

Lines drawn on proposed Lake Oswego to Portland streetcar

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

As planners and politicians move toward votes on the proposed Lake Oswego to Portland streetcar line, the lines for and against are being drawn, and the South Portland neighborhood finds itself in the unlikely position of being a defender of the project.

The project's Citizen Advisory Committee may make its recommendation at its next meeting, 5 p.m. February 7 at the Easter Seals Building, 5757 S.W. Macadam Ave. If necessary an additional meeting will be held February 15 somewhere in Lake Oswego.

Based on their discussions during the last two months, the CAC is expected to endorse the streetcar extension. In its last two meetings a majority of the group heaped scorn on two alternative proposals, No Build and an Enhanced Bus.

At a December meeting the group dubbed the No Build the "Head in the Sand" option, predicated on the theory that the corridor operates well now and will do so in the future.

The Enhanced Bus would cost \$51.1 million, as compared to the official cost of \$379 to \$458 million for the streetcar extension. (The latter, for the sake of local match for anticipated federal funds, includes \$97 million for the Willamette Shore Line right of way, which is already publicly owned.)

However, the bus is anticipated to attract just 730,000 new transit trips compared to 1.1 million for the streetcar, to take 39 minutes to travel the route compared to 30 to 33 minutes for the streetcar, and to cost \$1.54 million more to operate than the streetcar.

In addition, South Portland resident and CAC member Kerry Chipman told the group last month, "The enhanced bus will mean loss of service." Not only will it have five fewer stops, but also "A bus that fills up in Lake Oswego will not stop for us in South Portland."

Another CAC member, Beverly Bookin, said that on a recent trip, "By the time we left Lake Oswego it was standing room only, and by the time we got to South Portland there was no room for anyone." With more capacity, a streetcar can handle more people, she said.

Matt Brown, a former City of Portland transportation planner, focused

on the bus's greater operating costs. To maintain it, "TriMet would have to cannibalize the rest of the system. It's not a good deal for the region."

Developer Verne Rifer took a different tack: the streetcar is a better stimulus for development. "We have a pretty good bus system, but without help we'll be seeing Johns Landing at best remain fallow, at worst see disinvestment," he said.

"It's really suffering and the retail isn't doing well. Even in boom times there were numerous vacant lots on the river not being developed. I don't see an enhanced bus contributing to redevelopment or preservation," said Rifer.

In the wider world, however, the project faces strong opposition. In the wealthy Dunthorpe community, through which the streetcar will pass and which has always been hostile to the project, opponents are reportedly fundraising for a major legal fight.

Lake Oswego was considered a supporter, but in the last election three candidates ran for City Council on anti-streetcar platforms, and two were elected to the seven-person body.

At a meeting last month of the Portland Streetcar Advisory Committee, Rifer compared these communities to "Beirut," and South Portland to "the liberation of Paris" in their attitudes toward the project. This is ironic because South Portland's stance has been less than wildly enthusiastic.

Indeed, it is conditioned on most of the route through their territory being located on Southwest Macadam Avenue rather than the Willamette Shore right of way, as project engineers would prefer. The latter route would be faster and easier to operate, but would have more impact on existing homes and less benefit to businesses.

The Lake Oswego opposition is in fact based largely on the idea that the streetcar would be too effective a development tool. Opponents have charged that it would create "30 Washington Squares" in the town. Aside from being grossly exaggerated, consultant Doug Oblatz told the project CAC, "Washington Square is a shopping mall, and no one is suggesting that for Lake Oswego. It was used to get people's attention."

A related issue is the future of a proposed bike and pedestrian trail through the territory. There is virtually universal support for this. However, there is some

(Continued on Page 6)



Portland Streetcar stops at Gibbs Street in the South Waterfront neighborhood. (flickr file photo courtesy of pchurch)

POST CLASSIFIED ADS

Lessons

MUSIC LESSONS = HIGHER SATs

Extraordinary Piano and Violin Lessons.
Home of the Complete Instruction Method.
Visit www.EliasonMusic.com or
call Eliason School of Music. (503)293-2390

Marketing

Creative Services

Logo---Ad---Website---Sign
Brochure---Business Card
Writing. Design. Production.

Call 503-245-8148 to discuss
your needs. I can do it all, or
assist you. Local. Since 1981.

www.NealLubow.com

Real Estate

Multnomah Village Craftsman

Fully Finished 3 bedrooms, 2
baths with Fireplace & Jetted
Tub. 2 Porches, Fenced Yard.

3006 SW Carolina - \$344,900

Amber Turner
Living Room Realtors
503-804-1261

Wellness Directory

Massage

Healing Touch Massage

Dorothy Cundall, LMT, CNA, MA; LIC #5316
Energy healing • reiki • therapeutic massages • reflexology •
pranic healing • care facilities
Holiday Specials • Gift Certificates • Visa & Mastercard
3836-B SW Hall Blvd
503-740-3670 or 503-629-5187



David Klick, LMT
Advanced Massage Therapy
Since 1992
License# 3927

Deep Soothing Massage
Garden Retreat Setting

by appointment
503.977.3454
www.advancedlmt.com

Psychics

★ Lady of Fortune ★
Psychic Consultant
★ Psychic Tarot Readings ★
★ 503-477-9509 ★
Email: ourladyoffortune@aol.com
9519 SW Barbur • Portland, OR 97219

Legal Notice

The Metro Council is soliciting applications for the position of Metro Councilor for District 6

Qualified applicants must be registered voters within District 6 for at least one year at the time of the appointment. Metro District 6 covers portions of Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland.

Application materials and instructions can be found online at www.oregonmetro.gov/district6 or picked up at the Metro Council office, located at 600 NE Grand Avenue in Portland, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Completed applications must be received at Metro no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2011. Qualified applicants will be interviewed by the Metro Council at a public meeting to be held on Wednesday, Feb. 16, beginning at 5 p.m. at the David Douglas School District headquarters, located at 1500 SE 130th Ave. in Portland. The Metro Council may vote to appoint a new Metro Councilor at that meeting or hold its vote over to a later date.

For more information, visit
www.oregonmetro.gov/district6 or
call 503-797-1508

OREGON SCHOOL of MASSAGE

Promoting better health through quality touch.

Surprise your Valentine with...

Couples Massage

Feb 12, \$175/couple
Sat 9am-5pm



Spring Term
begins
April 4th!



9500 SW Barbur Blvd. #100
Portland, OR 97219
503-244-3420 or 1-800-844-3420
www.OregonSchoolofMassage.com

Interested in becoming a Massage Therapist?
Call (800) 844-3420 to register for a
free Massage Training Preview:

Tue. Feb 1st at 6:30pm
Sat, Feb 24th at 10am