

Portland Development Commission schedules open house at Sears Armory

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Development Commission is holding an open house beginning at 7 p.m. May 8 at the Sears Armory, 2730 S.W. Multnomah Blvd., to discuss future plans for the property.

The U.S. Department of Defense declared the four-acre property "surplus" in 2005. In keeping with standard practice in such cases, the feds are entertaining requests for the property by "the local jurisdiction" (the city of Portland), and have given the city grant funds to develop "a community vision of how the property should be used."

Portland City Council appointed PDC the "local redevelopment authority" to accomplish this task in 2006. The agency is considering three redevelopment proposals for the site, according to PDC's David Sheern.

The first is for a mixed-income housing project that would include units

for people with very low or zero income. The second is for a new Westside Christian High School. The third is a facility that would serve the Portland Office of Transportation, Water Bureau and Bureau of Emergency Management.

PDC held several public meetings about the future use of the property last year. "We received a lot of good input," Sheern said. "There was some concern about the effect on traffic. There was support for use as a high school and support for housing. There were a lot of comments that the site should be used well, and that space be retained for community use."

At press time PDC is looking at bringing the issue before City Council sometime in late May. Sheern pointed out that the federal government retains

title to the property at this time, and is not compelled to donate it or sell it to the city.



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