



An artist's rendition of the proposed affordable housing project on Block 49 in the South Waterfront area.
PICTURE COURTESY OF THE PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU

Long-awaited low-income housing set to break ground in South Waterfront

STAFF REPORTS

The Portland Housing Bureau is moving forward with the development of affordable housing for veterans and middle-income earners in Portland's South Waterfront neighborhood.

The new housing development will be a six-story building that will be constructed on the plot of land known as "Block 49." The project will have 209 affordable apartments over ground-floor space that may be used for retail, office or community services. Forty-two of the units will be reserved for veterans experiencing homelessness. Providing housing for homeless veterans will be the key focus of the project.

Construction of the new building is expected to start in November.

Housing Commissioner Nick Fish and Bureau Director Margaret Van Vleit said in a joint press release, "Many of you know that the path to moving forward with this project has been challenging on many levels. We are eager to get this project started to achieve affordable housing in the district as quickly as possible."

In a letter sent to Portland City Council by the League of Women's Voters in

February, the group says, "The North Macadam urban renewal area is 11 years old. To date not one unit of affordable housing has been developed. Many of the other projects outlined in the plan and the Central District Development Agreement, however, have been completed or are near-complete including the OHSU tram, streetcar, condo towers, streets and sidewalks, and Elizabeth Caruthers Park.

During the early planning for this district fears were expressed that this area might become an enclave for the wealthy. Given the amount of public resources that will be devoted to this district we urge you to ensure that fear is not borne out."

In 2006, the city created recommendations that 30 percent of all increment tax revenue generated from Urban Renewal Districts be allotted to "affordable" housing. In many Urban Renewal Areas, including South Waterfront those recommendations have gone unmet.

According to the housing bureau several public actions will be planned in the next few months, leading up to groundbreaking in November.

A roof of stars

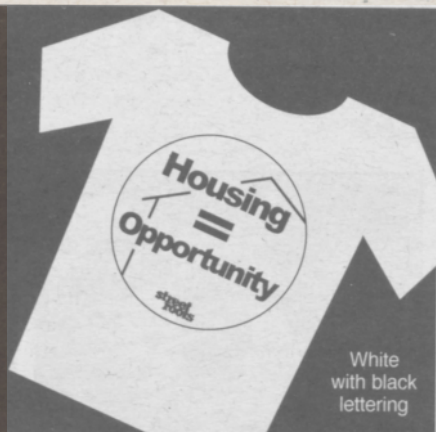
by Dharma Bum

Space is our body and our being
We breathe the air that we are
See with the eyes of being
See the oneness among us
See that the skin line is not the border line
See that We are vast and quicker than light
See the far and rising sun rising in the awareness that we are
If you take away the labels
You take away the limits
Science says it's so
The bible says it's so
The Dalai Lama says it's so
The dead poets in my ear say it's so
The speechless say it's so
The innocent say it's so
The ancient echos east of Eden
The rock of ages
The voice of prophets
The ice age dreamers
The roaches waiting to inherit the Earth
The immaculate hearts under water
The evergreen forest
The horizon that goes on forever
They All say, it is so!
So don't take my word for it
I'm just the empty trumpet of the wind
Turn your eyes inside out
expose your bone marrow
Let Space have its way
Die a quiet death
Clear seeing will arise where a brain used to be
You will know that the grave and the cradle are one
You will find rest and flowers will sprout everywhere!

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