S.M.I.L.E. BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2012; SMILE STATION

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Officers and Directors present: President Mat Millenbach, Vice President Paul Notti, and Secretary Eric Norberg; and Directors Stan Hoffman, Gerri Sue Lent, Ellen Burr, Nancy Walsh, Nate Maki, and Michael Hayes

President Mat Millenbach called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm, and asked for introductions around the room. The minutes of the May 16 Board meeting were reviewed, and Paul Notti moved that they be approved as presented; Gerri Sue Lent seconded; the motion carried without objection.

Tina Osterink next presented the final drafts of the Sellwood Gap Trail Enhancement Plan. The land involved was acquired by Metro in 2006; SMILE is seeking design and amenities for the trail through the "Sellwood Gap" area. Tina distributed pages of summaries of the results of repeated design charettes, which are incorporated into these minutes by reference. Tina introduced Michael Hayes and other community members to explain elements of the three potential design approaches to this project, and she invited SMILE Board members to come up to the three large wall illustrations and, using colored dots, express their own preferences (advisory only). Some Board members did so, and some did not, at this point.

Ellen Burr was next, representing the SMILE Land Use Committee she chairs. She summarized the issues the committee dealt with in the past year -- addressing modifications of rules requests on various properties. The demolition of smaller homes to build larger ones has come before the committee, and she and her committee have met with representatives of Rennaissance Homes. However, last week, a new issue arose: Meyer Group Architects contacted Mat and Ellen about a proposed project -- a 4-story apartment house on the half-block behind the former The Woods nightclub (which previously had been Wilhelm's), and the business-district parking lot. The building would have 100 units -- largely studio apartments, but with some one-bedroom apartments -- and NO OFF-STREET PARKING. The property is being sold by the previous developer, who had intended to build a 2-story condominium complex there. This new proposal has caused some controversy in the neighborhood among neighbors and businesspeople. Since this is on commercially-zoned property, it appears there no waiver is required to have no off-street parking for this building.

Mat then introduced Teresa Pucik, SMILE's designated representative to the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Southeast Light

Rail Project, who announced that TriMet has now said they are adding back the south-side pullout wing on the Bybee Bridge for MAX access by elevator on BOTH sides of the bridge, as originally contemplated. "Eastmoreland helped bring this about," she added.

Mat introduced Kevin Downing, our lead negotiator in the Union Pacific lawsuit settlement talks, who remarked that the March 30 settlement is still sealed by the judge, who reserved to himself the authority to announce the settlement, which he has not yet done. Thus Kevin is unable to report on whatever we have agreed to in the settlement and what the outcome is. SMILE hopes to learn this within the lifetime of its current Board members.

Kevin said that he was present to ask the SMILE Board's permission to apply to the Oregon Community Foundation for a grant to assist Union Pacific in implementing a "clean diesel project" budget of $208,575. Eric Norberg moved that Kevin be authorized to proceed with this by the end of the week (which Kevin had identified as the deadline to do so), and Michael Hayes seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

President Millenbach then introduced the Moreland Presbyterian Church Homeless Project subject, about which attendees at the July General meeting had voted to ask the Board to express concerns, both to the city and to the church. Mat said he would allow input from those attending the Board meeting, after a recap of recent events on this subject. He then read the two motions passed by those present at the June General meeting.

Vice President Paul Notti then presented his understanding of the objections to the church's plan by those at the General meeting. After a "pro and con summary" from Paul Notti, a man present said that "although the city, JOIN, and the church are vetting the homeless participants in this program, nobody is vetting the proposed overnight parking lot sites for suitability".

A woman present expressed fear that a number of RV's full of people could park at the church overnight. Eric Norberg pointed out that this situation would violate the JOIN and site restrictions for the program. She said she was generalizing about the city program, and was not speaking specifically about Moreland Presbyterian Church. Another woman said she did not believe the city would follow its own rules for this program, and related a bad experience in Corvallis. Teresa Pucik said that research on the Eugene homeless program shows that it is entirely different from what the Portland City Council passed, and is not at all comparable; the Eugene program has paid monitoring; ours is all voluntary -- just one of many differences.

Dawn Anderson, who was present, said she might sell her home across the street from the church's parking lot if the program

goes through, but fears her home's value would be reduced if the program does go through. The man who spoke first, who said his name is Andy, criticised City Commissioner Nick Fish for a "lack of candor". A woman, following up on Teresa Pucik's comment, said that there were over 1,000 problems in the first year of Eugene's long-established program, which is what led to its paid monitors from St. Vincent DePaul -- but these monitors have no enforcement capability. Mat closed the public discussion at 9:13 pm to allow the Board to discuss the issue amongst itself. Mat opened the discussion by presenting two proposed motions, incorporated into these minutes by reference.

The first motion called on the city to modify the proposed program by specifying that the shelter be indoors, with such amenities as beds and running water, and further asking the city to require adequate transparency and neighbor notification of any organization seeking to participate. Paul Notti moved that the motion be adopted, and Nancy Walsh seconded. Discussion followed, seeking to refine the wording and grammar. Gerri Sue Lent questioned some of the assumptions made by the neighbors, and appeared to object to the concept of asking the city to revise the program to specify sheltering in a building rather than on a parking lot, in our response to the city -- saying the pilot program "deserves a chance".

Stan Hoffman and Michael Hayes said that the weakness in the city's adopted plan is the lack of supervision on-site, and its reliance on the neighbors to police the involved parking lots -- as well as the lack of notification and neighbor input. Nate Maki agreed with Gerri that the city won't modify the program, but he said he is OK with SMILE saying the city should support the program financially by aiding the church -- but he said he does not agree with the idea of requesting the city revise the program to specify indoor shelter.

Paul Notti commented that "this is not really an emergency program; the homeless in transition can take a year to get into low-income housing; one night on a parking lot won't make a difference". Mat Millenbach related his experience at a Lutheran Church in his former residence in Billings, Montana, to address this sort of homeless problem -- the church did bring qualified homeless people into the church to spend the night, and it worked very well, and still does, although it did and does still require considerable volunteer work.

At this point Mat tabled the first motion in order for the Board to consider the second motion.

Paul Notti offered the second motion, incorporated into these minutes by reference, and with no second to the motion immediately offered, Eric Norberg offered a second to facilitate the discussion. The second motion was directed to the church.

Michael Hayes said the real problem involves the neighbors; "if they could find a way to do this without the indoor component", he could favor this. Nate Maki expressed the thought that "something is better than nothing, and we don't have the right to make them change this". Paul Notti took polite issue with that thought, saying "the church is not impacted by this plan, but the neighbors are. What the church is doing is impacting the neighbors, so they need to do more". Gerri proposed a modification, Eric seconded, and the modification passed 8-1.

The second motion now read: "The SMILE Board suggests that Moreland Presbyterian Church modify its planned Overnight Guest Project to allow for the following: Allow guests to sleep inside the church; allow guest access to clean water and indoor bathroom facilities; provide security to ensure guests are safe for the duration of their stay." This motion then carried 9-0.

Returning to the first motion, now re-read by Mat, Gerri said she thought it prudent to modify the first motion to highlight only the second half of the motion -- asking the city to have a mechanism to involve neighbors from the start [when an organization elects to participate in this pilot project]. Nancy Walsh said that if churches are willing to accept the idea of providing overnight housing indoors, the city should provide grants to cover the extra costs. Nate Maki said he favored the idea of city support to participating organizations, but still opposed requiring the city to change its pilot program. There was continued Board discussion on wording and intent. Stan Hoffman and Gerri Sue Lent proposed "shelter - security - running water - toilets" be provided to the participants.

Teresa Pucik pointed out a special concern is that the city is on record as planning to overlook code violations arising from this pilot program. Mat then asked the Board to return to the motion, and asked Gerri to repeat her modifications. She did, and Michael Hayes seconded the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment passed with 7 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

Paul then remade the motion incorporating the two modifications that passed, and adding a request for the city to enforce all applicable city codes. Stan Hoffman seconded that motion, which read: "The SMILE Board calls on the City of Portland and JOIN to modify the existing Overnight Sleeping Pilot Program in the following manner: Require religious organizations and nonprofits to provide indoor shelter, security, running water, and toilets for guests participating in the program; ensure adequate transparency with neighborhood associations and affected neighbors by including workshops, notifications, and open house events for each proposed participating organization; and enforce applicable codes." This motion then carried with 7 yeas, 2 nays.

Paul Notti moved the meeting be adjourned, and Gerri Sue Lent seconded; the motion carried unanimously at 10:27 pm.