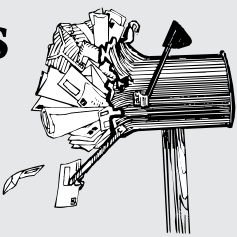


An update on the Sears Armory site from the housing bureau

Letters to the Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
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Thank you for your engagement with the public process involved in determining the best use for the Sgt. Jerome Sears US Army Reserve Center.

Your involvement has been critical in helping the City of Portland think about important neighborhood needs, and we appreciate your input. I know for many of you, it has been some time since you last heard about the City's plans to reuse the base.

I'd like to give you a quick update about our approach for the site. As you know, following our community

process and initial due diligence as authorized by the Department of Defense, the Portland City Council approved exploration of a reuse plan, with affordable housing as the first priority in 2008.

Since that time, we've been hit hard by the recession, and many housing and real estate development projects have been stalled or cancelled altogether in our region because they could not secure public or private financing in a tightening credit market.

City Council formed the new Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) with a mandate to rationalize long-term housing policy and investment direction.

After analyzing our capital resources against the level of investment needed to undertake the planned development in the current financial climate, PHB has determined that we simply lack necessary capital funding to support the hoped-for affordable housing project on this site.

Our determination is based on many factors, not the least of which is our current understanding that the City is very unlikely to secure the site at no cost, which was an original hope to make a

new development financially feasible.

Housing Commissioner Nick Fish and I both regret that we've come to this determination, as we see clearly a growing need for housing that's affordable across the city, including areas like Multnomah Village in Southwest Portland.

Most of you know that we remain committed to a redevelopment of Hillside Terrace by the Housing Authority of Portland, and we are moving forward with a new housing development in South Waterfront, both of which will address some of the pressing needs in the community.

PHB's next step is to return to City Council with a report that we are unable to move forward with housing at

the site. We have informed the Mayor Adams of this determination, and his staff have begun examining other potential reuse plans, including revisiting the concept that the site could fulfill the City's need for a Westside emergency response center. We have also informed the Department of Defense about our determination and desire to explore other reuse possibilities.

I expect you'll be hearing soon about next steps for considering an alternate public use and how the neighborhood will be involved. I will work with my City colleagues to keep all interested parties updated as that moves forward.

Margaret S. Van Vliet
Director, Portland Housing Bureau

Neighbors clean up after contractor on Multnomah Blvd sewer project

The sewer job along Southwest Multnomah Boulevard is complete and I see that it has been tested and found satisfactory by the Bureau of Environmental Services.

Thus, I want to make a note that (while) the people that did the flagging of traffic did a very good job at their work I just want you to know that it was the people of the neighborhood

that cleaned up after them.

Every Saturday at the 40th and Garden Home Road intersection and along the parking areas there would be a 5-gallon bucket of all kinds of trash that was picked up after them. This went on week after week until the job was complete.

I am not sure but this could have happened in other areas as well. So thank the neighborhood that cleaned up their mess.

RW Jepson
Southwest Garden Home Road



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