

Multnomah NA loses appeals to Land Conservation and Development Commission

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

According to Jim Peterson, Multnomah land use chair, "The Multnomah Neighborhood Association filed objections to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. On March 15, the Land Conservation and Development Commission rejected all appeals.

"The MNA is exploring all options and has reached out to a land use organization and other neighborhood associations to help take the appeals to the Oregon Court of Appeals."

"The decision undermines the importance of citizen testimony and Oregon's land use goals as determining factors into the land use planning process," said Peterson. "We are now depending on the courts to uphold the law."

According to Peterson, the neighborhood's objections were prepared by Fodor and Associates and reviewed by land use attorneys Bill Kabeiseman and Carrie Richter

before being filed with the State of Oregon. What follows is a partial transcript of the staff recommendation of the Land Conservation and Development Commission to reject one of the neighborhood's objections to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan—that the city of Portland failed to adequately consider the 2000 Southwest Community Plan or protect a potential historic district in Multnomah Village.

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association objected to the City of Portland's decision to rezone much of the Multnomah Village Neighborhood Center area to the CM2 zoning district, which the association asserts allows densities, intensities, and building heights that are excessive for the Multnomah Village Neighborhood Center Area.

After the director's decision rejected this objection, the association filed an appeal of that decision.

Before discussion of the specific issues raised in the appeal, it should be noted that the remedy proposed by the Multnomah Neighborhood Association is that the commission partially

remand Task 5 of the periodic review to reconsider application of the CM1 zoning district in the Multnomah Village area to reflect the community character issue and topography and also apply a zoning district with clear and objective standards addressing the association's concerns.

Failure to Direct Planning Actions in a Manner That Would Achieve Local Goals and Be Consistent With Past Planning Efforts

The appeal asserts that the city failed to direct planning actions in a manner that would achieve local goals and be consistent with past planning efforts.

The appeal notes that the 2000 Southwest Community Plan (SWCP) planned for a "small-town" atmosphere for Multnomah Village, with height and design of buildings appropriate for the neighborhood, with a mix of residential and neighborhood-scale commercial development.

The appeal contends the SWCP is not mentioned in the recommended draft for Mixed Use Zoning Districts, which applies the CM2 district to Multnomah Village.

The appeal also contends this action violates the citizen involvement provisions of the SWCP, which state, "use the Southwest Community Plan policies and objectives to create, develop, implement or evaluate new citywide policies, programs, or project proposals to ensure that the concerns of the Southwest community are addressed."

In addition, as noted by the appellant, Multnomah Village has been identified in the past as worthy of a historic district designation, which makes it a Goal 5 resource; the CM2 zoning ignores this history, and thus violates Statewide Planning Goal 5.

Department Response:

The department recommends that this portion of the appeal be rejected by the commission. The city is not bound by the language or contents of the 2000 Southwest Community Plan.

The purpose of periodic review is to update and, where appropriate, modify the city's previously adopted comprehensive plan and implementing land use regulations.

In any case, the city's decision to mix the CM1 and CM2 districts in Multnomah Village, with the CM1 district being applied to a part of the village core area, is consistent with the excerpts from the 2000 community plan for Multnomah Village provided in the appeal.

Regarding the Goal 5 issue, the appellant has not demonstrated that Multnomah Village is a significant historic resource in the city's comprehensive plan.

The city is not obligated by the provisions of Goal 5 to protect any particular historic character within an area unless the resource has been found to be significant and the city has decided to protect it under its historic preservation ordinance.

Multnomah Historical Association holds annual meeting, seeks more volunteers

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The Multnomah Historical Association held its annual meeting on March 14 at the Multnomah Arts Center.

Three dozen people listened as Tim Lyman, president, gave an overview, explaining that the organization houses a history center, a website, as well as a vast archives in storage.

Additionally, the association provides presentations to the public.

"Last year," Lyman said, "we sent out electronic newsletters on a regular basis and held presentations at local libraries. Paper newsletters are no more due to costs."

There are about 160 members. Regular membership is \$20 a year and \$12 for seniors.

Founded by parents after the 1979 closure of Multnomah School, the association continues its mission of preserving the buildings, history, stories, photos, and memorabilia of the community.

Due in part to the efforts of the association, the school became the Multnomah Center, which includes



The Multnomah Theatre, circa 1946. (Photo courtesy of J.L. "Bill" Cate)

the arts center, Neighborhood House Senior Center, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., and other community organizations. The center is owned and operated by Portland Parks & Recreation.

Lyman said the group has some cash reserves, but new resources are needed.

"We need volunteers with grant writing experience and computer knowledge."

Anyone wishing to volunteer, donate, or for more information, should visit www.multnomahhistorical.com.

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