

Naturopathic college opens new downtown research facility, laboratory

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Fresh on the heels of completing their new master plan, the National College of Naturopathic Medicine opened their new Helfgott Research Institute in downtown Portland. It was a special day for college supporters, Ashcreek neighborhood activist Dorothy Gage in particular.

The 19,200 square foot building at

2220 SW First Ave was an NCNM community clinic until 2009, when those services were moved to their Lair Hill main campus.

Renovation of the building cost \$1.5 million, paid for from a variety of sources including the Meyer Memorial Trust and Don Helfgott, for whom the facility is named.

NCNM president David Schleich said that natural medicine as practiced in the United States, "after being a secret for 55 years is attracting atten-

tion as another way to assure good health long-term."

NCNM now works collaboratively with the Oregon Health and Sciences University and Portland State University. It also offers a Master of Science in Integrative Medical Research, the only such degree in the United States.

Dr. Heather Swickey, NCNM dean of research, said that when she first started, "Students did research on their own. They did fabulous work and received no credit for it."

Among other things, the institute looks at the positive and negative effects of various foods and the way it is prepared on individuals and the population as a whole.

Kim Thomas of Meyer Memorial Trust said, "The case for interactive medicine is so strong it can't be denied," and work on food diets and preparation is especially important "for people without a lot of resources."

To further this work, the building contains a food preparation area called Charlee's Kitchen. This is in honor of major donors Bob and Charlee Moore,



Dignitaries including Charlee and Bob Moore (center) and Dorothy Gage (right) use a giant scissors to cut a ribbon at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine's Helfgott Center in October. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

the owners of Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods, who have contributed a total of \$1.35 million.

Other major donors were sisters Dorothy and the late Marjorie Gage, both of whom received treatment for cancers at NCNM. The college is naming a laboratory at the new facility for Marjorie.

Sometimes in tears, Dorothy Gage said of her sister, "Almost everyone who took care of her became part of our family. Marge was totally dedicated to naturopathic medicine. She was an interesting mix of things. She was quiet, and didn't want to be the center of attention except on her terms. She would be overwhelmed if she were here today, as am I."

Design Commission approves new pump station for Willamette Park

By Lee Perlman
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The Portland Design Commission last month approved the design of a proposed new Fulton Pump Station, due to be built in Willamette Park. The design had no opposition and several public endorsements, including some from people who said they would prefer the facility not be built in the park at all.

Alan Armstrong of the Portland Water Bureau said the pump would serve 16,000 people. It will be located on the site of an existing restroom facility, and will include restrooms of its own.

In response to community input the structure's design was shortened by eight feet from the original, and it will be painted a dark green "in an attempt to make it disappear into the landscaping," Armstrong said.

"We had a lot of input, and based on that we incorporated a lot of changes while keeping true to our core objective of being an asset to the community," he said.

Mike Dowd, architect and Miles Place resident, said he could see the site clearly from his kitchen window. "We really didn't want this in the park at all, we hate to lose park space, but there were compelling reasons for putting it there."

According to Dowd, "Every time we met with staff the building improved. The architects avoided the temptation to make this an attention-getting building."

A proposed new multi-use trail, expected to bring a substantial increase in bicycle and pedestrian traffic, will "change the character of the park," Dowd said. Under the circumstances, the pump station design is "appropriate," he said.

South Portland neighborhood activist Jeanne Galick said planning for the pump station had produced "a lively group discussion. This is a beloved park, and we were aghast that this facility would be placed here. The impulse was to make this disappear - to make it smaller, with dark colors and reduced lighting."

The design also features "bird-friendly" windows, designed to make clear to birds that the windows are a barrier rather than an open space, and discouraging them from trying to fly through. Candace Lawson of the Portland Audubon Society complemented the architects for these efforts.

The Commission voted five to zero to approve the design. Commission member Ben Kaiser said, "I'm swayed by Mike Dowd. He'll be living with this more than us. Since he's in support of this, so am I."

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