

Letters to the Editor



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aesthetics are not simply a matter of personal opinion; there is often a social, cultural, and community identity that finds expression in neighborhood aesthetics.

I don't oppose the building of every larger-than-average home. I do oppose thoughtless, short-sighted, wasteful and destructive development.

Ava M. Stone
Multnomah Village

Replacement homes not in character with surrounding neighborhood

In response to Mr. Gillett's letter in which he takes odds with two readers who criticize the building of large new homes, he asks that owners of large and expensive homes not be "hated".

The real issue here is that many people feel that the new large expensive homes being built in older established neighborhoods are awkward in scale and style.

They seem to almost always replace a bungalow or cottage which in itself removes another affordable home in a time when there is a drastic shortage of such properties available in greater Portland.

The result is striking—blocking of direct sunlight, loss of sightlines and a complete loss of any sense of privacy in the backyard.

I can only imagine that the market value of a house sited next to a large building drops dramatically.

I encourage him to walk, drive or bike over to the 2600 block of Southwest Troy Street.

On the north side of the street, Mr. Gillett can view a brand new four-story home sited next door to an older single-story home.

I do not object to the new home in of itself but what upsets me is the imposing presence of the new home as it relates to its single story neighbor.

Mr. Gillett mentions having a large new home at one end of a block while on the other end would be a single-story home.

The two houses I mention are not a block apart but immediately adjacent to each other.

I would like to have a conversation with the owner of the single-story home as to what he feels about his new neighbor.

I also wonder about the economic impact on the single story home.

This is a local example of poor scaling of new buildings as they relate to existing homes in a neighborhood.

I also urge Mr. Gillett to tour North Mississippi Avenue and Southeast Division Street to see further examples of poor scaling and siting.

The question here is this: How do we build replacement homes so that they are more in character with our existing neighborhoods?

Sim Hyde
Multnomah Village

Editor's Note: Sim Hyde wrote two letters this month on the same subject. I took the liberty of combining excerpts of the two letters, as both letters had excellent points. — Don Snedecor

Community advisory committee appointed for future light rail project

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Editor's Note: According to Craig Beebe of Metro, a few weeks after winning narrow support from Tigard voters, a proposed Portland-to-Tualatin light rail project proceeded to its next stop as local leaders finalized the range of routes, stations and related walking, biking and roadway projects to be studied in a federally-required environmental review.

"A MAX line from the Portland Transit Mall to Bridgeport Village is the backbone of the Southwest Corridor vision, which also includes a number of other bus, road, bike and pedestrian improvements and development strategies in the fast-growing area," wrote Beebe.

On Dec. 12, the Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee reviewed recommendations from project staff and appointed 17 members to a community advisory committee.

"The CAC will advise the steering committee and project staff on public and social issues throughout the corridor," said Eryn Kehe, a senior communications specialist with Metro.

"Committee members will start meeting monthly beginning in early 2017 through spring 2018," she wrote. "One of their main roles will be to review the selection of a route and station areas."

The committee includes balanced representation from Portland, Tigard, and Tualatin. One representative is Michael Kisor from the Ashcreek Neighborhood Association. He is also active with SW Trails PDX.

Kathleen McMullen, manager of transportation and parking services at Portland Community College, was also appointed.

Other southwest Portland members include Jim Gardner, South Portland Neighborhood Association land use chair, and Roger Averbach who represents the Oregon Walks and Portland Pedestrian Advisory

Committee.

"The steering committee also unanimously approved project staff's recommendations," wrote Chris Ford, investment areas project manager for Metro.

"There is an amendment of directing staff to see if an initial traffic analysis could support an early decision to remove the I-5 alignment (between Southwest 13th Avenue and Barbur Transit Center). This would not need a full study in the draft environmental impact statement."

This action marks a significant milestone for the light rail project.

"The environmental review is a necessary step to qualify for federal matching funds," Kehe commented. "The task ahead is to assess the proposed alternatives and propose ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate significant impacts."

"This information will help inform decision makers in selecting the locally preferred alternative scheduled for early 2018."

CAPITOL HIGHWAY PLAN

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overall project width," Fitzgerald added. "This also narrows the travel lanes and street design as much as possible to slow down traffic."

But some commented that travel lanes aren't wide enough to allow TriMet buses and delivery trucks to safely pass. One question brought up was where delivery trucks would park?

Crosswalks were suggested at every transit stop, at a minimum, with use of rapid flashing beacons or other safety measures as appropriate.

Preserving as many trees as possible that are 12 inches in diameter or greater within the existing right-of-way was listed.

Reducing the speed limit to 25 mph for this entire stretch the highway was also recommended even though some said it wouldn't be adhered to.

"One of the reasons why this highway hasn't been built in 30 years," Fitzgerald said, "is that the city hasn't been able to figure it [the complexities of the area] out."

"Oleson Road is not what we want!" asserted Patti Waitman-Ingebretsen, long time historian and Capitol Highway resident.

Bioswales seemed to be on everyone's mind and not widely liked.

"They are mandated for every inch of cement," John Gibbon of Markham explained. "[Stormwater] needs to be contained, treated, and then disposed."

It was suggested that the Bureau of Environmental Services seek alternatives to bioswales, using permeable services or existing regional water facilities.

And finally, visibility and safety were brought up.

At the December Multnomah Neighborhood Association meeting, members unanimously approved two letters composed by the Capitol Highway subcommittee requesting \$2 million from the Oregon state legislature to ensure full funding of the Southwest Capitol Highway Improvement Project.

The association also unanimously approved the final set of comments on the project's design, which was originally developed and approved by the subcommittee.

Elizabeth Edwards, from Portland's Office of Government Relations, wrote the association:

"I wanted to let you know that support for SW Capitol Highway funding [requesting \$2 million] was included in the draft state legislative agenda considered by City Council last week."

"Thank you, Representative Lininger, and other legislative and community leaders for your advocacy."

There will be a Portland Bureau of Transportation town hall on the project on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW

Capitol Highway.

"At this event," Lyons said, "PBOT staff likely will present a revised cross section document that responds to our comments, along with a horizontal layout on an aerial map that will provide us with a rough idea of how this cross section could look for the entire stretch of road."

To receive updates or become involved in the subcommittee, send an email to chrislyons7@yahoo.com.

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