

S.M.I.L.E. GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2012; SMILE STATION

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- as well as -

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Officers and Directors present: Vice President Paul Notti, Treasurer Pat Hainley, and Secretary Eric Norberg; and Directors Nancy Walsh, Nate Maki, Michael Hayes, and Ellen Burr

In the absence of President Mat Millenbach, Vice President Paul Notti called the monthly SMILE General Public Meeting to order at 7:32 pm, noting the presence of a quorum, and asking for introductions around the room. When they were complete, Mark Wilson, a local resident with Portland Parks and Recreation, arose to announce that the Oaks Bottom Bluff Trail will close for up to two months this fall to rehabilitate it, to add a boardwalk to areas that flood, and to build an observation platform at the south end of the lagoon.

Notti then invited a review of the minutes of the June General Public Meeting (the July meeting was cancelled, since it would have fallen on Independence Day) -- and, after the review, with no corrections or omissions noted, Linda Silver moved that the minutes be accepted as presented, and Ellen Burr seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

Jennifer Koozer, a TriMet representative who is also a Sellwood resident, reported that this weekend -- and also next weekend -- there will be 'round-the-clock work to install a new fish-friendly culvert under the forthcoming MAX tracks and also under the Union Pacific tracks, opposite the Westmoreland Union Manor. Train traffic will be somewhat restricted, with some of the tracks temporarily removed, but at least one set of rails will be open at all times. Also, a center ("Jersey") barricade will be installed in the middle of McLoughlin between Nehalem and Ochoco Streets, to discourage pedestrians from risking their lives by running across McLoughlin Boulevard.

TriMet Project Manager Steven Witter was present, introduced, and invited to discuss the elements of the MAX construction that had been removed from the plans to save money. One of those initially was the south-side pullout, and elevator and stairway, to the Bybee Boulevard MAX platform. That has been added back in; and he said both pullouts were found to serve an integral function in the use of the station and pedestrian access. They also helped to respond to ADA issues the slope of the bridge might raise, by allowing disembarking at the top of the bridge in both directions. There followed a slide presentation about the station's design, and Witter added that there are plans to

use speed-calming techniques to bring vehicles down to the 25 MPH speed limit in the eastern stretch of Bybee from the bridge, where motorists commonly travel at least 10 MPH faster than that.

A SMILE member in attendance, Dick Laughlin, attempted to suggest a Harold Street station as a more desirable and safer alternative to building the Bybee Boulevard station, but Paul Notti observed that the agenda item limited discussion to the Bybee Boulevard station. Laughlin then charged that nearby train diesel engines will "spew carcinogenic diesel fumes" over those waiting at the Bybee Boulevard station -- although an attendee observed that a Harold Street station would be close to, and just west of, the railroad tracks as well. Laughlin added that he also is concerned about user security -- saying visibility and train noise would mask any attempt to alert others to a security problem on the platform. He also said that the bridge has an 8-percent grade, which exceeds ADA rules for handicapped access. Jennifer Koozer responded that Bybee, and its bridge, constitute a "street", and streets are exempt from this ADA restriction. Witter reminded Laughlin that one reason the south-side bridge pullout was restored was to facilitate ADA access from buses.

The next to present were Ronda Fast and Mat Dorfman, who were there to update SMILE on the various Crystal Springs culvert replacement projects underway and planned in Sellwood, especially near Tenino Street and Umatilla. Ronda apologized for the "obnoxious noise" of the "borderline dangerous" work underway at that intersection, but the goal is thought to be worth the inconvenience, she said; the culvert work is to enhance salmon transit and to enhance habitat.

Dorfman then surprised and amused those present with a thorough report on an extensive survey recently completed in Sellwood, comprised of 75 respondents, on the subject of beaver knowlege. For beaver facts and additional information, Dorfman invited contacting him...his telephone number is 503/823-8733. Ronda Fast then went on to detail the many culvert projects in the works, and some related tree removal plans, which regrettably are necessary in conneciton with this work, she said.

Architect John Cole was present to acquaint SMILE with a proposal involving an existing small apartment complex on S.E. 13th at Miller Street, on the northeast corner. The owner of that complex proposes building some additional apartments (described as a four-plex) on what is now the parking lot for tenants. He said the tenants tend to be younger and often students, and the existing parking lot usually has a lot of empty spaces. He thus does not think putting tenant cars on the street will be a problem, and eliminating the driveway will provide at least one more street parking space. Cole said he

lives in Woodstock and is sensitive to the importance of the off-street parking issue here -- "but, based on the occupants there now, I don't expect a problem to arise on Miller Street." Pat Hainley objected to this thought, saying that during the morning commute period, the street is often used by residents taking children to and from St. Agatha's, and the narrow street would be seriously impeded by additional parking at that hour.

Cole said that no building permit had been issued yet for the proposed construction, and "design review" is required at that location, so all this is just in the planning stage now. He added, however, that no variance would be required in order to proceed with this plan.

Nancy Walsh arose to remind those present of the 33rd annual SMILE "Sundae in the Park" at Sellwood Park this Sunday afternoon. She gave the details of this year's version of this well-attended and widely-enjoyed community event. She then put in a pitch for residents to contribute to the neighborhood "flower basket" project currently underway in the business districts of Sellwood and Westmoreland; although SMILE originated this project, the Sellwood-Westmoreland Business Alliance business association has taken it over, and as SMILE had experienced in the past, now that the novelty has worn off, the merchants along these streets are becoming more reluctant to fund the baskets. When the money runs out for the year, the SWBA will have to stop watering them, and the baskets will die off. SWBA and Nancy are hoping they can be watered through September, but resident contributions will probably have to fill the gap in order to do so, she suggested.

Ellen Burr, who in addition to being a SMILE Board member is also the Chair of the Land Use Committee, then reported on the recent issue of a developer planning to replace a house and a duplex on the west side of the block between Claybourne and Glenwood (on the east side of 16th), with a four-story apartment building (100 apartments contemplated) -- with no on-site parking. This is legal under the commercial zoning of the property, but when the zoning code was established, commercially-zoned property had been expected to be used for retail purposes, not residential occupancy.

The developer in question apparently has not completed purchase of this property, and she is hearing that the number of units planned may decrease a little, and at least a little on-site parking might be provided, but she doesn't know any details. Ellen invited contacting her to stay current on this issue or to obtain more information. E-mail may be addressed to her in the subject line, and sent c/o SMILE Secretary Eric Norberg at: norberg@myexcel.com. He will forward it to her.

Some comments from those present followed, concerning house

teardowns and replacements in the neighborhood. Ellen said that none of these is illegal; all are following the rules and code.

However, she said, she believes the city may not currently be enforcing its own code on asbestos mitigation in residential teardowns, and she and her Eastmoreland equivalent are looking into that possibility.

There being no further business on the agenda or offered, Diana Richardson moved the meeting be adjourned, and Nancy Walsh seconded the motion. The motion carried with apparent unanimity at 9:21 pm.