



PHOTO BY SOPHIA KINHARATH



At left, (left to right) William Manlove, the attorney for the city of Portland, Ibrahim Mubarak (seated) and Mark Kramer, the attorney for Right 2 Dream Too, address Multnomah County Circuit Court on July 11. The two groups were in court arguing a case that could decide the future of Right 2 Dream Too (shown above), a homeless encampment at the corner of Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside. Mubarak is the spokesman for the nonprofit organization, which defends its camp as an emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness in Portland.

Right 2 Dream Too, city, await court's decision on challenge

BY JOANNE ZUHL
STAFF WRITER

Whatever Right 2 Dream Too's future holds, its time on the corner of Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside could be short-lived if a judge rules in favor of the city to dismiss the homeless group's case.

On July 11, after listening to two hours of legal arguments from the city and Right 2 Dream Too, Judge Karin J. Immergut elected to take the matter under advisement. She said she would return with a decision in two to three weeks.

The city says the operation, where an average of 60 homeless people sleep each night, is an unpermitted recreational campground, and in violation of city code. Right 2 Dream Too maintains that its camp is an emergency rest area, where people experiencing homelessness can find shelter and access other services.

The recent one-night shelter and street count in Multnomah County tallied nearly

1,900 people sleeping outside after shelter space was full. Right 2 Dream Too established its rest station in October 2011.

By the city's measure, the organization (via the property owners Michael Wright and Daniel Cossettes) owes City Hall \$25,687 in fines for noncompliance with city code. The campers say the permit and compliance requirements are prohibitive for such a fledgling nonprofit. (The organization had corrected one violation in lowering the height of its fence along Burnside from eight to six feet.)

Last year, Right 2 Dream Too, represented by attorney Mark Kramer, sued the city to suspend the fines that now accumulate \$1,500 each month. But it is a technical issue that could end the nonprofit's legal course forward.

In April, the city filed a complaint saying Right 2 Dream Too hasn't exhausted all of its options to appeal the city's decision on the code violations before going to court. Right 2 Dream Too responded saying it had

been denied a reasonable opportunity to appeal the fines or have the \$1,200 administrative filing fee waived.

Immergut is considering whether to accept the city's motion to dismiss the nonprofit's suit. The homeless organization claims that, given the attitude by the city regarding homelessness in general, the lack of process for waiving the fee, and the expired timeline on the appeal process, it has — for all intents and purposes — run its course.

All of this is to say it will be another two to three weeks before Immergut decides this technical matter, but if it's in the city's favor, it could be a death knell for Right 2 Dream Too's legal argument. The organization simply does not have the money or time to pursue an appeal.

Meanwhile, with the Fourth and Burnside property up for sale, Right 2 Dream Too members have been looking into alternative sites for its shelter operation. One site under consideration is the Medford

Building, former home to Transition Projects, which moved into the Bud Clark Commons in 2011. The building has a large shelter space with room for about 95 people.

Oregon state statute allows for two transitional shelters in any Oregon municipality. Right 2 Dream Too wants to be designated the second such shelter in Portland, after Dignity Village, which has operated for more than a decade.

People staying at the Fourth and Burnside area are required to follow a code of conduct, including no alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises, no violence or threat of violence, no weapons and no open flames, among other guidelines. As a result, the rest area has garnered almost no police complaints outside of being a homeless camp. The city, however, is feeling pressure from the business and Chinese community to remove or relocate the camp from its highly visible location at the entrance of Old Town Chinatown under the Chinatown Gate.

Event features documentary on homeless youth, food drive for homeless youth program

STAFF REPORTS

Media Works NW is producing a Kickstarter event open to the public at the Bobwhite Theater 6423 SE Foster Rd. on Aug. 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. The event will be a grassroots casual affair with live entertainment, prizes, and a preview of the documentary "The Unlearned."

Genora Trotter, the director and creator of the documentary has first-hand knowledge of how devastating the effects of "learned" helplessness can be on an individual by confronting her own helplessness. She has produced a 60-minute psychological documentary about a homeless youth and the tough love of his mother who experienced the challenges of falling through the gaps of societal conditioning and his learned co-dependence on enabling behavior, which eventually lead to a struggle for life. Living or dying rests solely on his determination to unlearn the mindset of helplessness, low self-esteem and anti-social behavior. His story of helplessness will reveal striking comparisons to that of other helpless youth.

The intent of this documentary is a call to action for youth organizations and individuals to actively engage in confronting learned helplessness.

Media Works NW is an advocate for aggressive media campaigns, inter-company discussions, and social group dialogue from youth programs, which will reflect a transparent concern for homeless youth and aid in removing the negative stigmas attached to youth helplessness. This documentary will be the first in a series of documentaries involving learned helplessness.

The event is also a food drive for p:ear. Please bring nonperishable food items. P:ear is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building positive relationships with homeless and transitional youth through education, art and recreation to affirm personal worth and create more meaningful and healthier lives. Each year its programs serve almost 900 homeless and transitional young people ages 15 to 24.

The First Family of Breakfast

By John R. Brown

The first family of breakfast meets early Saturday morning at an Episcopal church near a freeway entrance.

They come from all over the map, but Chicagoland seems well represented. They're not all related by blood, or by marriage. I don't even think they're all Episcopalians, but clearly they share some family traits that involve the arts of the kitchen.

The cooking and serving are restaurant quality, and the scullery manager is the nicest guy in America. And on top of all that, they offer the best coffee available to the homeless.

And on Tuesdays, their cousins serve chili. How cool is that?

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