

# Land: 'We just want them to build something ... that fits the neighborhood'

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"We are not naive to think that it's not going to be built, that the property will never be built," said Dennis Scovel, who bought a house at the corner of Jerome Avenue and 10th Street in the mid-1990s. "We just want them to build something aesthetically that fits the neighborhood."

The neighborhood went through a lot to be designated historic, Scovel said, and neighbors want something that fits in with that historical look of the surrounding Victorian, Craftsman and other historical homes. He said Hanson, during an earlier visit to his house, described a project similar to Krueger's other apartment structures at Mill Pond and Yacht Club.

One thing neighbors are opposed to, Scovel said, is the rezoning of the lots from medium-density R2, which permits single-family homes and duplexes outright and multifamily dwellings on condition, to high-density R3. He and other property owners have shown support for single-family homes on the site.

## History

Riverview Partners acquired the 14 lots in 2006

with an eye toward building an upscale neighborhood on the former Central School site. On the side fronting Jerome Avenue, the plan was to build homes that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act for aging residents, with room to add elevators. The half of the lot fronting Irving Avenue was planned as three-story Victorian- and Craftsman-style homes. The project passed various hurdles in the Astoria Planning Commission, City Hall and Historic Landmarks Commission but ultimately fell victim to the housing market crash during the Great Recession.

The principal agent for Riverview Partners, local developer Mitch Mitchum, was not immediately available for comment.

In 1996, the city had also approved plans for a 28-unit multifamily housing cluster for the property. But the developer died before the project could be started.

Hanson said there is the possibility some of the lots could be separate homes, adding Krueger is leaning toward townhouses and apartments.

"We haven't presented any concepts," Hanson said. "We were hoping that this series of meetings helps us propose a concept."

# Power: State has already helped the project

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A bill in the Legislature earlier this year would have required Portland General Electric and Pacific Power to purchase electricity from WindFloat under 20- to 25-year agreements. The legislation died in the face of opposition by the two companies, industries that use large amounts of power, the fishing industry and the Citizens' Utility Board.

Oregon has already helped the project financially. The Oregon Wave Energy Trust, which received \$1.96 million from the state during the 2013-2015 biennium, awarded a \$99,000 grant to Principle Power which helped the company secure a \$4 million U.S. Department of Energy grant, according to Business Oregon.

Monday was the second, and apparently the last, meeting of Brown's WindFloat advisory committee. On Monday, committee chair and state Rep. Caddy McKeown, D-Coos Bay, instructed members to submit written comments by Dec. 15 to be incorporated into a report to Brown by Jan. 15.

"I was hoping we would not be scheduling another meeting," said McKeown, who spoke little during the meeting on Monday.

In contrast, committee member state Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, peppered executives from Principle Power with questions throughout the two-hour meeting. Johnson asked how much space each floating turbine would cover — executives said each has a radius of 1,000

feet — and why other investors, including the oil company Shell, cannot fill the project's funding gap.

"Shell's got plenty of money," Johnson said. "I don't think there's a lack of interest. Some of us are just concerned, who pays and how much?"

Principle Power CEO Joao Metelo said companies are investing in the technology, but they also need proof that the project can be financed.

The power purchase mandate in the bill in the Oregon Legislature earlier this year, House Bill 2216, could have generated an estimated \$23 million annually for the project, said Oregon Public Utility Commission chief operating officer Michael Dougherty. That would have generated a total of \$460 million to \$575 million for Principle Power, if the utilities had signed 20 to 25-year contracts to buy the electricity.

For residential ratepayers, it could have cost up to 35 cents a month on their power bills.

A two-turbine pilot project could cost \$150 million to \$180 million, and a three-turbine project could cost \$210 million to \$250 million, according to a Principle Power presentation.

Johnson also asked Principle Power executives why they were no longer trying to sell power to the Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas project, which they were exploring a couple years ago.

Kevin Banister, Principle Power's vice president of business development in the Americas and Asia, said the

company approached multiple industrial power purchasers but "there's sticker shock for some of those players as well." Due to delays in the Jordan Cove project, Banister said Principle Power could not secure a power purchase agreement with the developer in time to meet the May 2016 deadline for the federal grant.

Michael Hinricks, director of public affairs for Jordan Cove, gave a different reason why Jordan Cove developers are no longer discussing a power purchase agreement with Principle Power. Hinricks said Jordan Cove was waiting for Principle Power to complete a study of how the offshore wind project would impact the grid.

"There wouldn't be any (discussions) with us, because we're waiting on their interconnect study," Hinricks said. The price of WindFloat's power was also an issue for the Jordan Cove project, although Hinricks said Jordan Cove's

developers were interested in it because "it's supporting green technology."

Jeff Bissonnette, policy director for the Citizens' Utility Board and a registered lobbyist, said perhaps there might be other ways the state could support the project so ratepayers would not directly shoulder as much of the financial burden. Bissonnette reiterated comments by utility representatives that rates should not be used to pay for research and development projects, nor for economic development.

"It seemed like it was the ratepayers of two utilities being asked to kind of bear this research burden in pushing the technology forward," Bissonnette said. "To the extent there are benefits to the state, that there is interest by the state, why isn't there more of a discussion of a shared burden?"

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