

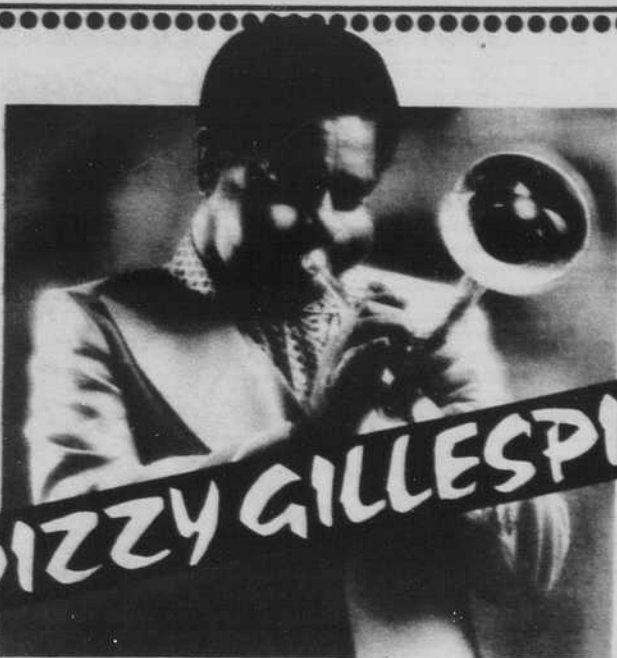
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West University neighborhood may get six new bus shelters

By Rich Burr
Of the Emerald

Controversy over the West University Neighborhood Refinement Plan is far from settled, if Wednesday night's forum on the long-range planning document is any indication.

Harold Lannom, a member of the West University Neighborhood team that wrote the original planning draft, clashed with representatives from the Eugene Planning Commission, Sacred Heart Hospital and the Eugene Chamber of Commerce in a OSPIRG-sponsored forum.

Members — including Lannom — of the neighborhood have withdrawn their support of the plan since the planning commission revised it last fall.

"All the hospital wanted out of the process" was a compromise, said Ed Mann, Sacred Heart's planning director.

And that's what the Eugene Planning Commission gave them, said Eleanor Mulder, a planning commission member.

"We were not acting as brokers between groups," Mulder said. The commission and groups representing area interests created a plan to benefit the whole community, she added.

At issue is expansion of the medical community in the vicinity of Sacred Heart Hospital.

The notion that clinics are "gobbling up the land" is false, Mann said. He cited an independent study that shows clinics occupy only 6 percent of

the West University area.

Basic economic and business principles will keep clinics from over-running the neighborhood and crowding out housing, said Tom Swocum of the Eugene Chamber of Commerce.

Swocum said it's unlikely the medical community will replace present housing, and, moreover, its presence is an economic boon for the WUN and for Eugene.

"The neighborhood is a part of the city of Eugene," Slocum said. He added that the plan "serves the interests of the city as a whole."

But Lannom said the medical community creates a traffic problem to the WUN area.

Two University representatives also voiced opposition to the plan in its present form.

Dave Lesser of the University's off-campus housing office and Dave Rowe of the campus planning office, defended the protection of residential housing.

Lesser said the present plan could harm student interests.

He called for abandonment of the plan unless changes favoring housing are made.

Both Lesser and Rowe suggested more student participation and increased unity between student organizations and the WUN in future planning.

"It's not an 'us and them' situation — them is us," Rowe said of the relationship between the University community and the WUN.

Refinement plan controversy divides neighbors, commission

By Brian Bubak
Of the Emerald

As many as 50 new bus stop shelters may be built in Eugene with money from a special \$100,000 federal grant, says Lane Transit District marketing representative Carla Chambers.

Six of those are scheduled for the West University Neighborhood, which would give it more shelters than any other neighborhood in the city, says Chambers. The federal grant specifies that the money be spent only for bus shelters and other passenger boarding improvements, she added.

LTD will pay for three of the West University shelters, and the neighborhood association will match LTD's three through Community Development Block Grant funds and a Federal Aid Urban Grant that was awarded to the community through LTD.

Block grant funds were given to the city and then placed "under the umbrella of the neighborhood," says Marshall Landman, West University grant administrator.

The bus shelter additions, which cost \$2,000 each, are part of "nodal" developments in the West University area, Landman says. Nodal developments are areas where people naturally congregate or places that could be made more conducive to congregation.

In addition to the shelters, six wheelchair-accessible concrete pads and three benches will be installed in the West University area along LTD bus routes. The neighborhood association will finance the additions entirely, says Brenda Shea, West University bus shelter implementation director.

Originally, LTD planned to install two bus shelters, but it added one more when the neighborhood association offered to match the bus district with three neighborhood-financed shelters, Landman says.

Shea compiled a photo album of the eight most heavily used bus stops and presented it at a neighborhood meeting, she says. The neighbors then voted for six locations through ballots in the neighborhood newspaper, she added.

"They were real enthusiastic about it," Shea says. "It was a real needed project."

The West University Neighborhood Center at 1458 Ferry Street will receive nodal improvements as well, Landman says. Those developments include a covered bike rack, a highly visible bulletin board, landscape plantings and a barbecue to make the yard more useable for neighbors.

The final designs will be completed in a month, and construction is expected to start in two months, Landman said.

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