

# Hillsdale neighbors discuss appropriate response to snowstorms

By Polina Olsen  
The Southwest Portland Post

The January 7 meeting of the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association started with a discussion of the recent snowstorm. One attendee's father fell and broke his hip, while many worried about the effect on local merchants (which was, in fact, devastating).

Some got together with neighbors for potlucks and solstice parties. One woman reported thousands of dollars in water damage and many commented on the benefits of Food Front, a neighborhood grocery within walking distance.

Don Baack opened a general discussion of how the city handled snow removal during the recent storms. Mike Roach, owner of Paloma Clothing and president of the Hillsdale Business and Professional Association, thanked everyone who shopped in Hillsdale during December explaining the snow made it "a tough month for all merchants."

Most attendees felt Portland did not have a system to deal with heavy snow. Several people complained that the city plowed snow onto sidewalks particularly at bus stops. Don Baack suggested designated spots to pile snow in future. Others suggested Wilson High athletes stand by for emergency shoveling.

Rick Seifert, editor of the Hillsdale News, suggested that the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. (SWNI) Emergency Preparedness Team take up the issue noting a lack of organized response during the snowstorm.

One attendee said that although the

## HILLSDALE NOTEBOOK

storm caused inconvenience, the city's limited budget demanded prioritized spending. "I don't want the city to allocate \$5 million on (snow) ploughs that are used once every five years," he said.

Additional agenda items for discussion included:

**Terwilliger Boulevard Closure:** The October 8, 2008 landslide on Burlingame Place destroyed several homes and blocked Terwilliger Boulevard. Insurance companies have approved funding for the removal of two destroyed homes.

**Capitol Highway Cycle Track and On-Street Parking:** This proposal would add a raised pedestrian walk and raised bike path along Southwest Capitol Highway between Sunset Boulevard and the Wilson High School entrance on Vermont Street. Right now, the bike path is at the street level.

Don Baack, chair of the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association, voiced support explaining it would look like a wide sidewalk. He said it could open the way for on-street parking since a raised bike path would prevent people parking in the bike lane. Several others agreed with the proposal citing increased cyclist safety.

**Speed bumps along Capitol Hill Road:** Will Stevens, program manager of traffic operations for the Portland Office of Transportation, discussed a proposal for adding speed bumps along Southwest Capitol Hill Road.

Stevens noted the Hillsdale Neigh-



Will Stevens (left), PDOT traffic operations program manager and Don Baack show proposed Southwest Capitol Hill Road speed bump placement. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

borhood Association, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, and at least 67 percent of the affected residents along Capitol Hill Road must approve the project.

The residents and neighborhood must provide the approximately \$3000 per speed bump. The city has two proposals, one with nine speed bumps and one with eleven. Further discussions are planned. [Editor's Note: See separate story on Page 2]

**Rieke Elementary School Soccer Field:** Marlys Mock from Portland Public Schools and Bob Downing, Portland Parks and Recreation Support Services Manager, discussed replacing the Rieke Elementary School (1405 SW Vermont St) soccer field. The city closed the field

last September due to lead concerns but reopened it in December after deeming it safe. The heavily used field is worn five years beyond city guidelines and should be replaced, according to Downing. The new turf cost estimate is \$750,000.

**Southwest Trails Liability Issues:** The Southwest Trails Committee, the City of Portland, and abutting property owners worry about potential lawsuits from trail users. Don Baack reported "tremendous support downtown" for SW Trails and that liability was a matter of sorting through complicated rules with city officials. He hopes SW Trails will emerge from the discussions with a clear charter.

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