

Park: A 'land swap plan' could solve safety issues

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"and bringing a lot of positive activities will combat the negativity with their presence."

Ellis said he did not disagree, but that some of the "positive feeling" on 13th Avenue will be lost if the park is re-opened because the people the park attracted will filter out onto West University's most popular stretch.

"It doesn't take long to overrun the park," Ellis said. "You will start the war over again. The negative potential outweighs the positive potential of doing this. But I don't think you should give up on it."

The WUN board went on to discuss some small improvements they could make before giving their proposal to the city to reopen the park in case it is denied.

University student and board member Kellyn Gross suggested a test run where interested neighbors and board members could start to clean up the park little by little.

"If it doesn't work out and we see problems, then we're not so invested," Gross said.

At the meeting Bob Quinney announced that he and his wife, Leslie, the owners of the land next-door to the park, are planning to tear down the house on the corner of 14th Avenue and Hilyard Street. Part of the proposed rebuilding plan includes a possible land swap that would exchange his corner lot for land facing 14th Avenue Alley. This would improve visibility from the street and close off the back portion of the park.

The Quinneys would also like to build a two- or three-story apartment complex that would include second- and third-floor balconies and windows looking down on the park.

"The reconfiguration would eliminate alley access and improve visibility by making it shallower," said landscape architect Robin Hostick from the City of Eugene Parks Department. Hostick has been working on a plan with the Quinneys and developer Gordon Anslow of Anslow and Degeneault, a design and construction firm in Eugene.

"I would begin to suggest that a land swap would eliminate the problem, but you can increase the success of the park by reconfiguration (because) criminals want places that are out of sight, dark ... as it is right now the park feels like a no-man's land," Anslow said.

"Lots of eyes seems to make people feel safer," Anslow continued. "It's not breaking any new ground to say that if you reconfigure the park it won't be quite as appealing to criminals."

Property owner Bob Quinney said reconfiguration makes sense for everybody.

"It's a win-win, we think. Once (City Councilor David Kelly) hears that the park is behind it and the neighborhood association is behind it, it ... will go a long way."

The board moved to vote on the proposal, which passed unanimously. WUN board member and secretary Deborah Healey then wrote a statement to send to the City Council:

"The West University Neighbors Board supports the proposed land swap by Bob and Leslie Quinney in order to create a shallower, wider park with greater visibility."

Hostick said that the council must approve this before the plan can begin and emphasized the need for community input in the decision.

"We would need councils involved and the neighborhood association showing support; that would be a step in the right direction," Hostick said.

WUN Board Chairman Drix Rixmann said that if WUN Park can make an improvement like this, "it could spread to other parks."

Noting that about 60 percent of West University residents are students, Rixmann said it is extremely important that students get involved.

"If you live here now, it's your community," he said. "People need to feel that it's their neighborhood, because it is. The city wants all input, so just come in and talk."

Healey agreed, "five out of nine board members are students," she said, including ASUO President Adam Walsh.

"The board works well when we have sophisticated representation of students," Healey said. "The students' energy is what restarted (the West University Neighborhood Association)."

The next WUN board meeting is Thursday at 7 p.m. in Central Presbyterian Church located at 555 E. 15th Ave.

Contact Rixmann for more information on how to get involved by calling 485-1585, e-mailing him at Drix@msn.com, or by mail: West University Neighbors c/o 307-1/2 E. 14th Ave. Eugene, OR 97401-4207.

nwilbur@dailyemerald.com

New programs will prepare students for an economy closely tied to East Asia

Oregon has an interdependence with East Asia because of location and similarities in industry

BY GABE BRADLEY
NEWS EDITOR

Several departments at the University are teaming up to better prepare students for the challenges of working in an economy that is closely tied to East Asia.

The enterprise, spearheaded by the University's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies, involves linguistics, political science, history departments and the business school, among others.

The initiative is partially fueled by the projections of economists and business analysts, which claim China will soon overtake the United States as the world's largest market.

"The new economy in Oregon has a huge interdependence on East Asia," said James Bean, dean of the Lundquist College of Business.

Bean said many Oregon firms have operations in East Asia while many East Asian firms have operations in Oregon.

Many businesses in this state have told the business school that they need more students who are comfortable with and informed about East

Asian culture, Bean said.

Bean said the increasing importance of East Asian culture on Oregon businesses has several causes, ranging from geography to a similarity of business types.

"Partly we're on the Pacific rim and partly the economies of China, India and Korea are exploding in the area of high tech — the area that Oregon is very into."

"We have a long-term partnership with Japan at the University," Bean said. "This is partly because East Asian Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences is one of the strongest in the country."

Relying on the strengths of several schools and departments will be vital to the success of the new programs.

"We don't have a lot of international business faculty," Bean said.

Faculty from other parts of the University would be involved in teaching the new programs. Bean said the process has been highly collaborative, in order to "make the whole bigger than the sum of its parts."

However, the final details of the initiative have not yet been decided.

"We're in the process of planning the new programs," Bean said. "We're putting together some proposals for the federal government right now."

The federal grant proposals that would fund the project are due in the fall.

According to Bean, the program will involve learning modules in East Asian culture and East Asian business practices. Also, the program will culminate with a trip to East Asia and tours of several businesses.

"Each year we would do a different emphasis. The first year we have planned is sports business because we already have close contacts with the 2008 Beijing Olympics Committee," Bean said. "And every year we'd do something else, like manufacturing or electronics."

Bean said each year's trip emphasis would be selected by the administration with the help and advice of faculty and students involved.

Estimated participation for the first year of the program is between 20 and 30 students, according to Bean.

Bean said the goal of the initiative is to make participants more competitive in the job market and the global economy.

gabebadley@dailyemerald.com

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