

SMILE GENERAL PUBLIC MEETING

December 2, 2015

SMILE Station

Blog

www.SellwoodMoreland.org <<>>

Procedural

www.SMILErecords.org

OFFICERS PRESENT: Corinne Stefanick, President; Gail Hoffnagle, Vice President; Pat Hainley, Treasurer; Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Miriam Erb; David Schoellhamer; Bob Burkholder; Nanci Champlin; Joel Leib, Steve Szigethy; Elaine O’Keefe

President Stefanick called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, and asked those present to introduce themselves in turn, around the room. A quorum was not yet present, so a review of the minutes was postponed until there was one.

A police officer was present from the Central Precinct Traffic Division, at President Stefanick’s request: Sgt. Doug Gunderson. He brought, for discussion, various citizen complaints forwarded by PBOT which originated in the neighborhood. These centered on speed, crosswalk issues, bicycles, and congestion related to the Sellwood Bridge construction.

Among common threads that he said he noticed are issues relating to congestion problems at the Westmoreland intersection of S.E. Bybee Boulevard and 17th, and in Sellwood, at 7th and S.E. Spokane Street. Gunderson commented, “I don’t have an answer for the congestion – it is what it is.” But, he said, when the new Sellwood Bridge opens, that particular issue should be resolved.

President Stefanick asked about getting more police patrolling in the neighborhood. Gunderson pointed out that, “1/2 to 1/3 of our department is eligible to retire in the next three years. I don’t see our numbers increasing in the foreseeable future. I have been in Portland law enforcement for 24 years; I haven’t seen the staffing level this low, ever.” He added, “We don’t have enough precinct cops to staff the precincts adequately.” He went on to answer questions from those present. He invited e-mail or telephone contact: douglas.gunderson@portlandoregon.gov; 503/823-2225.

By this point, a quorum had been established, and President Stefanick asked those present to review the minutes of our November 4 General Meeting. One misspelled name was identified and corrected. Bob Burkholder moved the minutes be approved as amended, and David Schoelhamer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

David Schoelhamer was next to present, updating us on issues being heard by the SMILE Land Use Committee. He projected a graphic prepared by the city showing developments in progress in Sellwood and Westmoreland; “there are 400 units in the pipeline.” There will be a meeting tomorrow night at 6:30 pm at SMILE Station to hear from the developer of a

large apartment house on S.E. 6th Avenue between Umatilla and Tenino. “117 units; parking for 43 vehicles.”

Robert McCullough, Chair of the Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association, and of Southeast Uplift as well, was present, and observed at this point that the number of cars registered in Multnomah County is going up 1% a month – presenting a bit of a disconnect with the city’s policy of discouraging additional parking spaces at new apartment developments. Schoellhamer completed his presentation by remarking that the Land Use Committee is also dealing with Portland Comprehensive Plan issues, which he detailed.

Gail Hoffnagle arose to discuss parking issues, and brought Robert McCullough forward to comment on these with her. Tomorrow night marks the last meeting of the Citywide Parking Committee, she said, of which she is a member. Gail plans to bring the conclusions of that committee in a report to SMILE.

In the meantime, there is local concern in both Eastmoreland and Westmoreland that people are parking on neighborhood streets in order to take the Orange MAX light rail line from the Bybee Boulevard Station. McCullough said that, eventually, there should be a multi-level parking structure built (as originally planned) at the Tacoma Street Station. “You can’t have a light rail line without parking.” McCullough said he would like SMILE to join the ENA in addressing the neighborhood parking issue. This segment of the meeting ended with a general discussion of these matters by those at the meeting.

Gail remained standing for the final segment of the meeting, for which she was joined by Bob Burkholder. The two reported on the recent series of disaster preparation meetings both have been involved in; these have been financed by Southeast Uplift grants, and have been very successful. 40 blocks have been served by these meetings, and the pair is hoping to reach a total of 50 blocks served. Participants receive 3 one-hour classes. Burkholder told the meeting that the biggest problem when disaster strikes is initial denial by those affected, followed by a delay in addressing the problems. “So make a plan! Be ready to act fast!”

There being nothing else on the agenda, or offered from the floor, David Schoellhamer made a motion that the meeting be adjourned; Bob Burkholder seconded; the motion carried with evident unanimity at 8:48 pm.