

OHSU contemplates adding up to 200 hospital beds in Portland

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

One of the corollaries of Murphy’s Law is that before you can do anything, there’s something else that you have to do first. So it is with the Oregon Health and Sciences University, which wants to add another 150 to 200 hospital beds to their campus.

OHSU spokesperson Brian Newman told the Homestead Neighborhood Association last month that the hospital has considered seven possible sites for such a building, six of them on their Marquam Hill campus and one in the South Waterfront.

This last dropped out early, he said. “It seems to make sense to put our outpatient facilities in the South Waterfront, our inpatient facilities on the hill,” he said. A new wing in South Waterfront would be “like building a brand new hospital cut off from all its support services,” he said. It would also create “confusion in the public’s mind” about where to find these services.

Another possibility was the current site of the School of Dentistry. OHSU eventually hopes to relocate this, and many similar teaching-related facilities, to its proposed new campus in the South Waterfront.

This, in turn, would free up space on Marquam Hill for hospital buildings there. However, they concede that bringing this to fruition will take years if not decades to accomplish. In the meantime, Newman said, replacing the Dentistry School is “a \$200 million problem” standing in the way of putting anything else on that site.

At the moment, he said, the idea that “rose to the top” is an expansion of the Kohler Pavilion, best known as the top terminus of the school’s aerial tram. This is consistent with the Marquam Hill Master Plan, he said. So far there is no cost estimate for the project.

Homestead land use chair Anton Vetterlein told Newman that Southwest Terwilliger Boulevard is “a tremendous city asset. We resisted OHSU’s

expansion so close to it.” Failing that, it persuaded the City to attach a number of conditions to the Kohler Pavilion’s permit relating to neighborhood impact mitigation, and some of these have not been fulfilled. “We’d oppose any expansion of Kohler until these conditions are met,” he told Newman.

In fact, Michelle Seward of the Bureau

of Development Services sent OHSU a notice of code violations on July 2. All violations related to failure to adhere to conditions attached to the Kohler Pavilion’s building permits and including failure to provide landscaped screening and screening for lights.

In a related matter, former Homestead chair Rich Davidson inquired about

rumors that Ronald McDonald House may soon leave the Marquam Hill campus. Newman replied, “The model for Ronald McDonald has changed. They now expect the university to build facilities for them.” For this, he said, “The financing just isn’t there.” He quickly added, “No one at OHSU wants them to go away. They’re an asset.”



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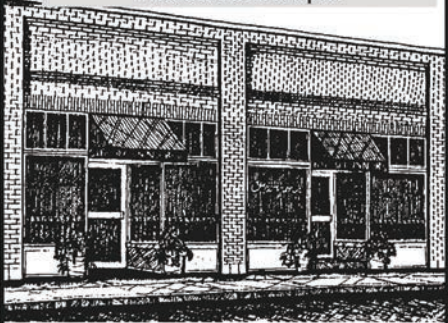
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