



Mayor Hales and Commissioners Fish, Fritz, Novick, and Saltzman:

The St. Johns Neighborhood Association (SJNA) is writing in support of the Portland Bureau of Transportation's proposed street vacation of the traffic island at the intersection of N Lombard and N Richmond in the St. Johns neighborhood of Portland (RWA #7942).

Over a decade ago, the neighbors of St. Johns worked with the (then) Portland Planning Commission and Bureau of Transportation to create the St. Johns Lombard Plan. The goal of that plan was to create a more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly town center in St. Johns. To that end, the Plan recommends (pg 36, St. Johns Lombard Plan) that the "slip lane" at N Richmond and N Lombard be eliminated, squaring up that intersection and making that entire stretch of Lombard safer for pedestrians. This is particularly important, as the James John Elementary School is located at N Lombard and N Charleston.

There has been a deep history of public outreach associated with the reconfiguration of the intersection of N Lombard and N Richmond. The original St. Johns Lombard Plan process involved many public meetings and reflects hours of hard work from neighbors who served on that advisory committee. There have also been at least four public SJNA general meetings, with attendance ranging from ~35 to ~90 people at each, at which the current development was discussed in detail. The community members in attendance showed overwhelming support for the proposed intersection improvements. In fact, as recently as January 11th, 2016, a group of neighbors who vocally oppose the street vacation were only able to garner four votes for their motion to officially oppose the vacation.

The current proposal to vacate "Ivy Island" to fix the intersection of N Lombard and N Richmond is good policy for several reasons:

- These are safety improvements that the community asked for;
- The developers of the Union at St Johns will pay for the safety improvements;
- The safety improvements are consistent with the city's "Vision Zero" priorities;
- The developer will create - and maintain! - two public plazas to the south and the east of the development, which will create an attractive gateway to our downtown.

For these reasons, the SJNA asks the Portland City Council to support the Portland Bureau of Transportation's proposed street vacation of the traffic island at the intersection of N Lombard and N Richmond.

Thank you,

St. Johns Neighborhood Association Board
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