

S.M.I.L.E. BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2011; SMILE STATION

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Officers and Directors present: President Mat Millenbach, Vice President Sean Murray, Treasurer Pat Hainley, and Secretary Eric Norberg; and Directors Stan Hoffman, Nate Maki, Paul Notti, Nancy Walsh, and Tom Ramsey

President Mat Millenbach called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm, observing that a quorum was present. He began by asking for a review of the minutes of the November 16 Board meeting -- after which Sean Murray made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, and Nate Maki seconded the motion, which was then adopted unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was a discussion about the need for speed bumps to slow down speeders and discourage cut-through traffic on Tenino Street -- a discussion led by two residents of the street, Tom Ramsey and Heather Koch. Heather's car had been damaged in a collision, while parked, just this afternoon, by a cut-through speeder.

Tom asserted "Tenino gets the worst cut-through traffic", and went on to explain that PDOT has plans for speed bumps for this very purpose on every east-west street south of Tacoma except Tenino; he wants Tenino included in this plan, and would welcome a letter from SMILE urging that course of action. Tom plans to speak to PDOT about this matter, and determine if the omission was a mistake, or if there was thought to be some reason for it. Since Tenino is barely wide enough for a conventional car to drive through in one direction, when cars are parked on both sides of the street, cut-through traffic there often maims or kills pets, endangers children, causes mirrors to be knocked off of parked pickups and other wider vehicles, and occasionally causes collision damage to parked vehicles on the street.

Paul Notti volunteered to help Tom and Heather with this issue, and a discussion of elements of this cut-through commuter traffic followed. Paul then proposed a motion that the Board send a letter to PDOT advocating steps to be taken by PDOT to improve safety on Tenino Street between S.E. 17th and S.E. 6th. The goals advocated would be the reduction of cut-through traffic, reduction of speeding, and increasing safety. Tom Ramsey seconded the motion, and in the ensuing vote, the motion passed unanimously. Mat assigned Paul to write the letter.

Heather Koch remained standing to report to SMILE about what the Sellwood Bridge Community Advisory Committee had heard recently

about the plans for "public art" on the new bridge. A process is underway to select one or more artists to execute the public art portion of the Sellwood Bridge project, which has a half-million-dollar budget. 40 potential artists have been identified (with an emphasis on local and regional artists); these will eventually be winnowed down to 3 to 5 artists, who will be invited to submit a proposal ("you never really know what you are going to get"), and from those the final selection(s) will be made.

Heather observed that "the County's [public art] process is less participatory than TriMet's process" -- there's not a lot of opportunity for public input. Heather is willing to attempt to involve the public in this. A discussion followed of what the County is actually obligated to do ("nothing"), vs. their stated intention ("to respond to the community"). Heather finds this intention hopeful and positive.

Next, Stan Hoffman presented an update on emergency preparedness in the neighborhood. He has been aspiring to a block-by-block program, modeled on Seattle's program, but there are a great many blocks in Sellwood and Westmoreland, so it is not easy to reach critical mass for this. Nonetheless, the City is interested, and the NET program is interested. Stan revealed that the NET program ["Neighborhood Emergency Team"] is moving from the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management to the Portland Fire Department, which is generally being accepted very positively by NET members. The County is now interested in underwriting preparedness booklets for distribution to residents. "PREP" is the acronym being brandished about, at present.

Stan says he is helping develop a new website for broader citywide use, and is trying to get neighborhood coalitions involved, but layers of bureaucracy add impediments.

Mat Millenbach asked Land Use Chair Ellen Burr about the "7-Eleven letter" authorized by the Board last month. She said that it is in process -- and she repeated that the site, at S.E. 17th and Tacoma, has no landscaping at all and needs some.

Nancy Walsh related how she had been caught behind a stuck bus on S.E. 13th recently -- Bus 70 was trapped at the Spokane mid-street bicycle boulevard curbing, because somebody was illegally parked in the no-parking zone in front of the Leipzig Tavern. The blockage lasted at least half an hour, and this problem is not uncommon there, she said. A nearby parking enforcement officer seemed uninterested in resolving the blockage. "Enforcement is as important as posting 'no parking' signs."

There being no other business, Stan Hoffman moved the meeting be adjourned, and Nate Maki seconded the motion -- which then carried with apparent unanimity at 8:46 pm.