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The Southwest Portland Post

Volume No. 25 Issue No. 5

www.swportlandpost.com

Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

March 2017

Increased development means heritage trees are at risk of being cut down

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The Feb. 7 meeting of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association featured a discussion on heritage trees and how to become a tree steward.

Heritage trees are trees that have been formally recognized by the Portland City Council for their unique size, age, historical, or horticultural significance.

According to local tree steward Emma Dugan, currently Multnomah Village only has two heritage trees. One of them, a *cryptomeria japonica*, is outside the Multnomah Arts Center with a plaque attached to it. Hillsdale has 12; seven of them are on one lot.

Portland is lucky to have a tree canopy that covers more than 30 percent of neighborhoods, according to the city's website. With more than a quarter million trees lining the streets and countless more in parks and on private property, Portland literally is a green city.

However, with increased developments, demolitions, and residential infill, trees are at risk of being taken down more frequently.

Dugan facilitated the group through a presentation about trees. She said she took a seven-week course to become a Portland tree steward costing only \$25 and said scholarships are available.

"The training provides an overview of tree biology, identification, pruning and maintenance, proper planting techniques, and ecosystem services," she explained.

"We also learn about pests and pathogens of the urban forest, and urban forest management and policy."

"I have always been a tree lover," Dugan said. She graduated from Oregon State University in the forestry program.

"No previous experience is needed to become a neighborhood tree steward," she said, "but you do need a passion for trees, a desire to learn, and the commitment to help."

Her presentation explained that trees benefit the air, improves water quality, provide wind breaks, and reduce cooling costs in the summer.

"Businesses make higher profits when trees are present," she continued. "It also reduces flooding, especially needle and broadleaf evergreens."

"They also provide wildlife habitat, reduce erosion and carbon dioxide, and offer visual and sound buffers."

Dugan then explained certain trees can be designated as a heritage tree. For private properties, consent of the owner is required. Anyone can nominate a tree in the right-of-way.

Nominations are due by May 1 each year. In June, the tree is reviewed by a city arborist. In

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One of Multnomah Village's heritage trees, a *cryptomeria japonica*, is located outside of the Multnomah Arts Center. It was designated a heritage tree by the Portland City Council in 1995. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

Light rail advisory committee meets, environmental review phase begins



A new Southwest Corridor Light Rail Community Advisory Committee has begun monthly meetings. (Photo courtesy of Metro)

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The new Metro Light Rail Community Advisory Committee held its first meeting on Feb. 6 at the Multnomah Arts Center. The meeting was open to the public and public comment was provided.

While not available at press time, the committee's monthly meeting dates and materials will be posted on the project website: [www](http://www.swcorridorplan.org).

swcorridorplan.org.

Staffs from local jurisdictions and agencies continue working together as the Southwest Corridor light rail project begins the environmental review phase. During this period, Metro and TriMet will work closely with the Federal Transit Administration to identify significant impacts of the remaining routes under consideration.

"There is a lot of new information to collect and understand so our staff will be busy for several months," said Eryn Kehe, the project senior

communications specialist.

The steering committee, consisting of project partners, elected and appointed officials, will take a few months off before reconvening later in 2017. The steering committee makes final recommendations to the Metro Council and other jurisdictions for the Southwest Corridor Plan.

"The city of Portland has appointed Commissioner Dan Saltzman," said Dylan Rivera of the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

"A 45-day comment period is planned in early 2018," Kehe said. "The public and other agencies can then review the draft environmental impact statement."

In the meantime, citizens can hear what other people in the community have said about transit in a set of videos featured on the project website.

"Consider sharing information with your friends and neighbors," Kehe suggested. "Ask a friend today, 'Have you heard of the Southwest Corridor light rail?'"

"Let them know why you are interested in the project, and encourage them to visit the website to learn more."

The next Metro Light Rail Community Advisory Committee meeting will be Monday, March 6, at 6:30 p.m. in room 30 at the Multnomah Arts Center.

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