

St. Johns Neighborhood Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 26, 7:00 pm—Central Hotel
Minutes by Denis C. Theriault, secretary

Board members present: Emilie Saks-Webb, Jennifer Levy, Shamus Lynsky, David Green, Justin Sundling, Rob Metnick, Denis C. Theriault, Adam Robins

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm.

Special guest present: Ame LeCocq and Greg Moore of Recology Portland

WE STARTED WITH OUR SPECIAL GUESTS:

As part of its good neighbor agreement for its facility on N Suttle Road, Recology agrees to meet with the SJNA board and provide a briefing once a year.

Ame gives a presentation and answers questions about some of Recology's recent community work, including an event at George Middle School where volunteers pulled out ivy, cleaned the school's courtyards and entryway, and rebuilt a greenhouse.

Jen asks Ame if Recology might schedule tours for board members this spring. Ame says she's interested, and Emilie or Denis say they'll try to schedule them. Ame says the wetlands restoration work that's been mounted behind Recology's solid waste facility has "taken off": This was a subject of debate when the city approved Recology's application to build the facility, and now there are herons, cinnamon teals, and turtles.

Jen also reminds us that the neighborhood cleanup is now SJNA's responsibility and that Recology has traditionally helped with its predecessor, Trash 2 Treasure. Recology's helped cart away glass, metal, and yard waste and debris. It's also donated compost and helped pay for radios and vests—which SJNA will inherit from Trash 2 Treasure's organizers at Swapnplay.

We begin to take up the future of the cleanp. It's going to be at the St. Johns Christian Church, on Central between Charleston and Richmond. The church has a large parking lot behind it and another available across the street. The tentative idea, based on feedback from the church, is to hold the cleanup the weekend before Easter. Shamus asks why it's not going to match Trash 2 Treasure's traditional weekend, before Earth Day. Emilie says the church had indicated that weekend wouldn't work. But also that we can ask again.

Jen suggests obtaining a schedule of nearby neighborhood cleanups, so we can pick a non-conflicting weekend.

One thing going away this year? The "swap" portion of Trash 2 Treasure in which people either bring or take home items like clothing or books or furniture, all of which is supposed to be decently reusable. That's always been as big a volunteer production of the cleanup itself. Maybe—*maybe*—we'll still have a plant swap, Emilie says.

Recology historically told Dre Davey, who helped run T2T for Swapnplay, that it had encouraged its workers to volunteer by posting signup sheets at the plant. They say they'll also want another volunteer opportunity in St. Johns this summer, maybe in mid to late July. We have a summer event already on our calendar. Happenstance!

Ame cautions that whatever winds up planned can't touch the neighborhood's parks or community center. Volunteers are contractually barred from painting or planting on parks land. It might have to be something like the project at George.

METRO GRANTS!

What's a sensible way to spend the last of Metro's St. Johns Landfill surcharges, to be divvied in the form of one-time community enhancement grants?

David and Jen mention environmental monitoring, particularly for air quality.

Jen also thought about teaming with Main Street and the Boosters to seek a public safety grant for improved street lights downtown—more densely arrayed and lower to the ground and more pedestrian-oriented.

David mentions the city's ongoing LED conversion. Jen says her vision involves taking out old poles and would someday stretch all the way out to the cut.

Shamus notes that Ace Hardware has said it's willing to help push for lights mimicking the St. Johns Bridge.

No other ideas for the Metro grants are offered.

VOLUNTEER SOIREE UPDATE!

It's going to be Thursday, March 12, at the Colony, from 6 to 9 pm. This is replacing the winter social because, in part, no one wanted to bust their humps so hard again this year for something that didn't amount to much more than a chance for people to eat and drink for free.

SJNA is partnering with Main Street to at least keep the essence of the social alive. We'll rent out the Colony and offer a cash bar and appetizers. We'll also pay the \$150 rental fee for a food cart (Dub's!). Local groups will all be able to pay for a table to promote themselves. There was talk, also, of babysitting and games. The chairs discussed a site visit (where subjects like trash and recycling would be addressed) and said they'd continue the logistical conversation with the various neighborhood group leaders.

Who can help March 12? Some jobs involve picking up food and other things—like raffle prizes and offerings—ahead of time. Rob sensibly offers Secret Aarvark hot sauce.

Other issues: Should vendors for raffle prizes be local? That depends on the size of the thing.

MORE ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP!

Justin has been dubbed captain of the cleanup, on the day of the cleanup. Denis agrees to help produce fliers. We'll need refreshments, too.

We know one other day off limits: May 9, the day of the St. Johns parade. There's talk of sending around another Doodle poll.

It's an open question as to whether the cleanup will turn a profit or break even. As an example, Adam says, last year's winter social raised about \$800 after a lot of spending. It's usually raised much more than that.

Emilie says seek we can ask the Port or Portland and Recology for grants, to supplement the money ONI offers to neighborhood associations. Recology's bins have not been free. Emilie tells Jen we should see about getting them for free, and Jen suggests talking to Dre at Swap.

Shamus asks if anyone knows a good contact at New Seasons, soon to be nearby neighbors across the Cut. Rob knows their community outreach person, Nicole, and offers to drop her a line to see what they might contribute.

OUR SUMMER EVENT? WHAT ABOUT IT?

The big question: Should we do an ice cream social or another fundraising event this summer? This leads to talk of obtaining food handler cards and the liability perils involved with laying a massive Slip 'n' Slide down Baltimore Hill.

We agree to come back to our meeting next month with ideas for our summer vent.

But one idea seems promising: a barbecue cookoff during the Bizarre. Shamus says a second stage could be available.

And this is noted: If we raise money, we could spend some money.

Rob wonders about selling beer. Jen cautions that it's... difficult. It's often better to piggyback onto someone else's insured event to save time and money and hassle.

Jen supports something during the Bizarre. We sold artwork the other year, she says, and that made money.

Shamus wonders about selling booze at St. Johns Park, which could be verboten. He says Sarah Anderson of Anna Banana's, who lives adjacent to park, might be OK with hosting a beer garden on her yard. Shamus also says the second stage, on Burlington by 4th Estate and Barrique Barrel, also means the Bizarre needs more entertainment than usual. He'd know. Since that's his other hat, etc.

Not that the Slip 'n' Slide idea's unpopular. It's not.

LAND USE UPDATES!

David says there's not been much progress on affordable housing work or advocacy. Shamus says we now have an available volunteer, Cara Griffin, who could inventory current affordable supplies. But she's not begun that task yet.

Jen says she talked with Main Street since last fall's gentrification forum last fall. They're willing to partner on a session devoted to affordable housing, which was among the ideas for a successor session. Former board member Babs Adamski is interested. Developers want to be part of that conversation, too. Leslie Lum of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability also says she's interested. She's met with Josh Leslie, our new land use chair. Adam says he's also heard from Leslie. Shamus hopes to connect all the various names mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

David mentions PBOT's interest in feedback on special projects. Emilie mentions re-routing Trimet from Lombard onto Ivanhoe through downtown.

The city has new tree rules. We talk about those.

The comprehensive plan comes up, and David says he'd like to push for a zoning overlay, near industrial zones, to gently force businesses to monitor and report pollutants and emissions.

Another change? How about requiring trees along train tracks. Jen's worried that industrial owners will all say it's too expensive. She says she and David could work on that issue.

There's no report on the proposed Pembina propane terminal at the Port's Terminal 6.

But there is a report on Marvel 29 and its locally catered grand opening and myriad amenities: LEED platinum status, a dog wash in the basement, bike repair bays, etc. We also hear the origin story of the name: Copper's atomic number is 29. The bridge—which painted a shade of green similar to the shade of oxidized copper but isn't actually made out of copper—is a marvel. And so forth.

THE SJNA BOARD RETREAT!

We confirm the date and time again and ponder food and refreshments. Potential subjects include how to cope when Emilie and Jen step down as co-chairs and how to fill the board's long-vacant 11th spot. Crystal should probably take our pictures, too.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHARLESTON AND LOMBARD?

A dentist from Southeast who's also a developer bought Huk Lab's building, Hookah Lounge, and the church behind Huk Lab. Jen's been meeting with him. He'll tear them down (including the decrepit but historic Huk building) and put up a mixed-use project, filling most of the block—a "7/8" project as opposed to the "2/3" project up Lombard, Adam jokes. Picture retail topped by apartments.

The Library has already approached SJNA about the project. The church and library share a parking lot—which could conceivably be cut in half if boundary lines are strictly interpreted.

Rob asks about height limits in St. Johns and is told the maximum is three stories or so. Joe Purkey, a local architect and volunteer, and Main Steet are also part of the evolving discussion.

ANGELA WAGNON HAS BEEN PROMOTED!

The neighborhood's crime prevention coordinator at ONI has been named the boss of bosses over all of the city's crime prevention coordinators. Her replacement was someone she mentored, Emilie thinks. We'll get him to come to a general meeting. Maybe we can chat about graffiti abatement.

THE FIXIN' TO HAS GRAND PLANS!

They want to take out their back patio and food cart pod and construct a small but indoor concert venue. They'll keep a bar back there that would only be open when a show was on. Chris from Pizza Contadino, one of the carts in their pod, is coming inside to manage their food.

But there's been a history of noise complaints there, mostly the work of one particular neighbor. One hope is that a venue, with soundproofing, could curb the kvetching—legit or not. The owners have said they'll go beyond city rules for noise abatement and soundproofing. Rob says he's been told they've hired an acoustics consultant. Adam suggests that's a good thing, telling the board about all the noise that still bleeds from the Prado during events—despite its owners following city rules.

CELEBRATE NORTH PORTLAND!

Who wants to talk to muckety mucks like Tina Kotek and various business leaders?

It's 5:30 to 8:30 March 14.. It's the Ides of March, Shamus says. Beware.

Tables are \$125 each. The Boosters have offered to split a table for eight. Emilie says she's not interested in paying for a full table. She also says anyone who goes should be nominated for an award. "Let's make sure we're not sitting there clapping for people who don't do anything," Emilie says. "That's right. I said it. It's true."

OTHER QUESTIONS?

Let's email ODOT for an update on Tyler/Polk/etc crossing improvements at Lombard. They messed up the work bid, and because they waited too long to send it out, there wasn't time last construction season to resubmit it in time. It's supposed to be back out this spring.

Let's keep nagging PBOT over Fessenden improvements, which go out to bid this year for next year. David or land use can help coordinate that nagging. We talk about the planned bike lane on Columbia Way north. David mentions the grassy Tyler right-of-way next to Bethel Baptist Church and muses about a walking path. Shamus suggests a parklet model seen in certain SW neighborhoods.

Jen mentions Friends of Trees and urges some canvassing, to help spread more greenery up and down the corridor.

David says he'd love the shabby abandoned house with linoleum-covered windows, near the bend, into something commercial. Like a coffee shop!

The meeting adjourns at 8:24 pm.