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The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

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Guide*
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Volume No. 18, Issue No. 2

www.multnomahpost.com

Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

December 2009

Negotiations and lack of stimulus money delay Capitol Highway Project

By Allison Voigts
The Southwest Portland Post

While several segments of the Capitol Highway Project have been completed, others, including the Garden Home segment and Hoot Owl Corner, are facing new delays, according to the Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT) Ross Swanson.

Swanson, the project manager for the segment from the Multnomah Boulevard viaduct to Southwest Taylors Ferry Road, had hoped to deliver a modified version of the plan, which was first proposed in 1996, by early next spring ("PBOT aims to deliver modified Capitol Highway Plan in six to nine months," *The Southwest Portland Post*, September 2009).

But bureaucratic red tape has delayed work on the design as PBOT, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and local consultants The Parametrics Group negotiate the details of the contract for the project. Swanson said he hopes design plans will resume this winter, but was reluctant to give another estimate for when the modified plan would be completed.

"I hope the community will be patient

with us while we work through the red tape," he said. The project would add sidewalks and bicycle lanes to Southwest Capitol Highway between Garden Home and Taylors Ferry roads, requiring the city to use most of its right-of-way.

The original proposal, estimated at a cost of \$12 million, cites narrow traffic lanes, uncontrolled intersections, and the lack of sidewalks as dangerous problems along the 1.1 mile stretch of road.

Swanson told the Multnomah Neighborhood Association in August that the new plan would include meetings with a citizen's advisory committee to try to save significant trees and homeowners' landscapes that have been developed into the public right-of-way.

The new plan would also require storm water to be treated at its source according to environmental mandates established in the 13 years since the project's conception.

The Hoot Owl Corner, named after the convenience store located at the intersection of Southwest Capitol Highway, Vermont Street, and 30th Avenue, was reworked in the original project design to eliminate its curve, creating

(Continued on Page 6)



Walking along Capitol Highway toward Multnomah Village can be a tricky thing with no sidewalks. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

HAP submits grant application for Hillsdale Terrace housing project

By Allison Voigts
The Southwest Portland Post

On November 17 the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) submitted their application for a \$17 million grant from the federal government's HOPE

VI program to redevelop the Hillsdale Terrace public housing complex in Southwest Portland.

Since HAP's announcement in March that it would be pursuing a complete redevelopment of the low-income apartments ("Hillsdale Terrace to apply for HOPE VI redevelopment funds," *The Southwest Portland Post*, April 2009), rather than selling the site or improving the existing structure, neighborhood residents and organizations have both volleyed criticism at and pledged support for the project.

Critics argue that the total cost of the project, estimated at \$41 million, is too much to spend on 115 units (housing 237 people) in an isolated location that is poorly integrated

with the surrounding neighborhood.

"Building a segregated, dense community of low-income families is exactly what HAP should *not* be doing," wrote retired builder (and former HAP board member) Ray Hallberg in an opinion letter to *The Oregonian*. "Such projects have been identified nationally as social failures since the 1960s."

Some critics, like Hallberg, say the money would be better spent on Section 8 vouchers to help Hillsdale Terrace residents rent apartments in private housing, while others, like Hillsdale activist Rick Seifert, have suggested buying up housing in the depressed real estate market.

"If Portland's public housing's left hand, the development commission, had any idea what the right hand, the housing authority, was up to, the two agencies would rush to redirect the Hillsdale Terrace money to South Waterfront," Seifert wrote on his blog, *The Red Electric* (theredelectric.blogspot.com).

But the project's supporters argue that rebuilding Hillsdale Terrace is the only way to offer low-income families access to the neighborhood's excellent schools and services.

Neighborhood House director Rick Nitti wrote to *The Oregonian* in response to Hallberg,

"At the tail end of the housing bubble, Southwest Portland lost much of its affordable rental housing inventory to condo conversion and increasing rents," wrote Nitti. "Lower-income households are increasingly closed out of our community. A new Hillsdale Terrace would preserve and expand housing choices for families with less means."

HAP officials say connecting the

residents of Hillsdale Terrace with the community is one of the primary goals of the redevelopment, a strategy to end their need for public housing by providing resources in education, job training, and healthy living. \$2 million of the HOPE VI grant would be spent on community and support services, and 39 agencies including Neighborhood House, Big Brother/Big Sister, and the Multnomah and Hillsdale Neighborhood Associations have offered another \$6 million worth of services.

John Keating, Assistant Director of Strategic Partnerships at HAP, said that workshops and surveys held over the summer with Hillsdale Terrace residents and neighbors revealed a need for mentoring, tutoring, and youth employment programs for the complex's 138 children.

Residents also expressed a strong desire for a community garden, which the neighboring Hillsdale Community Church has offered space for, where they can grow their own food.

"This isn't a 'bricks and mortar' approach," Keating said. "We want buildings that will last a hundred years, but it's also about all of the services that current and future families will have access to."

HAP has successfully applied for and received two HOPE VI grants in the past, for its New Columbia and Humboldt Gardens properties. HAP officials expect to receive an answer to the Hillsdale Terrace application sometime in February, and they say they will continue to pursue funding for the project if they don't receive the grant. If successful, construction would begin in 2011 with a completion date set for summer 2012.

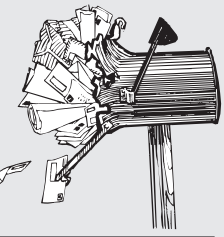


Pictured is one of the buildings of the 60-unit Hillsdale Terrace housing project built in 1970. (Photo courtesy Portland Architecture)

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Letters to the Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
7825 SW 36th Ave Suite #203
Portland, OR 97219
Fax: (866) 727-5336
email: news@multnomahpost.com

PCC Sylvania drives smokers into neighborhoods and parks while enforcing campus smoking ban

I am not a smoker, and I do not particularly like smelling smoke on my students' clothes but here's the scoop. I live on Southwest 60th next to Lesser Park and Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus and I work at PCC Sylvania.

I walk between my home and the college and have started to see my tiny well-loved park getting trashed by my employer's decision to put a punitive rule in place that drives smokers into the parks and neighborhoods.

I plan to go to my neighborhood meeting and bring this topic up for discussion, but I feel bullied by the college as its neighbor. I feel they are getting rid of their "problem" in my front yard.

I also expect to see crime increase as more people are sent down in to the neighborhoods to smoke. I work with high school dropouts on campus and many now see this is as an opportunity to get "high" after class in the parks below.

Many of these students of mine have been on parole or [are under the supervision of] probation officers and have committed property crimes. We are now sending them into small quiet neighborhoods.

It seems unfair to the smokers, unfair to the neighbors and wrong that the college paints this "everything is fine angle" with The Oregonian when it is not.

There are at least 50-100 people each day going out behind the campus to smoke and the neighborhoods need to know why this is happening. Did PCC talk this over with the neighborhood association?

I have a call in to the manager of the West Region of Portland Parks and Recreation to see how they plan to address this.

Marlo Urbina
Southwest Portland

Southwest has a wide variety of healthcare practitioners

Numerous of our students and staff, and some friends in the neighborhood, have commented on Ms. Olsen's November *Post* article ["Multnomah-area school has trained massage therapists for 25 years," by Polina Olsen, November 2009] about Oregon School of Massage.

We thought she did a good job in using a variety of sources in presenting a balanced picture of our program. We like being a part of the community... the article will introduce us to more of

our neighbors.

It seems like this part of Southwest Portland has many, and a wide variety of, healthcare practitioners. I'd love to see more information about that published, and could probably enlist some students who would be willing to do some footwork (listing practitioners, and surveying them as to their specialties and concerns) to develop it.

Thanks for keeping the community informed.

Ray Siderius
Director
Oregon School of Massage



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Himalayan Blackberry and English Ivy lead list of Portland's invasive species

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Planning Commission last month approved the draft Invasive Plant Policy Review and Regulatory Improvement Project. This is an updating of the City's listing, and policy toward, "invasive" plant species.

As Jennifer Goodrich of the Bureau of Environmental Services explained, these are plants that "grow so rapidly they crowd out other species. They take down trees, harm storm water absorption, and spread the risk of wildfire. They create monocultures and change soil chemistry so that trees can never grow. Some are toxic to livestock." The strategy to remove them is "early detection and rapid response," Goodrich said.

The current policy adds 43 plants, and removes 24, from a list begun in 1991, Trisha Sears of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability said. The policy discourages the use of such plants, requires them to be removed from required landscaping, and encourages all property owners to do such removal.

There are 15 Type A plants that by law must be removed immediately when found, and the City will offer assistance when possible. "We want all city policies to be consistent," Sears said. "What we've found is that some plants on the nuisance list are on the mitigation list (plants recommended when landscaping is required)," such as the Norway Maple.

Commission members Howard Shapiro and Michelle Rudd pointed out that some invasive plants are also attractive. "If I have one in a little garden box and it's not hurting anyone?" Rudd asked. "If it's on the A list it's illegal," Sears replied.

Dixie Johnston of the Collins View Neighborhood Association called the policy "dear to my heart, and I wholeheartedly endorse it."

June Heartline of the West Multnomah Conservation District said, "My idea of a good time on weekends is to go out and murder invasive plants. They cost

us thousands of dollars in damage every week. You can manage your own property, but unless your neighbors are on board they'll come right back."

According to Heartline, the proposed policy "gives people a carrot and a bit of a stick to take care of this. Some of these plants are still being sold at nurseries – that horrifies me." Regarding Norway Maples she conceded, "Removing trees is a touchy subject."

Editor's Note: Here is a list of invasive trees, plants and shrubs, according to "GardenSmart Oregon: a guide to non-invasive plants." Invasive trees and shrubs

include Brooms and Gorge, Butterfly Bush, English Holly, European Hawthorn, Himalayan Blackberry, Knotweeds, Russian Olive, Saltcedar, Spurge Laurel and Tree of Heaven.

Invasive herbaceous plants include Bachelor's Button and Knapweeds, Fennel, Hawkweeds, Herb Robert and Shiningstar Geranium, Jubata Grass, Myrtle and Leafy Spurges, Policeman's Helmet, and Toadflaxes. Invasive aquatic and wetland plants include Parrotfeather and Brazilian Elodea, Purple Loosestrife, Ribbongrass, and Yellow Flag Iris.

Bicycle Master Plan approved by planning commission

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Planning Commission last month approved a draft update of the City's Bicycle Master Plan, with some modifications suggested by the public.

Project manager Ellen Vanderslice told the Commission that in the last month the Bureau of Transportation has received more than 150 e-mails about the draft. Only 17 actually opposed the draft, but 75 called for changes.

"We came away with confidence in the proposed system buildout, but we heard we may not have struck the mark with our implementation strategy," Vanderslice said.

In the initial draft Tier One projects, for earliest implementation, leaned

heavily on the installation of Bike Boulevards, the signing of low-traffic streets as bike routes where bikes and cars share the road without special facilities.

Critics called for more emphasis on off-road trails and on separated in-road paths that are reserved exclusively for bicyclists. "We always knew these things were important; the question was how we get there," Vanderslice said.

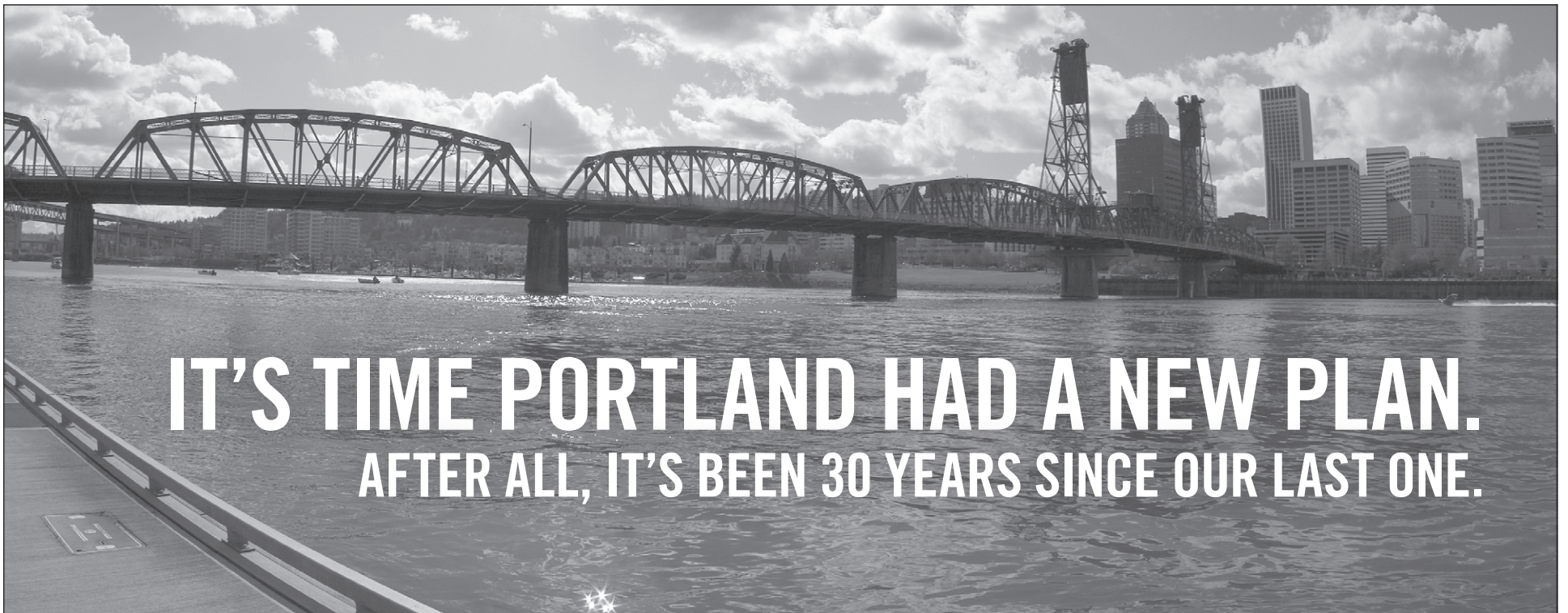
Planners now propose to move some items forward in priority, including creation of "a signature trail network," and to add Southwest Capitol Highway to the list of major bike routes.

Commission member Chris Smith proposed a series of amendments. These included a goal of having 40 percent of all trips of three miles or less done by bike (the plan had called

for 25 percent), to devote \$25 to \$40 per capita per year to bike improvements, and to provide "equity" in bike facilities around Portland by emphasizing facilities in east Portland and southwest Portland.

"We could have a full buildout of this plan for \$500 million," Smith said. "That sounds like a lot of money, but it's the cost of 7.5 miles of streetcar, 40 percent of the cost of our light rail lines, and one-eighth the cost of the Columbia River Crossing."

Commission members Howard Shapiro, Michelle Rudd and Irma Valdez resisted these amendments. "Does this mean we would fund bike trails before we funded sidewalks?" Rudd said. Shapiro said, "We're not in the implementation business. Don't tie us up in details." The plan was ultimately adopted minus most of Smith's amendments.



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TIME FOR A NEW PLAN. Today we face many new challenges. Only 61% of our students graduate on time. 45% of our electricity comes from coal. Our unemployment rate tops 11%. And there's the human toll – a growing gap between the haves and have-nots. We want to share opportunities equitably among our city's increasingly diverse population. But rather than just present a plan for all to follow, we'd rather have a lively discussion with you about it.

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In the coming months, you will have many opportunities to weigh in. Join us at a workshop session or go online to help us define priorities, guide investments and set the course for our city for the next 25 years. Whichever you choose, we want you to participate in the discussion. Because more voices means better choices.

12.01.2009	6:30–9:00pm	St. Johns Community Center, 8427 N Central Street*
12.03.2009	8:00–9:30am	World Trade Center, 121 SW Salmon Street
12.05.2009	10:00am–12:30pm	Mt. Scott Community Center, 5530 SE 72nd Avenue*
12.07.2009	6:30–9:00pm	Wilson High School, 1151 SW Vermont Street
12.15.2009	6:30–9:00pm	University of Oregon – Old Town, 70 NW Couch Street

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Childcare available at the Mt. Scott (12/5) workshop: RSVP by 12/2 at 503-823-2041. *Interpretación simultánea en español disponible.

Holiday Guide

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

The annual **Multnomah Village Holiday Gala** is happening Friday, December 4 and Saturday, December 5.

Friday includes Horse and Carriage Rides at the Multnomah Arts Center from 4-9 p.m. and from Key Bank from 6-9 p.m. Tree lighting with Santa is at 6:42 p.m. in front of Village Beads.

Oregon Music Hall of Famer Mark Bosnian leads caroling in the street at 7:00 p.m. Portland Art Collective "Open Doors" Show 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Great shopping in the Village until 9:00 p.m.

Saturday includes Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast with Santa at the Lucky Labrador Pub, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Portland Art Collective "Open Doors" Show 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Great carolers and shopping in the Village all day long!

Antoinette Antique and Estate Jewelry (inside Le Meitour Gallery) is celebrating their anniversary by giving away an estate diamond ring to one lucky vintage jewelry lover and a \$100 gift certificate to another lucky winner. Bring in two cans of food to be donated to Neighborhood House charities and receive one raffle ticket. Receive another raffle ticket with any new purchase made through December 12. For more information about the Holiday Gala contact Michele Cassinelli at Village Beads, (503) 244-1821 or visit the

Multnomah Village website at www.multnomahvillage.org.

Eat chili, slurp hot chocolate, buy used books and even snag a vintage typewriter.

This year, the **Hillsdale Chili Feed and Holiday Sing** offers a mélange of possibilities on Sunday, Dec. 6, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (or as long as the chili lasts) at the covered and cozy Food Front entrance in the Hillsdale Town Center.

The Hillsdale Business and Professional Association is offering the food and drink (donation suggested), local schools will provide singers and musicians, and the Hillsdale Community Foundation is selling a small, select assortment of used books and typewriters.

For more information, contact Rick Seifert at Hillsdale News, (503) 245-7821 or Mike Roach at Paloma Clothing, (503) 246-3417.

Don't miss the music and magic of **Northwest Senior Theatre's Holiday Show**, December 9, 10, 11, and 12 @ 2:00 p.m. at Alpen-

rose Dairy Opera House. Handicapped access is available. \$5 donation per person. For more information call (503) 251-4332 or e-mail nwseniorthatre@yahoo.com.

19th Annual Multnomah Christmas Ball & Toy Drive with big bands sound of Carl Smith & the Natural Gas Co. Featuring Carlee Smith. At The Cider

Mill, 6722 SW Capitol Hwy. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Music 8:30 pm – midnight

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The South Portland Business Association ("SPBA") is pleased to sponsor a holiday event (no reservations required) which will be a "warm and dry" place with stunning views to watch Portland's annual Christmas Ship Parade. Please join the SPBA for this great event.

The SPBA looks forward to celebrating the holiday season with all of you

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Leslie Anderson, Sharon Cannon, Sophie Franz, and Aimee Erickson were the muralists honored at the Multnomah Arts Center open house and mural dedication, November 6. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

Multnomah Arts Center open house includes mural dedication

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

November 6 was the official dedication for the Multnomah Arts Center's new lobby mural, which pays tribute to the activities of the building. Visitors were also treated to a show-and-tell of these activities.

The 175-square-foot mural, covering all parts of the lobby, pays homage to the center's fine arts and drawing, weaving, music, acting and dance classes and activities. It also includes nine classic Greek muses and figures from Native American mythology.

Lead artist Aimee Erickson presided over the work with the assistance of Sophie Franz, Sharon Cannon and Leslie Anderson, but they incorporated ideas contributed from throughout the community, and 750 people assisted in applying the paint.

The mural project was financed by grants from the Regional Arts and Culture Council, the Safeway Foundation, and the Neighborhood Small Grant Program. "The idea was to change the lobby into something more welcoming," MAC director Michael Walsh told those who gathered for the event.

Erickson, who lives within walking

distance, said that the old lobby "had its charm, for sure," but was "kind of shabby." Of the center she says, "I've grown to love it, and realize what a special place this is." She admitted, "I'd never done anything of this scope before." When designing the project, "I was told, 'Shoot for the moon. If we don't hit the fundraising goal, we can try something more feasible.'" The finished project is "a celebration of the creative spirits working together."

Former director Will Hathaway provided guided tours that showed not only what the center is, but how it became that way. It began at what is now Neighborhood House. It moved to its present location in 1988, when the Portland School District chose to close and sell the former Multnomah School.

Over time there have been other improvements, such as conversion of the basement boiler room to a printmaking facility, retrofitting of outdoor portables to metal and clay art areas, and paving of a gravel lot behind the building for additional parking.

In the auditorium a handicapped access ramp has been added, and other improvements have converted what was once a "graduation stage," as Hathaway put it, to something capable

of handling theatrical performances.

Indeed, those who came were treated to a "Cirque Du Multnomah" theatrical review by Center instructors, following a similar performance by dance instructors in the gym, and an art exhibition in the gallery, and demonstrations of arts of various kinds throughout the building.



A tour of the Multnomah Arts Center, which included this art class, was part of the agenda of the open house and mural dedication, November 6. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

Dining Out Guide

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Planning Commission mulls school regulation changes

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Planning Commission last month endorsed two changes in the zoning code regulating school activities, but balked at a third change.

Most Portland schools and churches are on land zoned for residential use. To operate they must obtain a conditional use permit, which states in broad terms what they are allowed to do and sometimes set conditions.

A group of community activists, many of them from southwest Portland, have accused the Portland School District of violating its conditional use permits, and the district itself has complained that the system is burdensome and unworkable.

Collins View neighborhood activist Dixie Johnston, one of those who has accused the district of violating the code, testified, "Our community has been through a school closure. It was very painful, we're still dealing with it, and it's still kicking us in the teeth. What we all want to see is a sense of community, but we don't do a very good job of that. We become focused and selfish."

Johnston suggested letting City workers take a day a month off work to work on public schools. She told the Commission, "I do want to commend City staff and how they've handled a

very difficult situation. I like the tenor of the discussion and feel we're going in the right direction. I'm very grateful for your intelligent questions."

When a school or church is vacant for three years, it loses its conditional use status. The Portland Bureau of Development Services staff proposed, and the Commission endorsed, a change that would extend the grace period to five years.

They also agreed to abolish a requirement that a school seek an amendment to its conditional use if its enrollment increases; they retained a requirement that an amendment is needed if the school adds more than 1,500 square feet of floor area.

The third amendment would allow any changes in age or grade level, without public review, for schools teaching kindergarten through eighth grade. Citizen activists have made official complaints to the Bureau of Development Services, charged with enforcing the zoning code, concerning grade changes at nine Portland public schools. The amendment would nullify the complaints against all but two of these schools.

Commission members were uneasy about both the substance and procedure here. Commission member Chris Smith said, "Putting everything from kindergarten to eighth grade in one bucket doesn't work for me. The transporta-

tion impacts are different." He added, "What's most frustrating is that this is indefensible from a citizen's point of view. We're making the complaints go away by changing the code."

Commission member Irma Valdez said, "We're being asked to bless what (the school district) has already done." Commission member Howard Shapiro said, "I'm not comfortable with this at all."

Mike Liefeld, who has been dealing with the code compliance complaints for the Bureau of Development Services, told the Commission, "We're trying to do what's reasonable."

Deborah Stein, District Planning Manager for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, said that the current code has proved cumbersome for everyone involved. "Things simply can't work the way the code is written," she said.

Earlier in the hearing, the Commission experienced some frustration during interaction with Portland School Board member David Wynde. The "point person" on the board for dealing with school facilities, Wynde said that a recent evaluation of school buildings revealed "The major systems in most are in need of replacement. There's a need to remodel, repair or replace all of them."

A defined set of projects in this direction has a total cost of \$270 million. Things that need to be done in the next

12 to 18 months would cost \$80 million. The district recently spent \$12 million on its most immediate needs, "and we borrowed to do it."

Smith said that in some ways, the City and the District have "overlapping jurisdictions. Schools are often the hub of the community. If they are closed or moved, it has a tremendous impact. When you're considering closing a school you hold a public hearing, but City Council should also be involved."

Wynde replied, "I think you've identified an issue: overlapping jurisdictions. We're committed as entities to exercising our legitimate rights and responsibilities while cooperating with other jurisdictions." He added, "We've met the requirements for collaboration" with City government.

Shapiro noted that the City and its citizens have "a substantial investment in our schools. You took a strong position on what Schools have to do to protect their best interests. I urge you to soften your position in the interest of the common good."

Wynde replied, "I think I agree with what you're saying, the spirit is there." However, he added, "When you need to find \$32 million to balance your budget, that's why we're elected, and we wouldn't be happy if other jurisdictions told us how to do that. We expect others to do their job, and we will do ours."

Community health is focus of OHSU School of Nursing class

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

This year's Oregon Health and Sciences University School of Nursing class studied the young and the old in southwest Portland, and provided services along the way.

For the third consecutive year, Launa Rae Mathews has been using the community around the OHSU campus as a living study area for her senior nursing class.

One group of four students has been studying the problems of low-income children and families, and has been working with Head Start, the Southwest Community Health Center, and the YWCA After School Program.

They worked with the Casey Eye Institute and Doernbecher Children's Hospital to provide dental exams, vision and hearing screenings, nutritional

assessments and health education. They also provided mentoring and homework help for children in the YWCA program.

In return, children and families in these programs helped the staff study local health issues. The area's strengths are parent support groups, and social service resources. Needs not fully met are a lack of affordable housing, childcare and transportation. This last contributes to problems of having access to healthy food, jobs and health care for parents.

"Your ability to use resources can be dependent on getting basic needs met," student Barbara Whistler told *The Post*. A finding not surprising to local residents is that the area lacks basic transportation services such as sidewalks. Whistler added that even in wealthy communities, "Poverty can be hidden."

Another five students worked with

Neighborhood House and the Loaves and Fishes Meals on Wheels program on senior health issues. One of these was medication management, "which has long been identified as a major medical problem," student Vida Manavisadeh told *The Post*.

Another issue was "socialized relationships," which she defined as lives with "a limited number of social contacts," and a lack of "engagement" with the ones they have. "I didn't realize how big an issue it was," she said. Where such problems exist, she said, Loaves and Fishes drivers play an important part because they get to know their clients, and can be a resource to refer them to help when they need it.

Capitol Highway Project

(Continued from Page 1)

a traditional "T"-style intersection in which traffic comes to a stop at Southwest Vermont Street and 30th Avenue.

The \$1.7 million redesign had been nominated for federal stimulus money for "shovel-ready" projects by U.S. Rep. David Wu, and U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, but failed to make the cut last month.

A female pedestrian was injured at the corner last month when a garbage truck struck her as she was crossing the street. Portland Police Officer Sze Lai, who investigated the accident, said the woman was wearing black clothing and that the driver of the garbage truck did not see her. He did not think the accident was related to the layout of the intersection.

The portions of the project that have been completed include a segment between Southwest 30th Avenue and Bertha Boulevard, between Bertha Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard (Hillsdale Town Center), and between Barbur Boulevard going south and PCC Sylvania (West Portland Park).

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Local potter to hold arts show at her Multnomah Village studio

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

Jan Edwards never took a pottery class until she was out of college. Now, she divides her time between clay work, regular teaching, and giving workshops everywhere from Colorado to Tuscany.

"Painting and drawing figure largely in my work on pots, clay paintings and paper," Edwards said from the light-filled studio she built in the backyard of her 1926 cottage near the Multnomah Art Center.

Today, she was busy turning the studio into a gallery for her upcoming 19th annual holiday show. During the weekends of Dec. 4 and Dec. 12, Edwards and a group of artists will display pottery, beaded jewelry, garlands, -- even felted hats.

"I mostly sell out of the studio," Edwards said as she glanced around the room. Her terracotta, porcelain and stoneware creations range from abstract wall hangings to food safe cookware.

Teapots are a specialty along with colorful gravy pitchers and casserole dishes that go from the oven to the table. She recently finished a large tile installation for a home in Long Beach, Wash. "I love to do custom tile," she said. "I do lots of backsplashes and also make tile for bathrooms."

Although her pottery passion started later in life, Edwards always loved art. "Mom said I was an artist from the time I was two," she said. "I was trying to be a children's book illustrator, and

accidentally got into clay work." While teaching swimming and art at a summer camp, someone showed her how to use a potter's wheel. "I got hooked," she said. "From day one I was up to my eyeballs."

Edwards left Chicago for Aspen, Colorado. In 1988, she attended a ceramic conference in Portland, fell in love with the city, and moved to her Multnomah Village cottage one year later. During that time, she's seen pottery become more competitive.

"The generation who taught us saved the craft from extinction," she said. "Today there are lots of people coming out of graduate schools. In Oregon, there's a potter under every rock -- and often a very good one."

Edwards enjoys helping other artists and teaches at the Multnomah Art Center and Mt. Hood Community College. She hopes her students will be among those attending her December show. "It's my favorite way of marketing," she said. "I enjoy meeting people who like my work."

Jan Edwards Holiday Open Studio with Judith Rose, Geraldine Foote, Nancy Cushwa and Vicki Strom Medley will take place at Edwards' Multnomah Village Studio at 2650 SW Custer St., Portland.

Hours are Friday, Dec. 4, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday Dec. 5, 10 p.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday Dec. 6, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday Dec. 12, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday Dec 13, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, email clayjan@mac.com.



Top: Clay painting by Jan Edwards. (Photo courtesy of Dan Kvitka)
Right: Jan Edwards in her studio with a oven-to-table casserole dish and cake cover. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)



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