

SMILE GENERAL PUBLIC MEETING

August 3, 2016
SMILE Station

Blog

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Procedural

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

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Walsh; Elaine O’Keefe; Miriam Erb;
Bob Burkholder; Nanci Champlin

President Stefanick called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m., and asked those present to introduce themselves, in turn, around the room. Observing that the meeting had met the quorum requirement of 20 SMILE members in attendance, she requested a review of the July 6th General Meeting minutes. One name’s spelling was corrected. Following the review, Margaret Branson moved that the minutes be approved as amended, and Matt Hainley seconded the motion, which passed without objection.

President Stefanick introduced Brett Thompson, who identified himself as the “outreach manager” for “Renew Oregon”; he was appearing at the meeting by his own request. He turned out not to be a SMILE resident, however; he told us that this was the first time he had ever been in the neighborhood. He explained that his request to appear was made to acquaint SMILE with the organization’s political campaign against the use of coal to generate electricity in Oregon, and he referenced House Bill 4036 and Senate Bill 1547. The public utilities have been cooperative in meeting this goal in Oregon, so their intended campaign is unexpectedly more or less over. He passed out what he called research forms (none were provided for inclusion in these minutes), and passed around sign-up sheets for the organization’s mailing list.

Patti Farris, a Westmoreland resident and a successful Monarch Butterfly propagator, was next to appear, advocating the planting of milkweed to attract Monarchs – since it is not only their food but the only plant on which they will lay their eggs. She explained how she had found such eggs on her own milkweed plant, and she brought the eggs indoors and put them in a terrarium with milkweed leaves. While few eggs survive predators while outdoors, the indoor environment allowed all 30+ eggs to hatch, and all the butterflies were subsequently released. She recommended the “showy milkweed” variety for success with Monarch Butterflies in Portland.

Nanci Champlin and Elizabeth Milner, Co-Chairs of SMILE’s S.N.A.C committee, arose to present an update on the long-planned SMILE project – “Springwater Meadows” – on the “Sellwood Gap” section of the Springwater Trail through the neighborhood. The landscape design chosen after much public outreach and input accents wildflowers and other plants. Last year, SMILE got a Metro grant to implement this block-size project, and S.N.A.C. was hoping to enroll 30 people in the complementary and related “backyard habitat” program.

This summer, the committee has presented two of these educational sessions on how to develop “backyard habitat”, in conjunction with the Audubon Society. 42 people attended these sessions, and 30 signed up.

Rod Wojtanik (a Sellwood resident) from Metro, and George Lozovoy from Portland Parks and Recreation, followed Nanci and Elizabeth to the front of the room, to give updates on the Springwater Trail construction in the “Sellwood Gap”. Rod spoke first: Metro has been working for over 20 years to create the Springwater Trail, and the 13th to 17th Avenue strip in the “Gap” has been acquired from Oregon Pacific Railroad to complete the trail in that area. The railroad has moved its track nine feet south to make way for the trail, and will install a Jersey Barrier retaining wall to separate the track and the trail.

George was next: From Umatilla Street around to 13th in the southwest corner of Sellwood is an unpaved section of the Springwater Trail, and it will be paved. Paving is straightforward from Umatilla to 9th; but 9th to 13th has all sorts of challenges: Environmental, utility-oriented, and logistical. Some asphalt will be on the trail by mid-October. Weather will also be a factor in the timeline, but “railroad orders [at intersections] are the real challenge,” commented Rod. A citizen present at the meeting expressed concern about potential dangers between 17th and 19th on Linn Street, when bikes must ride on the city street to stay on the trail.

Nancy Walsh stood to give a brief report on this year’s 37th annual “Sundae in the Park”, which takes place starting at noon this Sunday, August 7, in “upper” Sellwood Park. She discussed the entertainment booked for Sunday afternoon, as arranged and emceed by Dana Beck. Nancy asked attendees at this meeting to volunteer a couple of hours or more to assist at tables or with activities. The stage and awning will go up around 9 a.m., and help with that would be most welcome also.

Shaynna Hobson from Metro appeared briefly at the meeting, at President Stefanick’s request, to discuss and answer questions about the planned Metro homeless service center at Mitchell and Milwaukie in the north end of Westmoreland. She attempted to dispel unfounded rumors and misinformation reportedly running rampant online, and assured those present she would “be here every [General] meeting” to continue the conversation.

Matt Hainley then stepped in to explain the donation of a small section of the old Sellwood Bridge’s railing to SMILE, and touched on the options for its placement on our property. At present it is lying on the lawn under a plastic cover, with warning signs advising to “keep off”. Some general conversation on this subject followed.

There being no other business remaining on the agenda or offered from the floor, Margaret Branson moved adjournment, Nanci Champlin seconded the motion, and the motion evidently carried with no objections at 9:13 p.m.