

Multnomah Village neighbors fight for corridor at mixed-use forum

PORTLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest residents and leaders attended the city's mixed-use zone forum on Oct. 14 at Wilson High School. The zoning component is part of the larger Portland Comprehensive Plan 2035.

The first public hearing for the comprehensive plan is scheduled for Nov. 19 at 3 p.m. at City Hall (City Council chambers).

Multnomah Village and is slated to be reclassified as a neighborhood center despite repeated requests from the Multnomah Neighborhood Association and Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. that it remain a neighborhood corridor.

Multnomah chair Carol McCarthy explained that this new classification will allow four-story buildings (up to 55 feet) in the central core of the village.

"It is also likely that buildings could go (as high as) five stories," McCarthy said, "depending on what point their allowable heights are measured."

The commercial storefront designation is being eliminated and the city is addressing new zoning restrictions with regards to height and style of buildings.

Barry Manning, senior planner for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, fielded questions and complaints at the recent forum. Manning reminded people that zoning rules were last drafted in 1995.

"Our bureau is addressing population

growth for the next 20 years," Manning explained. "Some of these rules accommodated old bulky buildings that resemble Tillamook cheese blocks with limited use."

The city will make height exceptions for developers who utilize green building and landscaping designs or add public gathering spaces and plazas. Bonus points are awarded for developments that include affordable housing and commercial space.

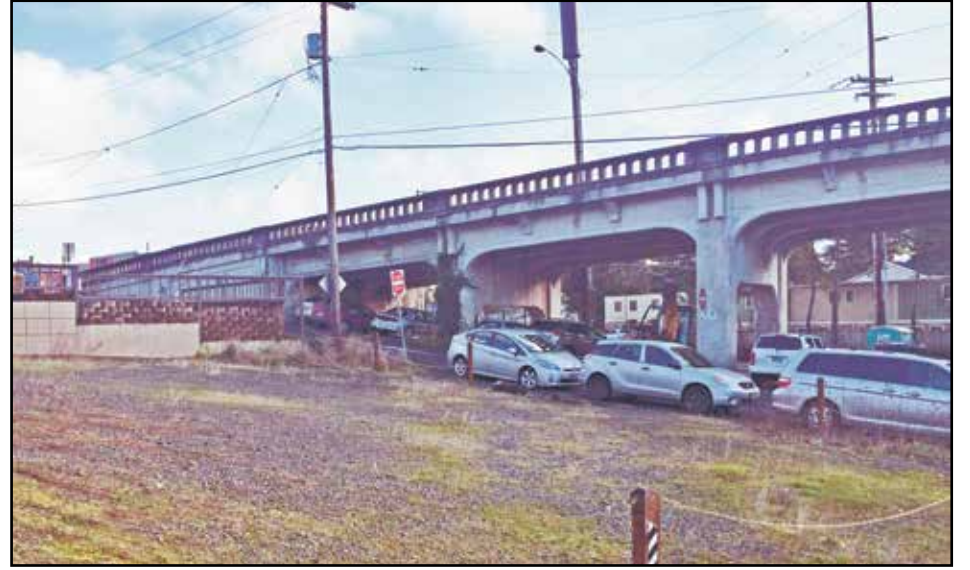
"These projects can have higher stories like the proposed Neighborhood House project," McCarthy explained. The local charity is proposing a four-story development on Southwest Moss Street and 35th Avenue.

McCarthy requested that CS be changed to CM1(d) overlay. This design designation promotes the conservation, enhancement, and continued vitality of areas like Multnomah Village with special scenic, architectural, or cultural value.

This designation requires a design review with community standards that ensure certain types of infill development will be compatible with the neighborhood and enhance the area.

But according to the most recent draft of the comprehensive plan, Multnomah Village is designated CM2 (commercial mixed-use) which allows for medium-scale development in neighborhood centers and corridors.

Manning was asked about a group who walked through Multnomah Village in June 2014. The planning bureau conducted seven different community walks throughout the city then. One of these walkabouts was in Multnomah Village. It included neighborhood and business association leaders, city staff, and several consultants.



Empty lots like this one in Multnomah Village are being eyed by city planners for infill development. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

He explained that questions were proposed to the group about available spaces for potential development. He clarified that there were no developers among the group.

Some neighborhood leaders had heard a comment that a Walmart-type store could be brought to the area near the post office which could have about five-acres available for development. When asked about this, Manning said nothing had been proposed or suggested.

"We are still fine-tuning the comprehensive plan to meet the growing needs of each community," Manning clarified. "Available land is considered opportunity sites."

Manning explained that large sites, like near the post office, could have large retailers, general use, or mixed-use development.

Long-time Multnomah resident Ken

Hittle attended both the forum and the neighborhood meeting the night before. He had two main concerns: keeping the building height to three stories and not changing the look of the village.

Hittle has recently become more active with neighborhood activities especially once he heard the city was thinking of turning the Jerome Sears Armory into a women's homeless shelter.

"Affordable housing is a priority," a participant shouted, "but what is the process the city uses to evaluate our comments?"

Manning said that if comments are inconsistent with the draft policy, then they would not consider it. The comprehensive plan is based on future growth and future resident figures.

"You are proposing suburbia in our
(Continued on Page 6)

Mary Elizabeth Symes

July 30, 1930 – September 5, 2015

London, England born, Mary Elizabeth Symes passed away on September 5, 2015. Mary opened her door to life on July 30, 1930 full of love and joy to parents George and Rosina Mary Richardson. Growing up in the heart of London proper with her brother, George and her sister, Rose, the family survived the London bombings of Hitler in World War II. Young Mary became a child of Operation Pied Piper with the removal of London children from their homes to the English countryside.

A War Bride to US Army Air Force Native Marvin Symes, she made her way across the Pond on the S.S. America to be married in New York's "Little Church Around the Corner" and to write a new chapter of her life story in the small town of Multnomah, Oregon.

Far away from the streets and sounds of London and the Isles, Mary and husband Marvin became a family of four with the birth of two daughters, Mary and Maureen. Multnomah quickly embraced "the Brit" and she worked in grocery for her adult years while taking care of home and family. She was a strong worker and friend to the Feuz's John's Market, first on Main Street Multnomah and then in the new store on Multnomah Boulevard.

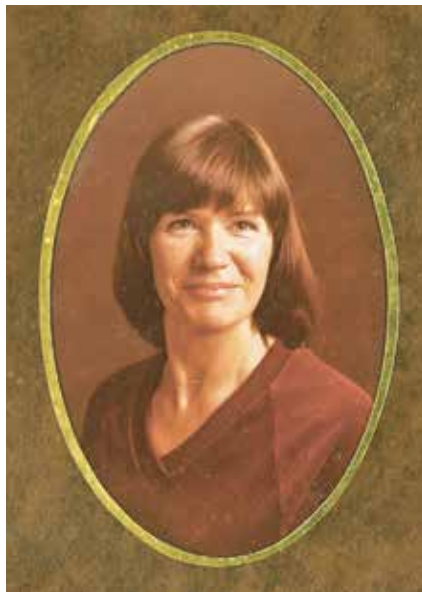
Mary's true love was working in her gorgeous garden and having her dog close to her side. Always a true Brit, Mary was known as "the Queen" lovingly to friends and neighbors. Her beauty, strength and love of life will be truly missed by all her knew her as family and as a delightful friend.

Mary is survived by her sister Rose Greenaway in London, England; daughters Mary and Maureen; grandchildren Cody, Colt, Cree, Megan, Heather and Angela along with great grandchildren Breanna, Brandon, Madison and Chase; and London, England family nieces Angela, JoAnne and Patricia, and nephew Colin Richardson.

Family is asking any Donations in Memory to Mary Symes be made to Disabled American Veterans (dav.org) or Portland Meals on Wheels.

Beloved Wife, Mother, Auntie, Nana and Friend ...

*May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



Inspiring passionate learners PreK-12

Join us for an Info Day to
learn more about our schools.

Grades 9-12 • Nov. 15, 2015

Grades K-8 • Jan. 22, 2016

Find more details and RSVP on our website.

We'd
like to
meet
you!

Teaching students to be thoughtful
in their education, about each other,
and for their community.

RIVERDALE

503-262-4847 • www.riverdaleschool.com
Grade School • 11733 SW Breyman Ave., Portland
High School • 9727 SW Terwilliger Blvd., Portland