

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Lake Oswego to Portland streetcar route more to neighbors' liking

The long-proposed Lake Oswego to Portland streetcar route has been given a new lease on life thanks to a new study, one that pleases South Portland residents for other reasons.

Earlier this year the Portland and Lake Oswego city councils called for further study of the controversial route despite vocal opposition in both cities.

Even Council members who voted for further study said they were not completely sold on the project and, in particular, were concerned about its projected \$460 million price tag.

Last month Art Pearce of the Portland Bureau of Transportation told Portland Streetcar Inc.'s Citizen Advisory Committee that new studies had reduced the capital cost to just \$200 million.

Details of the new analysis were not available at press time, but they did include a shorter terminus in Lake Oswego, initial acquisition of fewer cars providing less frequent service, and discounting the acquisition cost of the Willamette Shore Trolley right of way, valued at nearly \$100 million but already publicly owned.

Another feature of the study is that it puts more of the streetcar route through South Portland on



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

Southwest Macadam Avenue rather than the Willamette Shore right of way. The switchover would occur at Southwest Lowell Street rather than Hamilton as previously proposed, Pearce said.

South Portland activists feel the Macadam route would allow the streetcar to provide service and incentive for development where it would do the most good. The Willamette Shore Right of Way would take it, in some cases, within a few feet of residential bedroom windows.

South Portland activist Bill Danneman told Pearce, "It's only taken us four years to get to this place!"

Neighborhood coalition weighs grant applications

As *The Post* went to press last

month, the staff and board of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. were contemplating how to disperse the latest round of Neighborhood Small Grants.

Under this program the City of Portland annually disperses money from its general fund through the Office of Neighborhood Involvement to SWNI and six other neighborhood offices and coalitions.

They in turn use it to award grants to local community groups for special projects. Among other things, these projects are intended to "increase the capacity" of the group making the request, "encourage participation by under-represented communities," and encourage partnerships.

This year SWNI was allotted \$23,000. They received 23 applications requesting a grand total of \$36,000.

Gibbs Street Pedestrian Bridge half complete

Last month the Portland Bureau of Transportation and its contractors installed the third of five horizontal girders on the proposed Gibbs Street Pedestrian Bridge, creating a span more than halfway across the space between Southwest Kelley Street and Macadam Avenue.

Project Manager Jean Senechal Biggs of PBOT said that the project is on track for completion by March.



A photo simulation of the Gibbs Street pedestrian bridge as it crosses Interstate 5. (Courtesy Portland Bureau of Transportation)

Coalition board members fear community budget cuts

Anticipating bad economic times ahead, Portland Mayor Sam Adams has asked City bureaus to prepare budgets that reflect an eight percent cut from the 2011-2012 level.

Some southwest community ac- (Continued on Page 7)

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