, where his unit was recently assigned for a one week mop-up operation. He thinks that the police may begin rotating squads in to clean up trouble spots.

- Another resident asked if officers are working with Tri-Met. Officer Zajac said that there are no transit police based out of North Precinct. He also said that he is unaware of a MAX-related increase in crime. He said that there has been no official study like the one in Gresham, but that in his experience, most of the crime statistics in Overlook have been decreasing over time.

II. North Portland Sunday Parkway

Rich Cassidy from the Portland Department of Transportation spoke at the meeting about a project. He works primarily to promote walking as a means of transportation and health. The project is called a “Sunday Parkway,” and is scheduled for June 22, 2007. It is modeled on an idea from Colombia. The basic idea is to close off some number of streets in North Portland connecting four major parks. The streets will be open for walkers and bikers, but closed to cars (see attached handout).

- This has only been done in El Paso, several other cities have tried to do it but have failed to pull it off thus far.
- The event coincides with the brewer’s festival in Overlook Park.
- Huge need for volunteers, estimating need for 400 to 500 volunteers with “soft street closures.” Working with Hands on Portland to get volunteers, but also trying to get people from the Neighborhood Associations.
- Have applied for federal grants from the EPA. As part of that process, they may have five or six \$1000 to \$2000 grants available for community groups.
- Big sponsors thus far are Kaiser and Fred Meyer. Also working with New Seasons to develop a sponsorship proposal.
- If this is a success, they are thinking about doing it once a month each month in different locations around Portland, during the “good weather months.”

III. Earth Day Festival in Overlook Park

Bob New from the City Repair Project is the coordinator of Earth Day 2008, which will be held on April 19, 2008, in Overlook Park.

- The celebration is community organized with a minimal budget of around \$10-15k. The event is intended to promote awareness of environmental issues and climate change. Last year there were around 135 organizations represented there, and this year it may be over 150.
- The event usually brings about 4-6k people. This is the 9th year that City Repair has been putting the project on; last year it was at Woodlawn Park.
- The event changes each time based on the organizations involved.
- The theme changes each year, it is usually focused on localization. With climate change becoming such a big issue, sustainable living and education has become a focus.
- There are separate areas, like: kids village, better transportation fair, entertainment – there are three stages, usually from 10am to 10pm, but this year may be more like 12pm to 8pm.
- Will start meeting in December, plenty of opportunities for people to get involved and take leadership roles. Can also get involved with day of the event and day after set up and break down.

- Monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month at Overlook House. For more information, contact earthdaypdx@gmail.com.

IV. Big Ugly Pole

Eric gave a quick historical synopsis of the PGE pole installation, the PGE grant, and the process by which the project was selected (see past meeting notes). Sally Kavanagh explained the winning proposal to replace the lights along Willamette north of Killingsworth with underground wiring and new poles. PGE and the City are still hammering out the final details.

A motion to approve this use of the PGE grant was unanimously passed.

V. Rezoning Response

Eric reminded people that the comment period for rezoning ends on 11/26, and presented a draft feedback letter. He solicited input from attendees on things to add to the letter. The following concerns were voiced:

- The original plan was to allow some original homeowners to remain along Interstate. But, the EXd zoning around the homes will allow buildings right up to the edge of the property lines. Wants to add something to the last paragraph to ensure that the homes along Interstate are still livable and not sealed in by the buildings.
- Request for to create a planning district on the west side to step down.
- Request to make explicit the support for 65 foot height limit in lieu of 100.
- Need to stress that transit-oriented development requires that there be some lifestyle orientation in this strategy; need to keep parks and space.

A motion to approve the letter as amended was unanimously passed.

VI. Diversity Committee Formation

Eric discussed the representation (or lack thereof) of the community in the OKNA make-up, both geographically and ethnically. The lack of connection and communication with other parts of the community has been highlighted through the Chavez debate. He solicited volunteers to become involved in a new committee designed to try and bridge some of these gaps. Anyone interested should contact Eric.

On a related note, Mayor Potter has sought out a meeting with heads of neighborhood associations to help heal the rifts. He met last night with neighborhood association heads, members of the Chavez committee, and other folks, including the Interstate Avenue Business Association. He hopes to work together to create some projects to get cooperation between members of the community.

VII. Committee Chair Two-Minute Reports

- Treasurer (Kent Hoddick) – not present.**
- Secretary (Kal Shobaki)**

There is a new e-mail list usage policy (approved at the last board meeting) which will be posted shortly on the web site.

c. Publicity (Warren Cassell)

December 1, 10 are the due dates for submissions for the next issue, which will be distributed during the last two weeks in December and first week in January.

d. Land Use (Claire Paris & David Chott)

Claire noted that the land use representatives from throughout North Portland are working to build a land use alliance. She has also recently received notice that at 1050 N River Street on Swan Island, the owner is seeking to add a 10x30 foot platform to one of the existing docks.

e. Bluff Fire Prevention (Steve Lanigan) – not present.

f. Grants Coordinator (Dulane Moran) – not present.

g. Environment (Jeff Berebitsky) – not present.

h. Transportation (Brad Halverson)

- Brad discussed the situation at Greeley and Interstate intersection. The folks at the City are taking comments and appreciate anything that is sent in to them, they have not come to a solution yet. However, they are talking about doing an enforcement action on the left turn on Greeley going North on Interstate. The southbound right turn will remain closed until the City decides what it wants to do.
- The signal controllers on Interstate are partially installed – new software and hardware is already installed from Going to the Rose Quarter. The City is now installing north towards Kenton and should be done by the end of the year. The hardware has some intelligence to it to help learn about traffic and fix traffic flow. The timing on the lights is linked and the City is better able to coordinate the lights.
- There was brief discussion about the cyclist mural that was painted at the Greeley intersection. Brad said that it might be eliminated as graffiti, but he expects that if it does come down it can go back up with official blessing.

i. PSAC (George Spaulding)

Not sure if there is a meeting in December.

j. Parks, Trees & Trails (Cynthia Sulaski)

The Parks Committee is working on figuring out the five-year budget for parks. Cynthia will be sharing her potential plan with the board in December. She is interested in hearing ideas from members of the neighborhood and will send out an e-mail to the list seeking input.

k. Overlook House (Alan Cranna)

Read the newsletter for details – Christmas Bazaar on December 1-2 and Santa on December 8 at Overlook House. They need people to help sell refreshments at the Bazaar.

l. Interstate Farmer's Market (Kent Hoddick) – not present

VIII. Old Business

Eric briefly discussed the events at the City Council during the vote last week which took renaming Interstate off the table.

IX. New Business

OKNA does not have a general meeting in December. The potluck is in lieu of the general meeting. The next general meeting will be on January 15. There is also a North Portland potluck at the Kenton Firehouse on December 3 and a big Posada festival in St. Johns on December 15 (see the S.J. Sentinel for details).

Meeting adjourned @ 8:48 pm



North Portland Sunday Parkways

Background: Every Sunday from 7a.m. to 2p.m., the city of Bogota, Columbia shuts down 113 km of major roads so that people can bike, roller blade and run without cars. Known as the "Ciclovía", it has become a major community activity with 1.5 million people enjoying the street closure on an average weekend. Another word for this concept is "Sunday Parkways". Sunday Parkways are being talked about in many US cities as a way of opening up a network of streets once a week to encourage healthy, active walking and cycling.

The North Portland Pilot Event: The Portland Office of Transportation would like to schedule a Sunday Parkways event for **Sunday, June 22, 2008, 8am- 2pm** in conjunction with the International Carfree Conference to be held in Portland June 16-20. However, this all depends on whether or not we can find funding from grants and sponsorships.

The draft plan we have submitted for a grant pilot project would start with a "circular" six mile, two-way route in North Portland that has many neighborhood parks but minimal space where families and neighbors can walk, bike and enjoy recreating in a car free environment. **The idea is for "soft closures" allowing local access and using small barricades and volunteers at every intersection, with Police at the major/signalized interesections.**

Our idea for a route connects four major parks (Overlook, Arbor Lodge, Peninsular, & Unthank) and shopping areas and *avoids* TriMet bus routes, churches, and major street crossings over I-5 and across Interstate Avenue. Ultimately Sunday Parkways could be a monthly event during the summer months in several parts of Portland.

The last few years there have been signs that Bridge Pedal has become so popular and congested that hosting a few other events like it would probably be a very good idea. The concept of Sunday Parkways is a perfect match for Portland. It highlights Portland as a walkable and bikeable city. We are applying for one or more grants as well as pursuing sponsorships with organizations in our community. Health, transportation, recreation, community and safety interests all benefit from a strong partnership implementing Sunday Parkways.

For more information: Rich Cassidy, (503) 823-6051, rich.cassidy@pdxtrans.org
Linda Ginenthal, (503) 823-5266, linda.ginenthal@pdxtrans.org





Draft

Overlook Neighborhood Association

2209 N Schofield St
Portland, OR 97217

November 20, 2007

Interstate Light Rail Corridor Zoning Project
Portland Bureau of Planning
1900 SW Fourth Ave, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201

The following comments were approved by the Overlook Neighborhood Association on November 20, 2007. They are designed to highlight some of the key issues and concerns shared by the neighborhood and support the many individual comments that been submitted with much greater detail.

We are concerned that the goal of increased density could, if not carried out with good foresight, negatively impact the livability of the neighborhood for new and existing residents. The following issues need to be researched and addressed *before* the zoning is put into place. As we already see gridlock on Interstate Ave during the evening rush hour, one concern is traffic flow and congestion with the addition of a large number of people and businesses, particularly along bottleneck points. As peak-hour trains are already overcrowded, we would also like more assurance from Trimet that they would be able to handle increased demand on the Yellow Line (including the additional impact of a connection to Vancouver), that the bottleneck at the Steel Bridge will not prevent more frequent service, and that more double trains could be allocated to the Yellow Line. We are also concerned about the additional pressure that will be placed on existing park and green spaces, particularly in the northern end of the neighborhood, and would like to see thought and commitment to improving and increasing these resources. Finally, we would like to see some assurance that other infrastructure (police, fire, utilities, and sewer) will be able to handle the influx of new residents.

West of Interstate Ave, our primary concerns are that the transitional R2 and R2.5 zoning may extend too far into the neighborhoods and that, particularly with R2, the existing maximum height is too high. Though reaching the full height may not be likely, we would like to plan for the worst. A 40 foot building in the middle of largely 25 foot single family homes would be incongruent, particularly if they were a block or more away from Interstate Ave.

Similarly, we would request height restrictions on the EX and RHd zoning east of Interstate Ave and along other corridors. In particular, the existing 100 foot modification is grossly out of place in the neighborhood. Additionally, to keep what will become a very mixed usage area east of Interstate Ave livable and desirable, a number of other

planning modifications need to be added. We can identify some now but will need assistance to identify and develop appropriate and realistic guidelines for special regulations, design review, and planning district criteria. These would include set-backs, step-downs, less than 100% coverage in EX, a reduced minimum units per lot for RHd, and prohibited uses of businesses such as prohibiting non-active uses of ground floor retail. Even more so than other areas, parking in this area will be an important issue east of Interstate. While a small number of residents may be car-free, it is unrealistic to assume that this number will be substantial. Planning for parking, incentives for underground parking, and creative off-site parking solutions need to be explored.

Along Interstate Ave, the concerns identified for the area east of Interstate Ave also apply. Additionally, there is concern that, though permitted to some extent through conditional use, the RHd zoning (as opposed to EX) may restrict business opportunities. Easing the conditional use process or having more EX would be two potential solutions.

Thank you,

Eric Gale
Chair

Claire Paris
Land-Use Co-Chair

David Chott
Land-Use Co-Chair