

SMILE Board Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2018

SMILE Station

Main Website

www.SellwoodMoreland.org

Procedural

www.SMILErecords.org

OFFICERS PRESENT: Joel Leib, President; Gail Hoffnagle, Vice President;
Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Milner, Bob Burkholder, Elaine O’Keefe,
Brian Bawol, Tim DuBois, Kim Borcharding

President Joel Leib called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m., asking those present to introduce themselves, around the room. He then asked the Board to review the minutes of both the December 18th Special Board Meeting, and the December 20th Board Meeting. A spelling error was reported in the December 18 minutes, and then Elaine O’Keefe moved these minutes be approved as thus amended, Elizabeth Milner seconded the motion, and this set of minutes was approved with two abstentions and no “nays”. Elaine O’Keefe next moved the December 20 minutes be approved as submitted, and Tim DuBois seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

Scott Kelly, SMILE Transportation Committee Chair, introduced PBOT’s Rich Newlands to present on the options that have been developed so far to address traffic issues arising from commute-time congestion on S.E. Tacoma Street – particularly, endemic cut-through traffic issues. Newlands explained that he was present to seek the input of the SMILE Board on these options, none of which is without drawbacks; and he went on to discuss in detail the key options developed, in the form of a printed matrix he distributed to the Board and to spectators at the meeting – and which is incorporated into these minutes by reference.

Newlands said that he was surprised to discover that one factor driving the extensive cut-through traffic in Sellwood is the politeness of motorists on Tacoma Street, who seem quite willing to let motorists in from the side streets there. He commented PBOT could “carpet bomb” Sellwood with speed bumps, but speed does not seem to be the issue here – average speeds are under 25 MPH – so they would probably have little if any effect in discouraging cut-through traffic.

Newlands remarked that one clever idea arising from the neighborhood meetings on the subject was that of metering northbound traffic on S.E. 17th, at a point south of the Garthwick entrance, with rapid, rhythmic traffic signals (one car per light), in the manner of freeway onramp metering; this has never been done on a surface street, he said, so there is no data on how it works in such a situation. Bob Burkholder, a resident of Garthwick, expressed concern that there might be unintended impacts on Garthwick dwellers by such a practice.

Newlands summarized that, in every idea offered to address the cut-through traffic problem, “there will be winners and losers”. Several members of the SMILE Board, but not all,

seemed in favor of removing the traffic signal at S.E. 6th and replacing it with a “hawk” pedestrian-activated signal; Eric Norberg expressed concern over the traffic nightmare involving in handling high volumes of traffic in and out of Oaks Amusement Park via Tacoma Street at 6th – especially on weekends – if this signal were removed. Tim DuBois suggested that imposing an appropriate adjustable toll charge on use of the Sellwood Bridge would reduce the commuter use of the bridge to a manageable level, which is the root cause of the problem, he pointed out.

The Board decided it was not yet ready to offer guidance on these options to Newlands, but thanked him warmly for having appeared and having defined and discussed the options under consideration. The Board indicated it wanted to stay on top of this issue and the possible solutions, and keep its options open; it wanted to receive public input before taking a position.

The Board then turned to a discussion of a possible part-time SMILE marketing position, specifically oriented towards increasing rentals at Oaks Pioneer Church (and SMILE Station). Referencing the prior discussion at our Special Board Meeting in December, Kim Borcharding reported that she had contacted a neighborhood professional, who had been suggested at that time for the position, but learned she is not available at this time for such an assignment.

Tim DuBois remarked that we should hammer out the details of such a position and filling it only *after* deciding whether to pursue creating such a position or not – “discussing details endlessly, before deciding whether to do it, is handcuffing the Board” – and made a motion to create the position, with the details to be determined; Elizabeth Milner seconded the motion, which then carried with a vote of 8 yes, 1 abstain.

Kim Borcharding next gave a progress report on our “brick sale fundraiser” – we have sold over 80 of the bricks for engraving so far, and she said she has a Valentine’s promotion in mind for February, to be promoted with flyers, lawn signs, and possible school involvement. Kim added that she still wants to see SMILE Station remodeled to aid in its rental effort, and she thinks it might be possible to do this with little or no expense.

There being no further items on the agenda or offered from the Board, Elaine O’Keefe moved the meeting be adjourned, and Bob Burkholder seconded the motion, which carried unanimously at 9:08 p.m.