

25th Avenue Restoration

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She found 85 neighborhood volunteers and volunteers through SOLVE to work during five work parties, and together they put in 318 native plants in a 116 foot x 10 foot cleared section of ground alongside the trail.

"When I saw the diverse group of people who use the trail become involved with its restoration, an Orthodox Jewish family planting alongside Muslim teenagers, a Reed College professor planting alongside a 6-year-old living at Stephens Creek Crossing, I realized that we all had a common goal," said Wall.

"When the project is complete, we will have a safe nature trail for students living south of Capitol Highway to walk to Robert Gray Middle School and others to walk.

[It will be] a neighborhood asset rather than a weed-choked trail whose last 500 feet to Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway is a steep ravine, unsafe to walk," said Wall.

Don Baack from Southwest Trails has been Wall's mentor and has been trying for 11 years to get the last 500 feet outfitted with stairs and handrails so it will be safe to walk for people of all ages.

Wall and her team have received some funding through the "Safe Routes to School" program, but need more funding along with permits from the city to finish the northern section of the trail.

Southwest Portland lacks the system of sidewalks that are present in other sections of Portland so Wall and others rely on trails such as this one to get around the area.

Wall is retired so she has more time than many for this project. The project takes about 20-30 hours per week especially when applying for grants.

Wall spends time coordinating volunteers, speaking with contractors, fundraising, weeding, watering, studying native plants, storm water management, and dealing with the politics involved with managing and establishing support for a community project.

The volunteers are recruited

via SOLVE, trail signs, the Mittleman Jewish Community Center newsletter, Stephens' Creek Crossing housing and word of mouth.

A 4th grade class from the Portland Jewish Academy has helped plant native strawberries along the trail and learned about the importance of native plants in creating habitat for wildlife.

Wall is encouraging volunteers to work hard, and also be aware that they are part of something bigger and are making a difference.

She said she tries to be sure that the volunteers know why she is asking them to perform a particular task and hopes they come away with some new knowledge about native plants, storm water management and creating wildlife habitat.

Wall is hopeful that when the trail project is complete it will help students living at Stephens' Creek Crossing housing, the south side of Capitol Highway and others who walk the area and others have a safe way to walk to school, bus stops and the dog park that will also help them get some exercise and relieve stress by getting them out into nature.

The trail has a Western Red Cedar on the northern stretch that Wall hopes will be named a Portland Heritage Tree. It is close to the headwaters of Fanno Creek.

"This is a magical place that needs to be restored and protected into perpetuity," said Wall.

Wall will be holding a raffle to help raise money for this trail project and educate people about it. There will be three items: an Audubon-approved sedum roofed bird house, a growler carrier made from sustainable semi-precious wood and an Emergency Kit.

Each item is valued at about \$75. The tickets will be sold on July 23 at the Hillsdale Farmers' Market and on July 30 at the Hillsdale Book Sale at the Watershed Building. Both events run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The raffle ticket proceeds will benefit the Southwest 25th Ave Right of Way Restoration Project and the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association.



Pedestrians walk along a section of Southwest Barbur Boulevard without sidewalks. The light rail project will be addressing gaps in safe pedestrian routes along the busy corridor. (Photo courtesy of Metro)

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

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Naito Parkway.

Equitable housing and development were also brought up. Some sites have already been identified for affordable housing near light rail stations.

"The goal is to provide a corridor-wide strategy to generate a range of housing and job types for all people," said Ford.

Eryn Kehe, the Metro communications specialist, provided an update on the community advisory committee which has been meeting monthly since January.

"The committee toured the alignment area in April and learned about land use issues," Kehe said.

Kehe asked the committee to support the appointment of two additional

advisory members: a person of color and a business representative on Barbur Boulevard.

"I have been walking door-to-door on Barbur recruiting," Kehe said. "We're also going to be at a variety of farmer's markets and other venues this summer conducting additional outreach for the project."

What wasn't talked about was a new transportation funding bill that is being

debated in Salem. The bill includes potential funds for the light rail project. The legislature has yet to approve the bill.

Additionally, both TriMet and Metro must approve the route and propose partial funding to the federal government.

"Two billion dollars are still required to complete this project," Grumm said. "A measure could go to the voters by November 2018," Grumm said, "but the measure could be problematic for voters outside of the corridor that includes Portland, Tigard, and Tualatin if it only helps fund that one project."

The next community advisory committee meeting will be on Monday, June 5 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Highway. The public is welcome.

Legislative Town Hall

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amendment, provides that accessory dwelling units and duplexes can't be prohibited in single-family zones.

According to Claire Coleman-Evans, a leading opponent of increased density, "This (bill) encourages demolitions of smaller, less expensive houses, prohibits design review for livable cities and will demolish historic neighborhoods. It's also an attack on local control."

Leslie Hammond, vice-chair of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, said, "The bad news is that Speaker Kotek is sponsoring it and she can apply a lot of leverage to

get it passed out of the House and to the Senate, so it is important to send your thoughts to your senatorial representatives as well."

The three representatives listened and mentioned that they were not aware of the latest drafts of the bill. The three were supportive of the transportation bill that allocates \$2 million for Southwest Capitol Highway improvements.

Questions continued on ways to stabilize the state economy. "It seems like we go through this (lack of funding) every two years," Williamson said. "We are 50th in the nation when it comes to taxes for corporations."

The legislature remains in session until July.

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