



Overlook Neighborhood Association Board Meeting

AGENDA

Tuesday, January 5, 2021

6:30-8:15 p.m.

Virtual - Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/95028960315?pwd=aGY3d2dhSVhvY2Y2UFJWL2RBRzBqUT09>

(email chair@overlookneighborhood.org for alternate call-in information)

Board members, please try to let Alexandra Degher know in advance if you cannot attend.

TIME	TOPIC	EXPECTED OUTCOME	PRESENTER
6:30	Welcome		Degher
6:35	Meeting minutes	Approval	Macfarlane
6:40	Air toxins letter	Approval	Phillips
7:05	Homeless Letter	Approval	Boggs/Trejbal
7:20	Member Engagement	Discussion	Halverson
7:30	Weekly Update Work Stream	Discussion	C. Kebler
7:40	Treasury Update	Awareness	Halverson
7:55	General Meeting	Discussion	Degher
8:05	Board Reports	Awareness	Board members
8:15	Adjourn	Disconnect	Degher

Upcoming OKNA Meetings:

General: January 19

Overlook Neighborhood Association

Christian Trejbal, Chair

chair@overlookneighborhood.org



April 22, 2019

Union Pacific Railroad
1400 Douglas Street
Omaha, NE 68179

Re: Albina Rail Yard emissions

Dear Union Pacific Railroad leaders:

The Overlook Neighborhood Association is deeply concerned about volatile organic compound emissions (VOCs) and diesel particulate emissions from the Albina Rail Yard located near 1134 N Knott St., Portland, OR 97227. We join the undersigned neighborhood associations and other community organizations requesting that Union Pacific install a thermal oxidizer at the Albina Rail Yard to reduce these emissions and work with us to develop an actionable Good Neighbor Agreement regarding unfiltered diesel trucks serving the Albina Rail Yard.

For many years, residents of the Overlook Neighborhood have reported a strong chemical odor outside their residences. Over the past two years, the group Portland Clean Air (portlandcleanair.org) has researched VOC emissions throughout Portland and concluded that a small number of industries including the Albina Rail Yard are responsible for the majority of emissions due to a lack of control devices that mitigate such pollution. We are particularly concerned about the impacts on residential neighborhoods bordering Swan Island and the Albina Yard.

VOC exposure is dangerous and can cause eye, nose and throat irritation; headaches, loss of coordination and nausea; and damage to the liver, kidney and central nervous system. Some, such as formaldehyde, also can cause cancer.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality tracks emissions in the Swan Island area of Portland. Based on that data from the DEQ Cleaner Air Oregon 2016 Chemical Balance Sheets and corresponding 2014 Environmental Protection Agency 2014 National Emissions Inventory, the Albina Rail Yard is the third-highest emitter by ranked weight. The rail yard emitted 14,778 pounds in a year. By comparison, other emitters that concern Overlook are Vigor (5,782 pounds of VOCs annually) and Daimler North America (500 pounds annually).

We therefore urge Union Pacific to install a thermal oxidizer system at the Albina Rail Yard to safely abate VOC emissions. Standard VOC emission devices such as thermal oxidizers can destroy 97 percent to 99 percent of VOCs before they are released into the atmosphere. Newer devices have heat exchangers that save most of the energy that they use, and VOCs in the waste stream can be used as fuel to increase the temperature.

Grants are available that can cover up to half of the cost of a newer, energy-efficient device. Thanks to increased efficiency and grant support, the upfront investment in a thermal oxidizer system can be recouped within just a couple of years. We spoke with Energy Trust of Oregon who provides these grants and they expressed an interest in helping you with the cost of a regenerative thermal oxidizer. We would be happy to connect you with them.

We are concerned also about the use of unfiltered diesel trucks that pass through the Overlook Neighborhood and North Portland on the way to the Swan Island area. The Oregon Department of Transportation reports that the Albina Rail Yard generates the greatest number of truck trips.

According to the 2014 EPA National Air Toxics Assessment released in August 2018, Portland ranks in the worst 1.3 percent of counties for diesel particulate exposure, an airborne carcinogen. These pollutants affect all Portland residents, inordinately harming people in neighborhoods of lower income near highways and industrial areas.

We therefore request that you meet with us to develop an actionable Good Neighbor Agreement so that we can collaboratively agree on steps to mitigate impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods. For example, we might work together to encourage state lawmakers to set a reasonable timeline to phase out unfiltered trucks, keeping all businesses on an equal footing. During the interim, we might reach agreement on temporary mitigation measures such as minimizing idling time.

Emissions issues have come under increased scrutiny in the past couple of years. Portland residents and the Oregon DEQ have worked with several businesses to install or update emissions reduction systems. Perhaps most prominent among them was the Bullseye Glass facility, which was required to install a \$70,000 scrubber. After that and other high-profile incidents, DEQ now requires Oregon industries that pose the greatest threat to human health to mitigate per the new Cleaner Air Oregon program.

DEQ appears to lack authority over Union Pacific, but you have, in the past, demonstrated a willingness to work with the neighborhood. We ask that you do so again by voluntarily reducing your emissions as industries consistent with the rules that apply throughout Oregon. We have not doubt that voluntary action to make Portland's air cleaner and its neighborhoods healthier would receive positive media coverage and the appreciation of neighbors.

We are working closely with 39 Neighborhood Association boards, six churches and synagogues, three coalitions, and three other local organizations on this issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to an opportunity to discuss in greater detail how we can all work together to ensure the quality of life that is so much part of why people choose to live and work in Portland.

Sincerely,



Christian Trejbal, Chair

On behalf of the
Overlook Neighborhood Association Board

Citations available at:
<http://pdxcleanair.org/files/reports/Swan%20Island%20VOCs.pdf>

We undersigned, on behalf of our organizations, agree with and endorse this request of the Overlook Neighborhood Association and urge you to resolve this issue with good faith negotiation.

Adam Lyons
Executive Director
North East Coalition of Neighborhoods

Andy Beers & Elianne Lieberman
Co-chairs
Climate Action Team of Havurah Shalom, Portland

Cassie Cohen, MSW
Executive Director
Portland Harbor Community Coalition

Chelsea Powers and Pam Hodge
Chairs
Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association

Debbie Aiona
Action Chair
League of Women Voters of Portland

Eldon Potter
Chair
Church Council of Ainsworth United Church of Christ, Portland

Fr. Dave Zegar
St. Andrew Catholic Church, Portland

Ginger Edwards
Chair
Arbor Lodge Neighborhood Association

Janet Hawkins
Chair
Hayhurst Neighborhood Association

Jennifer Vitello
Chair
Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association

Jim Teisher
Chair
First United Methodist Church, Planet Church Committee, Portland

Joanna Jenkins
Chair
Brooklyn Action Corps

Josh Heumann
Chair
Cully Association of Neighbors

Kymerly Jeka
Chair
Humboldt Neighborhood Association

Mark Gillette
Chair
Reed Neighborhood Association

Mary-Margaret Wheeler-Weber
Chair
Portsmouth Neighborhood Association

Michael Heumann
Chair
Climate Change & Environmental Justice Team
Metropolitan Alliance for the Common Good (MACG)

Rev. Elizabeth Winslea
Pastor
Lincoln Street United Methodist, Portland

Rev. Dr. Janet L. Parker
Council of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Portland

Shawn Looney
Chair
Linnton Neighborhood Association

Stanley Perkins
Chair
Pearl District Neighborhood Association

Virginia Bruce
Chair
Washington County Citizen Participation Organization One

Overlook Neighborhood Association

Alexandra Degher, Chair

chair@overlookneighborhood.org



January 5, 2021

Dear Mayor Wheeler, et al.,

The Overlook Neighborhood Association calls upon the City of Portland, the Joint Office of Homeless Services and the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program to:

- Open small and large managed outdoor shelters in all parts of the city;
- Construct managed homeless villages in all parts of the city modeled on the Kenton Women's Village and the St. Johns Village;
- In all neighborhoods, close unsanctioned campsites located in parks, waterways and public paths, as well as camps where illegal activity has been documented;
- And close the Hazelnut Grove homeless camp on N Greeley Avenue and work with the Overlook Neighborhood to remediate the site and transform it to productive public use.

As we begin 2021, the City of Portland must honor its promises to help homeless residents and to support neighborhoods experiencing the harmful side effects of homeless camps. The current situation is a humanitarian catastrophe. Living outdoors puts people's health at risk and leaves them vulnerable to victimization. Meanwhile, campsites are causing environmental damage to our communities, rendering public spaces and parks unusable by the public, and are documented launching points for property damage, theft and other reported crimes.

It is time to do better. The city and the Joint Office of Homeless Services have demonstrated that there are viable models for connecting homeless residents to services and providing shelter in ways that do not require camping illegally in public spaces where basic sanitation and assistance are unavailable.

Organized outdoor homeless shelters have helped during the pandemic. The city should identify more locations throughout the city that can house those sorts of managed facilities. The city also should test larger outdoor shelters with bunkhouses and other alternative shelter.

Even more effective than temporary outdoor shelters have been managed villages with elements of self-governance such as the Kenton Women's Village. It has helped vulnerable residents connect to services and transition to permanent housing. The St. Johns Village follows that model and will shelter additional residents. The city should build on these successful models in neighborhoods throughout Portland.

At the same time, the City of Portland must make good on promises to neighborhoods by removing unsanctioned campsites located in parks, waterways and public paths, as well as camps where illegal activity has been documented. This is the approach called for in the North Portland Joint Statement on Homelessness signed in 2020 by multiple neighborhoods and nonprofits. City Council and the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program can demonstrate good faith by closing the Hazelnut Grove camp. Both Mayor Ted Wheeler and his predecessor promised to close Hazelnut Grove since campers illegally occupied the site along a multi-use path in 2015.

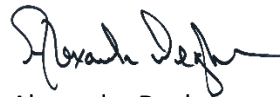
When asked about whether he would close Hazelnut Grove on KGW in 2017, Wheeler said, “Yes, just based on what I’ve seen, why are we allowing people with mental health issues or potentially drug and alcohol addiction issues to live in the woods? That’s not a good solution. All of the best practices, all the data shows, if you want people to gain access to the services that get them off the street and keep them off the street, the answer isn’t a tent, the answer is housing with wraparound services, whether it’s shelter or transitional housing.”

We agree and applaud the city for finding a better alternative. The Joint Office of Homeless Services gave Hazelnut Grove campers first opportunity to move into the St. Johns Village, where wraparound services are available. Those who did not move to St. Johns were connected to shelters and service providers.

The city delivered on its promise to help the residents of Hazelnut Grove. Now it must deliver what it promised to the neighborhood: End the illegal camping at the site. The city must then remediate the site and work with the Overlook Neighborhood to establish new public use there that will deter future camping. That restoration could serve as a model for every neighborhood that wonders what will happen after problem campsites that have damaged natural areas are closed.

By making good on its promises to homeless residents at the Hazelnut Grove camp and to residents of the Overlook Neighborhood, the city will demonstrate that it is serious when it tells Portlanders that it will help all residents succeed, find housing and enjoy a livable city. Let this be the first step toward real progress.

Sincerely,



Alexandra Degher

Overlook Neighborhood Association, Chair



Christian Trejbal

Overlook Neighborhood Association, Vice Chair