

Portland planning fair at the Oregon Zoo called 'crowded, festive and noisy'

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability last month kicked off the latest phase of the Portland Plan process with four public "fairs," including one on March 6 at the Oregon Zoo.

Mayor Sam Adams, who oversees the bureau, officially opened the fair, and played the drums of one of several ethnic musical groups who performed. About two dozen community groups and public agencies had tables offering information; these varied with each fair and, at the zoo, included the National College of Naturopathic Medicine.

Children's activities included a supervised petting zoo, featuring an Asian lizard and a baby python.

The main business of the day was discussions and surveys of strategies in four subject areas: Healthy Neighborhoods, Education, Economic Prosperity and Affordability, and Equity.

The strategies contained in the last called for equity in the apportionment of City resources, opportunities, and provision of basic services among geographic areas of the city as well as ethnic groups.

The Economic Prosperity and Affordability strategies included the development and preservation of educational and health institutions, industrial operations, trade and transportation industries, "green" enterprises, and local small businesses. It also called for helping individual households remain economically viable.

The Education section called for a



A group of Southwest folks meets to discuss Healthy Neighborhoods at the Portland Planning Fair. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

variety of strategies under the heading "Cradle to Career," all intended to give young people the training to be "self-sufficient" by age 25. High school graduates should be equipped to pursue a college education whether they choose to or not, since this level of training and literacy will be necessary for any other family-wage job.

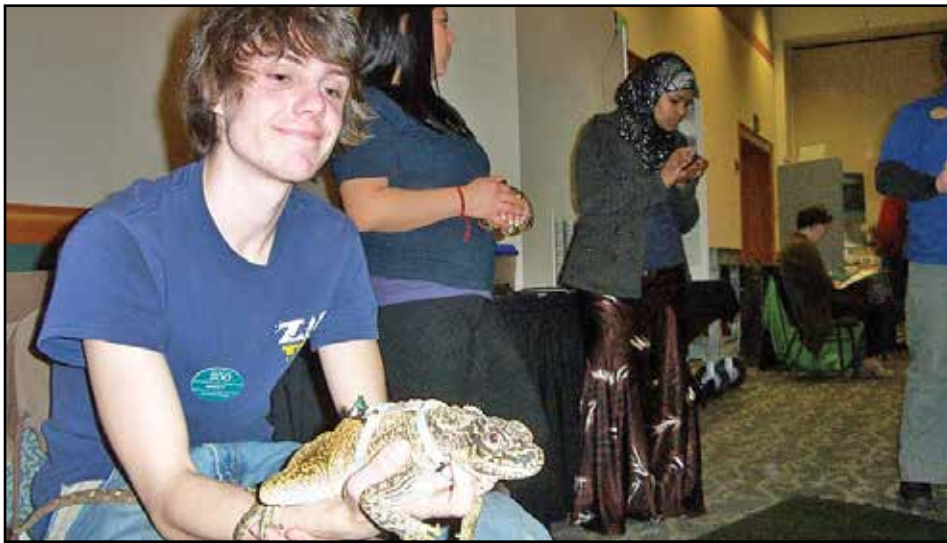
The Education strategies called for dealing with cultural disadvantage and family problems that could get in the way of academic achievement. They also called for greater integration of schools into the communities around them, and more community-related use of school property.

The Healthy Neighborhoods component was an extension of an earlier

direction toward creation of "20 minute neighborhoods," in which most basic needs are located within a 20-minute walk of most residents. One goal called for public acquisition of "high-priority natural areas" in, among others, the Tryon and Fanno creek drainages and Willamette Greenway. Another strategy called for creation of "greenways" connecting Hillsdale and Multnomah among other locations.

Unlike the other Portland Plan components, feedback here was more like a public open house, with interaction limited to written responses and one-on-one interactions with staff, than organized discussions. At the Oregon Zoo fair, planner Marie Johnson, who

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Mikey, an Oregon Zoo volunteer, holds an Asian lizard named Imelda at the petting zoo at the Portland Planning Fair. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

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