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The Southwest Portland Post

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Complimentary

February 2016

Multnomah neighbors rally around Capitol Highway improvements

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

The weather was chilly, but the mood was sunny as Multnomah residents walked door to door to spread the word of upcoming improvements to Southwest Capitol Highway between Taylors Ferry Road and Multnomah Boulevard.

They are members of the ad hoc Capitol Highway committee, led by transportation chair, Chris Lyons.

The group has been working with the city of Portland to finalize sidewalk and bike lane designs along Capitol Highway. It's been the top transportation priority of the neighborhood for more than two decades, according to Lyons.

"The one thing we really lack here is sidewalks and bike lanes," he said. "And while I think most people in the neighborhood don't care about having those on our less-busy side streets, we feel like arterials, like Capitol Highway,

should have the infrastructure like bike lanes and sidewalks."

Despite the need, the city has been unable to come up with the millions of dollars necessary for this "top priority," leaving residents without safe bike lanes and only a dirt path as way to walk into Multnomah Village.

"We want to be able to access the village without having to take convoluted routes to get into the commercial area," said Lyons.

"We also want safety. You see how unsafe it is there. People are having to bike right alongside a ditch and walk along what we call the 'goat path,' which is just a mud path."

The years of waiting could be at an end, however, as the Portland City Council votes on a local gas tax to fund this, and many other infrastructure projects.

Mark Lear, resource manager for Portland Bureau of Transportation says the 10-cents-a-gallon tax would raise

(Continued on Page 6)



Cindy Loud McDonald, Beth Fernandez, Sarah Lyons, and Stan McDonald take a break from canvassing Jan. 9 on what's known as the goat path along Capitol Highway that could soon become a real sidewalk. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

Is homelessness in Southwest Portland a growing concern?



By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

Is homelessness a growing problem in Southwest Portland? Marc Jolin, director of A Home For Everyone Initiative, offered some statistics as well as a broader perspective.

"Homelessness is a community-wide problem," he said. "The numbers of people sleeping outside, in their vehicles, or in places not meant for human habitation is not as large in outer Southwest Portland as in some other parts of the city, but there are certainly homeless people living in that part of town."

According to Jolin, "In the last street count, conducted in January of 2015, on one night we counted 133 individuals sleeping outside or in vehicles in Southwest Portland outside of downtown. That was about 8 percent of the total unsheltered homeless population.

"There are homeless people in outer Southwest for the same reasons there are homeless people throughout our community. Someone who becomes homeless may feel more comfortable in a particular part of town because it is where they grew up, where they have friends or family, or because it is where they lived or worked before becoming homeless," he added.

Why are more than 150 people coming to the Sears Shelter in Southwest Portland every day?

The Sears Shelter [formerly the Sears Armory building] is located at 2730 SW Multnomah Blvd, just a quarter mile west of Barbur Boulevard near Multnomah Village.

There are several reasons for the migration, according to Celeste Duvall, manager of Transition Projects.

The shelter is dedicated to women and couples only. There were no couples shelters in Portland so for the first time, couples can come in together and do not have to split up or choose to stay together and therefore on the street only.

The women's shelters in Portland including the one Transition Projects manages are filled and this allows more women (the most vulnerable population) to come off the street and stay in a safe, clean, warm, and welcoming environment.

Women and couples may bring their animals which is most often not the case with most shelters.

Sears Shelter dwellers are accessing shelter services provided by Transition Projects through its day center located at the Bud Clark Commons building in Northwest Portland, as a first point of contact.

When the Sears Shelter opened on Thanksgiving Day, Portland Mayor Charlie Hales' office said that the building would have to be vacated by the end of May. Discussions about where the

women and couples will go are ongoing.

Hales said he is interested in hearing if there are issues, or if the shelter seems to be operating smoothly.

Hales has scheduled a community forum for Tuesday, Feb. 16 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. Check with the mayor's office for updated information about the event.

"When the Portland City Council declared a state of emergency in housing and homelessness, we reframed the issue," said Hales. "'These problems can't be solved overnight' was no longer an acceptable response. We moved to asking ourselves daily, 'What problems can be solved tonight?'"

"The Sears Shelter and the community's warm response show that Portland as a community can move the needle on homelessness, and can do so with compassion and generosity."

The Volunteer Meal Provider program at the Sears Shelter has been very successful. Volunteers provide bag lunches Monday through Saturday and on Sunday a hot meal is served.

There continue to be challenges. Sears Shelter staff always needs volunteers and there are many opportunities to choose from including donation of specific items and meal providers.

For more information about volunteer opportunities, contact lauren.holt@tprojects.org or call 503-280-4741.

Is mismanagement, rather than lack of funds, keeping PBOT projects from completion?

OPEN FORUM

By Don Baack

Portland Bureau of Transportation and Commissioner Steve Novick have been singing the "No Money Blues" for a long time. But is it really a lack of money that keeps projects from getting done? In 2001 the State of Oregon awarded a \$1,000,000 grant to the Transportation Bureau to fix five crosswalks along Barbur Boulevard in Southwest Portland.

A couple were done in a year or so, the fourth was done in 2014, and the fifth crosswalk (Southwest Alice Street) was just completed in December 2015, and was reportedly funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation. What happened to the \$1,000,000? I have never seen a report of where the money went.

The crosswalk of Southwest Naito Parkway at Whitaker Street, one of five included in the city council-approved South Portland Circulation Study of 2001, was funded with the Hooley Pedestrian Bridge.

The crosswalk design has been done for years; ODOT's permission to build the crosswalk (Highway 99W) has

been secured.

The bridge was completed in 2012; the crosswalk was unfunded, then refunded and was supposed to be constructed in the fall of 2015.

It is still not done and no one seems to know where the money went or when this important link will be completed.

It is a key connection between Oregon Health & Sciences University campuses, 4T walking route, Urban Trail 1 and an alternate route when the OHSU aerial tram is not in operation. People trying to cross Whitaker Street without a signal-protected crossing face a serious safety challenge.

In September 2014, SW Trails obtained an agreement with Commissioner Novick's office to build a trail for the many students going from the new Stephens Creek Crossing housing development to Robert Gray Middle School.

The Portland City Council funded the project in October 2014. The transportation bureau is still fumbling around trying to figure out how work with SW Trails to get the project done.

It is not that SW Trails has never built important connections. We have done 20 to 30 of them all with permits when they were required, some of which now need maintenance.

The transportation bureau seems

to have become a black hole of planning, planning, planning and not getting projects, especially small projects, done in a reasonable time.

The bureau has had funds to do trail maintenance since the 2015-2016 budget was passed but is still trying to figure out how to work with SW Trails to get the maintenance done.

Problem is they have never engaged SW Trails in a conversation about getting trail maintenance done. SW Trails has submitted suggestions, but nothing has happened. No response, just a black hole. We deserve better than that from our city government.

What is the problem Commissioner Novick? Is it money or is it poor management?

Don Baack is a Hillsdale resident and is founder of SW Trails. The Post welcomes reader response. Write letters up to 300 words to editor@multnomahpost.com. Please include name and contact information. Interested in writing a guest column? Contact Don Snedecor, editor, at 503-244-6933 or don@multnomahpost.com. Note: we reserve the right to edit all opinion pieces for brevity, clarity, punctuation, and libel concerns. Deadline is the 20th of the month prior to publication.

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Deadline is February 19.

The Southwest Portland Post

Crowd of 500 attends Wilson meeting on West Side school boundaries

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

The wet, miserable weather didn't appear to discourage anyone from attending the West Side Boundaries Community Meeting at Wilson High School the evening of Jan. 19.

With an estimated attendance of almost 500, dozens had to stand as residents packed into every available seat in Wilson's cafeteria.

Also in attendance were several Portland Public Schools board members, and superintendent Carole Smith. Smith will make her final recommendations to the PPS board by the end of January.

The meeting was an opportunity to give feedback on the latest proposal by the District-wide Boundary Review Advisory Committee.

It's been a year-long process to create what the school district calls "right sized schools," to address overcrowding at Chapman and Hayhurst elementary schools and Lincoln High School.

A video played at the start of the meeting warned another 5,000 students will come into the Portland school district within the next decade.

Making a school "right sized" means ensuring enrollment at each school is high enough to pay for a complete range of core curriculum classes as well as plenty of elective classes, while not overloading classrooms with too many students.

Schools with lower attendance risk missing out on the extra electives because there isn't the money to pay for them.

Chapman, for instance, is already overcrowded and expected to become more so. The current recommendations call for redrawing boundaries to send some of the Chapman students to Ainsworth elementary.

Hayhurst elementary is currently overcrowded. But if the Odyssey K-8 program, now housed in Hayhurst, moves to another school, such as East Sylvan, Jackson Middle School or the currently vacant Smith School, Hayhurst would then risk becoming under enrolled.

So students from Bridlemile and Rieke would be shifted to Hayhurst.

Hillsdale Business and Professional Association president Mike Roach spoke against changes for Rieke School.

"This boundary change would push customers away from Hillsdale," said Roach. "And traffic—oh, my goodness. The proposed boundary change would produce 'Carmageddon.'"

According to Roach, "Every morning, Monday through Friday, frustrated parents driving from the north would flood every side street in Hillsdale, trying to avoid the already choked Sunset Boulevard and Capitol Highway intersection, making Hillsdale streets unsafe for walking by students or customers, who in turn, would have to drive, creating still more traffic chaos."

To relieve overcrowding at Lincoln High School, the boundary committee recommends moving the Spanish Immersion program from Ainsworth to East Sylvan. And instead of Ainsworth students going to West Sylvan Middle and Lincoln High, they would now go to Robert Gray Middle and Wilson High.

Jordan Hornlick, a seventh grader at West Sylvan Middle School was looking forward to being with his longtime friends at Lincoln High School. But the border change will force him to attend Wilson.

"I immediately grew really sad and angry at the prospect of losing the friends I made and being forced to start over again," he testified.

His friend, Evan Nyhus, who studies Chinese at West Sylvan asked, "What will happen to my Mandarin studies at Wilson, where Mandarin is not offered?"

While most parents would agree overcrowded and under-enrolled schools are a problem, they also dislike changes for their own children.

Despite assurances that the school board will likely keep students where they are by making boundary changes effective for incoming students only, and "grandfathering" current students to keep them where there are, there no guarantees.

This prompted more than one parent to beg the boundary committee to maintain status quo for those students in affected schools.

"We couldn't agree with you more—changes need to be made to address overcrowding at PPS schools," said Karen Silva Manning.

"Opening Smith is a consideration that makes sense. But uprooting established students in the midst of their education does not make sense. Please keep current students where they are and do not make an exception to the grandfather clause."

More than one parent brought up the vacant Smith School as a solution. Stephanie Condor, who has children at Maplewood, said their school is very small, overcrowded and projected to become even more so by 2020.

"So what we'd like to support is the idea



Judy Brennan, enrollment director of the Portland school district, goes over some numbers for the crowd at Wilson. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

of the Smith Elementary School being reopened in 2017. We see this as



Hillsdale Business and Professional Association president Mike Roach testified against changes affecting Rieke Elementary School. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

alleviating not only the overcrowding at Maplewood, but also at Capitol Hill. So we see that as a very viable solution," she said to cheers from the audience.

Despite the negative feelings about many of the proposed changes, the meeting's tone was polite and respectful. Many thanked the members of the boundary committee for a "thankless job." And Hayhurst parent Tina Oliver said if Odyssey moves out, they are ready to welcome new families.

"Hayhurst is a warm, generous, and welcoming community," she said. "We have great empathy for communities that are going through anxiety and stress of having to leave their beloved school. Change is difficult and we recognize this."

"We want you to know we will work hard to help families that are shifted to Hayhurst adjust and thrive. If your family might come to Hayhurst, we invite you to get to know us a bit, and we want you to know that we welcome you."



Ainsworth parents came out in force and wore matching t-shirts as a sign of unity. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

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Lair Hill resident travels to the ancient city of Petra, the Rose City, in Jordan

POSTCARD FROM PETRA

By Darl Kleinbach

It was late November 2015. My companion and I were fortunate to arrive at the Shara Mountains in southwest Jordan in the late afternoon. When viewed from afar, the rocky sandstone hills we planned to explore



"The Treasury" in Petra. (Photo courtesy of Darl Kleinbach)

looked like gigantic red marbles. The next morning we set out at the gates of Petra at about 7:30 a.m. The way to the gorge is a mile walk down the remnant of a Roman road. For comparison, we could have traveled on donkeys or camels, ridden a spirited Arab pony, or rode in a horse-drawn carriage.

These canyons were first settled in approximately 200 B.C. by Nabateans, nomadic tribes who originated in what is now northern Saudi Arabia. The location happened to be close to busy trade routes and eventually the tribes settled down and created a sort of caravansary, something like motels, for the travelers.

Some of the caves in the canyon walls were carved into sleeping spaces and elaborate dining rooms whose benches survive. The Nabateans traded food, shelter, and protection for news, culture, language, and even science. They lost their need to

room and Petra became the capital of the larger Nabatean area of influence.

The narrow couloir which leads to the tombs of ancient Rose City is called the Siq. In some places it is as narrow as 10 feet and the sides tower 120 feet high. The colors of the walls display the shades of the sunrise from yellow to deep maroon.

In one place there were royal purple with streaks of gold. The first part of the Siq is about a mile.

On each side are dams and cisterns to collect storm water and along the walls are channels to direct the water to the city when needed, one side for drinking and on the other, for irrigation. It was this management of water that made the thriving community in the canyons of the desert possible.

The first of the major tombs, called the Treasury, gleamed in the morning sun as we emerged from the darker rift in the rocks. It is a three-story façade carved in the red rock, in the style of a Roman temple. Only recently archeologists have dug down another 16 feet where they uncovered

two royal tombs.

The entire day we walked and marveled at more and more tombs, on one side, the huge royal tombs and on the other side of a wide valley, smaller tombs of lesser nobles. As the canyon widens, there is an auditorium, a colonnaded market street, a public well and finally remnants of three huge temples, built at different times.

Petra was later inhabited by Romans, Byzantines, and even Mongols before being abandoned to straggling Bedouin tribes. It was rediscovered in 1812 by a Swiss explorer.

Floods had settled silt 20 to 30 feet deep in the city. Archeologists are still excavating. Much is still to be discovered. Petra has been named one of the "New Seven Wonders of the World." And we agree.

Darl Kleinbach, a retired marketing rep., lives in Lair Hill. Her four-week adventure included Tunisia and stops in Egypt including Cairo, Luxor, and the Valley of the Kings. Kleinbach said she and her companion floated in the Dead Sea. They then went on to visit Darl's granddaughter, who lives in Abu Dhabi.

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COMMUNITY LIFE

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

1 Historical society: The Multnomah Historical Association board holds its monthly meeting on the first Monday (Feb. 1) at 7 p.m. and all are welcome. The association is dedicated to preserving the history of Southwest neighborhoods. This month's agenda includes planning for 2016. Meeting is at the Village Office, first floor meeting room, 2929 SW Multnomah Blvd. For more information, visit www.multnomahhistorical.com.

5 Chinese influences: Seven Oregon artists who are all influenced by traditional Chinese art will have a group show this month at the Multnomah Arts Center Gallery, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. Sally Huang-Nissen, Agnes Kwan, Sylvia Leung, Renee Lin, Tim Loh, Dan Lucas, and Donald Nissen will show their work ranging from mixed media to traditional Chinese-style painting. Opening reception is Friday, Feb 5, at 7 p.m. The show runs through March 1.

9 Changing climates: Still have questions about climate change? This film could answer them and move you to action. "This Changes Everything," an epic film that attempts to imagine the challenges from climate change will be shown free on Tuesday, Feb. 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center auditorium, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. Local groups will be

present to answer questions and give you a chance to connect and make a difference.

10 Guns in America: The topics of gun violence, gun control, and the right to bear arms are constantly in the news. The Second Amendment guarantees Americans the freedom to own guns, but what does it actually mean? Reed College professor Pancho Savery will lead participants in a discussion about why the Second Amendment exists. It's sure to be a lively discussion! This class will be held, Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 6:15 p.m. at the Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd. Registration required; register online, in the library or by calling 503-988-5234.

13 Mozart's genius: The Portland Chamber Orchestra performs Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor and his "Linz" Symphony in C major. Joining the orchestra is pianist Susan DeWitt Smith, assistant professor of music, Lewis & Clark College. Saturday, Feb 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the Nordia House, 8800 SW Oleson Road. Sunday, Feb. 14 at 3 p.m. at Agnes Flanagan Chapel, Lewis & Clark College, 0615 SW Palatine Hill Road. Tickets range from \$15 to \$25. For more information call 503-771-3250.

Happy trails: With SW Trails, there's always some new neighborhood to explore. This month's 6.3 mile walk starts in Hillsdale and includes Fairmont Boulevard to Council Crest and then takes the Marquam Trail to OHSU, to Terwilliger Boulevard and back to Hillsdale. Meet behind the Wilson High School bleachers (Sunset



This SW Trails walk was led by Hans Steuch in November. The photo was taken in Marshall Park. (Photo courtesy of Hans Steuch)

Boulevard and Capitol Highway) on Saturday, Feb. 13, and be ready to go at 9 a.m. Bring a snack and water and dress for the weather. Well behaved dogs are allowed on leash. For more information or to volunteer to lead a future walk in your neighborhood, contact Sharon Fekety, fekety@hevanet.com.

16 Life of a writer: Ever wonder what it's like to be a full-time writer? Join author Maggie Stuckey as she serves homemade soup and explains how a book is "born." Perfect for book lovers and aspiring authors! Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Garden Home Community Store, 7306 SW Oleson Road. Free. For more information, call 503-245-9932.

20 Music from Africa to America: By means of beautifully written

songs and stories, Benin-born artist and educator Parfait Bassalé shares about his journey from West Africa to Portland, Ore. Parfait's music has been described by many as inspirational and transformational. Come take a musical trip you'll long remember on Saturday, Feb. 20, 2-3:30 p.m. at the Capitol Hill Library, 10723 SW Capitol Hwy. Free. For information, call 503-988-5385.

24 Bon voyage: Missi and Mister Baker will hold a concert to help pay for their trip to the South by Southwest international music festival in Austin, Texas this spring. They're asking a \$5 cover charge to enjoy their distinct sound and get a preview of their upcoming recording project. This concert will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. at O'Connor's Vault, 7850 SW Capitol Hwy., in Multnomah Village.



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Hero Hughs enjoys playing outside during the Jan. 3-5 snow and ice storm at his home on Southwest 50th Avenue. What started pleasantly enough with an inch or two of snow paralyzed the city of Portland when freezing rain coated everything with ice. City officials urged motorists to stay home on Monday, Jan. 4. (Photo by Allison McGillvray. Additional photos on Page 7)

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Capitol Highway Improvements

(Continued from Page 1)

roughly \$58 million dollars over four years before it sunsets.

"The city council has to refer the tax to the voters," Lear said. "So we're on schedule to take the resolution to council on the 27th of January, asking the elections office to refer the gas tax to voters in May of this year."

A list of potential projects would allocate \$2.3 million dollars for paving Capitol Highway from Multnomah Boulevard to Taylors Ferry Road. An additional \$3 million could be leveraged from system development charges and the Bureau of Environmental Services for the sidewalks.

An expensive portion of the design is dealing with storm water; the initial idea of putting a giant pipe under Capitol Highway would balloon the one-mile project cost to \$19 million.

The city is now working on a different, less costly design. "The neighborhood,

through our ad hoc committee, came up with some recommendations with how we'd like to see the design change," Lyons said.

"And that was to make it so there's a sidewalk on just one side of the road, instead of both. We feel that's all we really need and that might reduce the costs some."

The city will come back to the Multnomah Neighborhood Association with its new design, and that is why members of the ad hoc committee were canvassing to spread the word about it.

They want to make sure everyone in the neighborhood is able to give feedback for the final design.

Residents who were at home Saturday morning were handed a flyer with contact information for the ad hoc committee and encouraged to stay in touch so they could provide their input when the time comes.

For Beth Fernandez and Sarah Lyons, it is all about safety.

"My son walks along Capitol

[Highway] to school and to the bus," said Fernandez. "And I walk to town all the time. It's just an accident waiting to happen."

Sarah Lyons, pregnant with her second child, added, "Kids are the reason for this."

Is anyone opposed to the adding sidewalks and bike lanes on Capitol Highway?

Lyons said not really, however there have been a few people worried that better roads will just encourage more people to drive on an already busy arterial.

"They worry that if you build it, they will come," he said. "And our position is: They're coming already. We're seeing more density and infill, and we need the infrastructure to accommodate it."



Patti Waitman-Ingebretsen looks on as Jason Ford signs an email list to stay abreast of the design plans for Capitol Highway. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

To stay informed about the Southwest Capitol Highway Plan, contact Chris Lyons, transportation chair at chrislyons7@yahoo.com.

Cody Clark, 21, dead after shooting at Multnomah Village apartment complex

POLICE BLOTTER

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

On Tuesday, Jan. 19 at 9:03 p.m., Portland Central Precinct officers responded to multiple reports of gunfire in the 3300 block of Southwest Multnomah Boulevard.

As officers were responding to the scene, they received an update that a man was suffering from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Officers arrived at the scene, located the man, and called for medical personnel to attend to his injuries. Medical personnel arrived and determined that the man



was deceased from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Officers learned that the man fired multiple rounds from a gun, damaging some neighboring residences before taking his own life. No other gunshot wounds were located by police.

The Oregon State Medical Examiner

responded to the scene to conduct a death investigation.

In the meantime, friends revealed via the Multnomah Village group page on Facebook that the deceased was 21-year-old Cody Clark who was attending a party at a friend's apartment in Multnomah Village at the time of the shooting.

At the time of this writing more than \$5000 had been raised for Clark's funeral and wake expenses. Those wishing to remember Clark or make a donation can visit <https://www.gofundme.com/c8kaeh9w>.

Help is available for community members struggling with a mental health crisis and/or suicidal thoughts. Suicide is preventable.

The Multnomah County Mental Health Call Center is available 24 hours a day at 503-988-4888.

Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare has an urgent walk-in clinic, open from 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., 7 days a week. Payment is not necessary.

If you or someone you know needs help with suicidal thoughts or is otherwise in an immediate mental health crisis, please visit Cascadia or call 503-963-2575.

Lines for Life is also available 24 hours a day at 800-273-TALK (8255). Information about the Portland Police Bureau's Behavioral Health Unit and additional resources can be found by visiting <http://portlandoregon.gov/police/bhu>.

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Questions & Answers About Our Environment

Dear EarthTalk: Why do many green groups oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) governing trade in the Pacific?

— Jane Donahue, Larchmont, NY

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is an international agreement that seeks to unite the economic interests of 12 countries that border the Pacific Ocean by lowering trade tariffs and establishing an international trade court to settle disputes.

TPP emerged as a West Coast equivalent to the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, designed to ease trade restrictions between the U.S. and Europe. But TPP has progressed much faster thanks to the willingness of Pacific nations to “play ball.”

International negotiators released a draft of the TPP agreement in October 2015 and are awaiting approvals from participating governments.

However, despite the theoretical advantages of more fluid international trade, the current draft has several complications that could lead to a variety of problems for participating nations and others, meaning its implementation is far from a sure thing at this point.

Green leaders criticize the Obama administration and negotiators from other countries for keeping early talks on the formation of the TPP closed to observers and media. Many individuals and public interest groups requested access to the discussions, fearing that the agreement would unfairly favor large corporations.

However, those appeals were ignored and the drafted document revealed what many feel was a prioritization of corporate interests over health and environmental concerns. Without any enforceable guarantees for environmental protection, the TPP could actually significantly contribute

to global warming through increased exportation of U.S. fossil fuel supplies.

Additionally, differences in national policies regulating chemical use, artificial fertilizers, and seeds from genetically modified organisms have yielded an agreement that encourages minimal protection.

The nonprofit Public Citizen points out that existing U.S. regulation of pesticide and GMO labeling on packaging could be challenged in the international court as “trade barriers.”

Another point of contention is the distinct advantage given to foreign corporations under the current TPP model. Overseas firms would be able to sue the U.S. government over new policies that disrupt the company’s “expectations.”

Perhaps more troubling is what is *not* included in the document, which fails to mention how it will protect from over-harvesting of limited natural resources.

Green groups point out that, while the TPP accounts for nearly a third of global fish harvest, there are no provisions to protect against overfishing. The draft also barely mentions enforceable safeguards of endangered species products, such as elephant ivory.

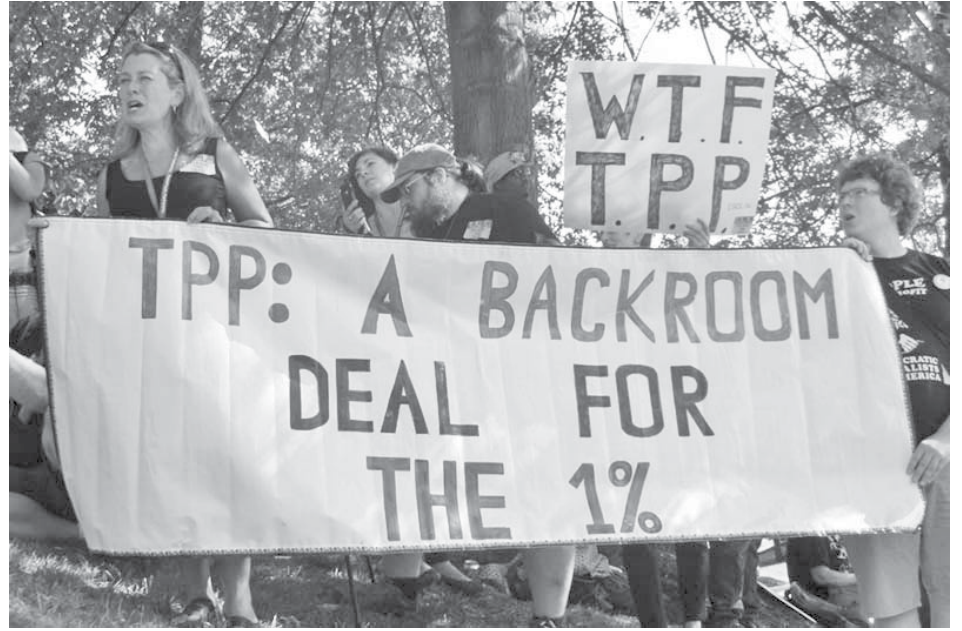
Yet another issue critics say is woefully ignored is social justice. With free-trade opening up, even more American jobs would be sent overseas to reduce costs.

Economists estimate that five million U.S. jobs could shift overseas under the TPP, resulting in serious pay cuts for American workers. Meanwhile, the richest 10 percent would profit at even higher rates, adding to an already drastic U.S. wealth inequality.

Clearly, the current draft of the TPP agreement needs a lot of work before Congress should even consider it. Those opposed to the current version of the TPP can voice their dissatisfaction by signing onto the Stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership petition on MoveOn.org, or by urging your representatives in Congress to vote against it altogether.

Contacts: TPP Page, <https://ustr.gov/tpp>; Public Citizen, www.citizen.org. MoveOn.org’s Stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership Petition, www.petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-the-trans-pacific.

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Activists in Leesburg, Virginia want Congress to just say no to the TPP given the potential social justice and environmental implications of the trade agreement. (Photo courtesy of Global Trade Watch, FlickrCC)

Ice storm glazes Southwest

(Continued from Page 3)



(Photos by Allison McGillvray)

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Light rail or bus rapid transit — to be determined Feb. 29

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

On Feb. 29, from 9–11 a.m. at the Metro Regional Center (600 NE Grand Ave), the Southwest Corridor Plan steering committee is scheduled to decide whether new high capacity transit along Barbur Boulevard (99W) between downtown Portland and Tigard will be light rail or bus rapid transit. Both modes are currently under consideration.

It is estimated that the new high capacity transit would be built between the years 2021 and 2025. Cost in 2014 dollars was estimated at \$1 billion for bus rapid transit. For light rail the estimated cost is \$1.8 billion if no tunnel is built and \$2.1 billion if one is built.

The steering committee will be asked to make two important decisions

regarding next steps for its high capacity transit program which has been in the works for several years.

1. Will bus rapid transit or light rail be the best high capacity transit mode to serve people in the Southwest Corridor?

2. Will an underground light rail tunnel directly to the Portland Community College Sylvania campus continue to be studied?

Mike Francis is a Hillsdale/Bridlemile resident who works in Northeast Portland. He loves the idea of being able to stay on light rail for his entire commute instead of switching transportation modes downtown, so he's in favor of light rail in whatever configuration is most practical.

"It's hard to imagine a tunnel really makes sense, but I'm willing to be persuaded," Francis said.

High capacity transit would also serve the National College of Natural Medicine which has been located smack in the middle of one



This montage shows a bus rapid transit vehicle from Eugene's EmX system (left) and a more-familiar Portland MAX light rail train. (Photos courtesy of Metro)

of the busiest traffic areas in the city, encircled by Naito Parkway, Kelly Avenue, the Ross Island Bridge, and traffic leading to and coming off Interstate 5.

NCNM employs about 685 faculty staff and typically enrolls more than 600 students. That number is expected to increase. About 25 percent of students use public transportation.

"The location was perfect for us in 1996 when we owned one building in the five-acre area in which we are located," said Marilynn Considine, a spokesperson for NCNM.

"We were then a tiny private college and the location is conveniently located near downtown, public transportation, and had room for growth. Things have changed a lot for NCNM. Today, access into and out of our quickly growing college is difficult for drivers and very dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists."

According to Considine, "At our campus clinic alone we have 20,000 patient visits per year, which, along with our faculty and students, brings a lot of traffic into our small campus every day," she said.

"Traffic has grown increasingly congested, fast-moving and dangerous

as Portland has grown in the past several years. There are no traffic lights on any of the streets around us and people take enormous risks crossing the streets every day."

There are still options in Southwest Portland and Tigard that would not use Barbur Boulevard. Also, the line is scheduled to go all the way to Bridgeport Village in Tualatin.

Constructing a bus rapid transit line is cheaper than light rail because its infrastructure needs are less extensive and in some areas it can use existing roadways.

But operation costs are considerably higher per rider than light rail, because its vehicles are smaller and so there must be more of them, plus the lower ridership projection.

Craig Beebe, a Metro spokesperson, explained that new high capacity transit won't necessarily follow Barbur Boulevard the whole way through Southwest Portland, and it definitely will not use it in Tigard.

"While we've heard broad support for the idea of better transit in Southwest, there are people who oppose specific route options, like some of the neighbors to PCC Sylvania that don't want a tunnel below their houses," said Beebe.

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