

SMILE GENERAL PUBLIC MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2013

SMILE Station

blog procedural

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Officers and Directors present: President Mat Millenbach, Treasurer Pat Hainley, Secretary Eric Norberg; and Directors Gerri Sue Lent, Tom Ramsey, and Ellen Burr

President Mat Millenbach called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm, and began with a request for introductions from everyone in the room. After that, since a quorum was present, he asked that the minutes for the February General Public Meeting be reviewed. With no errors or omissions noted, Tom Ramsey moved that the minutes be approved as submitted, and Bev Patterson seconded the motion, which then carried without objection.

First on the Agenda was a discussion about the traffic signal planned for S.E. Tacoma Street and 6th, a matter introduced by former Sellwood-Moreland Sellwood Bridge C.A.C. member Heather Koch, and then conducted by Michael Magee of the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

Heather talked about the options formerly discussed at the C.A.C. meetings, which led to the plan for a full traffic signal on Tacoma Street at 6th, coordinated with the signal at 13th and Tacoma, but changing only half as often, to discourage its use by those who would cut through the neighborhood to avoid Tacoma Street.

Magee, Senior Engineer in the Civil Design Section of PBOT, pointed out that the signal is related to Mulnomah County's Sellwood Bridge project, but it will be a city-installed and maintained traffic signal. It was originally planned to install the signal at the end of the Sellwood Bridge replacement project, but there have been a number of requests -- especially from the business community -- to install it as soon as possible, so it is currently planned for this fall.

Magee said he would accept questions and problems concerning the traffic signal via e-mail: Michael.Magee@Portland0regon.gov, but he reminded those present that "the signal will not actually act as intended until the bridge project is completed". He then conducted a conversation with attendees on related issues, largely focused on cut-through traffic and speeding. One person pointed out some "no left turn" signs on streets at right angles to Tacoma have disappeared and have not been replaced, so drivers are now turning left there. Some feared the new light could encourage cut-through traffic, but Magee reminded that the light will change only very infrequently for 6th Street drivers.

One resident suggested a "no right turn on red" policy on 6th on both sides of Tacoma Street to assist with preventing the signal from attracting cut-through drivers, and Magee observed that that was a very helpful suggestion, and made a note of it.

The next agenda item concerned a major sewer replacement and repair project coming to Sellwood and Westmoreland in 2014 -- and present to discuss it was David Allred of the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services. This will represent \$8 million of work, which is in "pre-design" now, and will be put out for bid late in the year. The work should take about a year to complete. He displayed a map of the affected streets, from Linn Street north to Reedway Street, plus an alignment within the Waverley Golf Club west of Garthwick.

Teresa Pucik registered a complaint about a Christmas Week inconvenience at her house from the previous sewer project in Westmoreland in 2011. It appeared to be too late to do much about that now, but Allred said he would accept questions, reports, complaints about the new project, and would attempt to mitigate any issues caused by the contractor. His e-mail address is: david.allred@portlandoregon.gov. His colleagues Lois and Annemarie were present and said they would be happy to receive such e-mails on his behalf, as well.

The third agenda item was an appearance by Ms. Beven Byrnes, the Executive Director of Bridges Middle School (grades 5-8). She revealed that this private, nonprofit middle school serves kids with learning challenges -- currently 38 are enrolled -- at its current location of N.E. 50th and Davis, near Glisan. Ms. Byrnes, who once lived in Sellwood and attended Llewellyn Elementary School, is actively looking into moving the school to an available church property between S.E. 17th and Milwaukie Avenues, near Lambert Street. The reason for the planned move is to increase the school's capacity to 60 students, and perhaps ultimately to a firm maximum of 90.

The school arose from a Providence facility started two decades ago, and which came to be known as Gately Academy, until Providence proposed to close the school to cut its costs a couple of years ago. Students' parents responded by founding a nonprofit organization to keep the school going, under its new name, Bridges Middle School. Students are transported by their parents, and there have been no community issues at its current location. Ms. Byrnes added that the school has had a 98% success rate in having its graduates go on to graduate from high school. She said that her presentation at this meeting was a "proactive" attempt to keep the community informed of this plan. For more, go online to: www.BridgesMiddleSchool.org. Her e-mail address is: BevenByrnes@BridgesMiddleSchool.org.

The final item of business, added to the agenda at the start of

the meeting, was a quick update for SMILE's membership by Ellen Burr, Board member and chair of the SMILE Land Use Committee, on the subject of apartment houses being built without tenant parking. She said the issue arose last year, with the Richmond neighborhood being the "poster child" for it, with lots of such projects.

A citywide land use group has formed to address this issue. The city is now attempting to come up with short-term amendments to try to address the problem while studying it further, and there is a hearing on proposed amendments next week (Tuesday, March 12th). The citywide land use group does not think these city proposals go far enough to address the issue satisfactorily.

There being no other items on the agenda or presented at the meeting, and with the quorum having slowly dissipated as the meeting progressed making a motion to adjourn impossible, the meeting was announced as adjourned by President Mat Millenbach at 9:15 pm.