

SERVING
Burlingame • Capitol Hill
• Garden Home • Glen
Cullen • Hillsdale
• South Portland
• Multnomah Village
• Raleigh Hills • Vermont
Hills • West Portland

The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

INSIDE:
South Portland
Neighborhood
Association
wins Spirit of Portland
Award--Page 3

Volume No. 17, Issue No. 3

www.multnomahpost.com

Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

January 2009

Multnomah Village temporarily renamed "Ice Station Zebra"

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

What the folks on Channel 8 called the Arctic Blast began before the last-minute Christmas shoppers had even started. It first snowed a few inches in Portland on Sunday, December 14. Then the temperature plunged into the teens and twenties—for days.

Getting around was treacherous at best.

A ton of snow fell on Thursday and Friday, December 18-19. And it kept snowing. And it stayed on the ground with low temperatures until Christmas Day.

Suddenly snow shovels and tire chains and studded snow tires were all the rage. Driveways and other slight inclines were dangerous. Les Schwab and other tire stores were backed for hours.

Many businesses were closed because folks couldn't get to work. Transportation Commissioner and Mayor-elect Sam Adams asked people to help clear the ice and snow

(Continued on Page 6)



Two girls and their dog try sledding along Southwest 52nd Avenue near Taylors Ferry Road, December 21. Additional snow photos on Page 6. (Post photo by Leslie Baird)

Sandy beach, fewer docks among federal changes to South Waterfront Greenway

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Thanks to the feds, and the fish they're trying to protect, the South Waterfront Greenway will have to undergo some pretty drastic changes. That was the message that Jim Middaugh and Patti Freeman of Portland Parks and Recreation brought to the Portland Design Commission in a briefing last month.

According to Middaugh, because the proposed 100-foot wide Willamette Greenway is near a fish-bearing stream, it must obtain the approval of the National Marine Fisheries Commission.

This agency is demanding that as the price of their approval, the park bureau abandon its plans to use boulders and riprap at the river's edge for

fish habitat. Instead, they insist that the city must demolish the existing river bank and create a slope, with a sandy beach at the water's edge, to allow a more "gentle flow."

"We didn't want to," Middaugh said. The bureau had already invested considerable time and money in a plan that combined fish and bird habitat with trails and other human recreation facilities – and, as Middaugh said, "We only have 100 feet to work with."

However, they have devised a new plan whereby the beach ends in a "sheet pile" (sheets of steel) wall, to the west of which the bureau can program the greenway at the existing elevation. Some of the plans for this area will need to be compromised but, Freeman assured the commission, "There may be trail modifications, but we'll retain separated paths" for bikes

and pedestrians as planned.

The biggest potential change concerns a proposed dock for light watercraft launching planned for the foot of Southwest Gibbs Street, one of the most prized features of the old plan. According to Middaugh, Marine Fisheries frowns on such facilities because they provide shelter for predators of young salmon.

In fact, he said, there is currently litigation brought by environmental groups over plans to install a dock in Lake Oswego. If Portland wants a new dock, he was told, it would have to remove one of comparable size somewhere on the river.

Freeman said the original Greenway plans called for four docks. "We don't know if we can get one approved," she said. Commission member Gwen Millius said, dryly, "They have an odd sense of scale to go after a dock that small."

Middaugh said that the new plans may allow the public to get much closer to the water; the old plans did not include this sort of beach, and the area closest to the bank was occupied

by dense vegetation. The sheet pile will be hidden behind vegetation.

Some of the trees planned for the Greenway will now be planted below the sheet pile and, because their base will be considerably lower, they will have less impact on views, an issue raised by some South Waterfront condominium owners.

"There is an upside to this," Middaugh said. The new plans may affect the project's cost, but since they will also be minus some planned features, "It won't be a 100 percent increase," he said.

Commission chair Lloyd Lindley, while not criticizing the Park Bureau's response to the federal demands, was disturbed by the changes. "Will this vision, which so many people have invested in, be pulled apart and micro-managed?" he asked. He also wondered about "continuity" with other developed parts of the greenway. Middaugh suggested the Commission draft a letter expressing these concerns.

Landscape architect Carol Meyer
(Continued on Page 4)



A section of the 100-foot-wide South Waterfront Greenway along the Willamette River. (Photo courtesy of Portland Parks and Recreation)

Don't forget to renew your subscription. Form on Page 2.

The Southwest Portland Post
7825 SW 36th Ave Suite #203
Portland, OR 97219