Friends group fights to save Fulton Park Community Center

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

I met with Moses Ross at a coffee shop in Multnomah Village in mid-January to discuss the fate of Fulton Park Community Center.

Originally built in 1914 as Fulton Park Elementary School, in 1958 the school was closed and the property and building were leased by the Portland School District to the City of Portland. That long-term lease continued until 1999 when the City purchased the building and property.

Located at 68 SW Miles St, not far from Barbur Boulevard, the property includes a 1.62-acre park, offices for staff, four classrooms, a full kitchen, and a gymnasium with a stage that is also used as a cafeteria and auditorium.

"It's one of those fundamentals that a community needs to have, right up there with sidewalks and sewer lines," said Ross.

"My daughter took preschool classes there," said Ross. "They had an amazingly low teacher-student ratio. The quality of education for a public facility is fantastic."

Ross, chairman of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, said a "friends" group has developed with some 75 members. The group has a Facebook page called "Save Fulton Park Community Center and Preschool."

Ross said that the activities held at the Center include an indoor park, folk dancing, community gatherings and city-run volleyball. "It doesn't mean that you have to use it, but it is there if you want to go."

To raise funds to cover overhead, Ross said better marketing was needed to targeted groups that could use the building, particularly those within a two to five mile radius.

Ross said he would like to see Fulton Park CC connect with the Multnomah Arts Center and the Southwest Community Center at Gabriel Park, so that Fulton could pick up overflow programming.

Additionally, a foundation could be formed to provide necessary funding. "I would love to see a public-private partnership," said Ross.

For more information on this subject, read Lee Perlman's news story on Page 1.

Letters to the Editor

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Obama envisions an economy that works for the '100 percent'

President Barack Obama [in his State of the Union address to Congress, January 24] focused on our most important challenge as a nation: how to make America work for working Americans again.

For the last three and half decades, the wealthy have done very well, while the middle class has flat-lined or worse. I agree with the President that much more needs to be done to help rebuild the American middle class and support our working families.

I am heartened that President Obama realizes that more needs to be done to take on the foreclosure meltdown. The last three years have seen modest measures that have failed to stop the massive wave of foreclosures that have overwhelmed many communities.

We must bring the same energy and commitment that was used to save the financial sector in 2008 and 2009 to help stabilize and restore our housing market. With five to eight million more foreclosures on the horizon, we must do all that we can to keep families in their homes.

It's the right thing to do for those families and it's essential for sustained economic recovery. This recession started with the collapse of the housing market, and until we deal with the foreclosures, underwater mortgages, and falling home values, we won't get our economy back on track.

If we're going to re-make our economy to once again make opportunity and prosperity for middle class families and small businesses the top priority, we have to end the abuses and excesses on Wall Street that caused our economic crisis.

That's exactly what we aimed to do with the Merkley-Levin provisions to end high-stakes gambling with taxpayer-backed deposits. I'm glad President Obama reaffirmed his support for this common-sense rule and the other rules of the road that will bring accountability and stability back to our banking system.

I also appreciate the President's emphasis on rebuilding our manufacturing base. In the last twenty years we have seen millions of jobs swept away overseas. That is unacceptable.

If we don't build things in America, we won't have a middle class in America. Unfair trade practices by China are driving a huge loss of

(Continued on Page 3)

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