

New sidewalks and bike lanes slated for Multnomah Boulevard

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Bureau of Transportation held an open house last month on proposed new sidewalks and bike lanes on Southwest Multnomah Boulevard. Virtually none of the people who came and either spoke to staff or signed written forms were against the proposed \$4.5 million Phase One program. Some were disappointed there isn't more.

Project manager Rich Newlands told *The Post* that quite a few people were disappointed that sidewalks were proposed only for the north side of the boulevard. Part of the City's motivation, he said, was to stretch inadequate resources as far as possible.

Hillsdale and Southwest Trails activist Don Baack noted that the plans call for bike lanes on both sides of the boulevard, and suggested that the south side be designated a combined "bike-ped" facility. "That's the way it will be used anyway," he said.

Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. land use chair Marianne Fitzgerald was disappointed that the sidewalks extended only from Southwest 22nd to 31st avenues.

"I'm glad that they're designing this out to 40th [The stretch from 31st to 40th avenues would have to wait for Phase Two funding sometime in the future] and glad that we're finally getting some sidewalks, but I would have liked to see them come closer to Multnomah Village," she told *The Post*. City staff has "admitted they're picking the low-hanging fruit, the easiest to do."

Baack had several other suggestions. One was a bike boulevard from Multnomah to Southwest Troy Street at 25th Avenue, with a signal at Troy Street and Multnomah Boulevard, to provide access to the Hillsdale neighborhood.

Another was a new bikeway from Multnomah south to Southwest Barbur Boulevard connecting to an existing

signal at 24th Avenue, this last as a more direct route to the newly-remodeled Safeway Market. Finally, he called for an outdoor drinking fountain, with a spout for dogs, at Safeway.

Newlands said he agreed, at least in principle, with the proposal for a new route to Safeway, saying that using existing routes involve either unsafe practices or "a lot of out-of-direction travel."

Noting that Southwest Portland has 44 arterials without sidewalks, Fitzgerald said grimly, "One down, 43 to go."

Part of Multnomah Boulevard to be repaved

With the installation of new pressure sewer lines and water mains under Southwest Multnomah Boulevard virtually complete, the thoughts of City representatives and neighbors has turned to thoughts of making the battleground "good as new."

Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., and the Ash Creek Neighborhood Association have both called on the City to completely repave the street, not just patch over the parts that had been dug up.

Last month Bureau of Environmental Services spokesperson Stephen Sykes told *The Post* that the City has agreed to a full repaving of Multnomah between Southwest 31st and 45th avenues.

"It was in poor condition when we started our project," Sykes said. "This is in the long-term good for everyone." However, Sykes said, BES did not agree to the same full-pavement treatment for Multnomah from Southwest 45th to 69th avenues, as Ash Creek requested, because it was not in as bad a shape.

Ash Creek chair Jack Klinker told *The Post* he was not as concerned about this, since the City has plans to repave the street in the near future anyway. He was disappointed that BES would not fully repave lower Multnomah until the weather improves in the spring.



Multnomah resident Kim Isaacson (left) talks with a City of Portland transportation planner at the Multnomah Boulevard Open House, Feb. 17. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

South Portland Jail

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use to move forward."

Both Leonard and Mayor Sam Adams voted for the amended resolution, Leonard without comment. Commissioner Dan Saltzman was absent.

"Four out of four. You can't beat that," a smiling Davis said after the vote. He later added, "This is the first time I've been this pleased in a long time. This took a lot of work, but I wasn't alone." He gave credit to fellow South Portland board members Kerry Chipman, Bill Danneman, and Kelly Doyle.

As Fish pointed out, the new requirement does not mean that the proposed detention facilities will not be built.

It seems unlikely that this would be acceptable to some South Portland residents, especially parents of the new Southwest Charter School across the street, under any conditions. Davis suggested that the length of the process alone might defeat the development.

Leonard later told *The Post*, "I fear that many people who opposed this facility will assume that they won. This facility will inevitably be approved, and when it is those people will be even angrier than before."

Leonard had wanted to simply attach some conditions as part of Council's approval, "but I didn't have the votes. A majority of Council had already decided that this should have a conditional use."

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