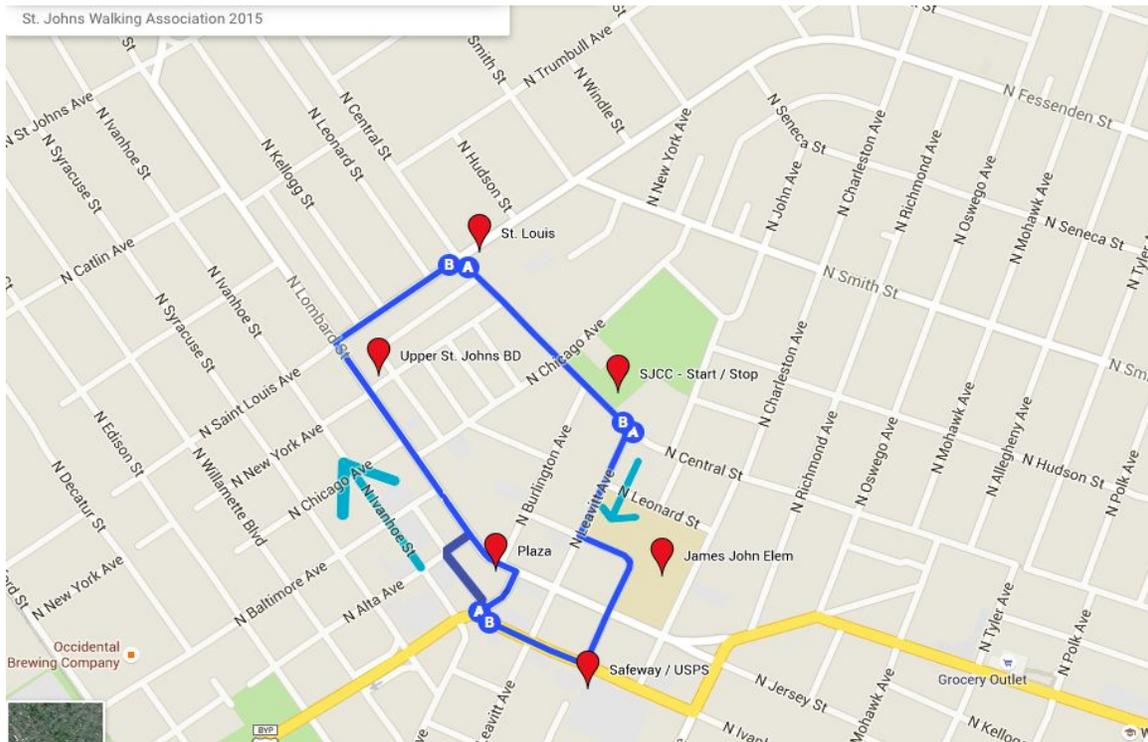


**St. Johns Neighborhood Association
Special General Meeting
Walking Meeting
Monday, Aug. 10, 2015**

- 6:30 Neighborhood Business
 - I. *Call to Order*
 - II. *July Minutes Overview and Approval*
 - III. *Reports:*
 - A. *Treasurer's Report- Adam Robins*
 - B. *Land Use Updates- Josh Leslie*
 - C. *SALT Team Updates- Ben Poe*
 - IV. *Introductions*
- 6:45 Your Place and Walkability
- 7:00 Go Outside
- 7:05 Walking Tour and Meeting (walk is < 1 mi.)
- 8:15 Debrief (return to Center)
 - o Hear from people and record
 - General concerns and perceptions
 - Critical specific problems
- 8:25 Next Steps
 - o SJNA: Safety and Livability Committee - Ben Poe
 - o SJBA Committee - Lindsay
- 8:30 Adjourn



**St. Johns Neighborhood Association
General Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 13, 2015, St. Johns Community Center
Minutes by Denis C. Theriault, Secretary**

Board members present: Shamus Lynsky, Emilie Saks-Web, Denis Theriault (late), Josh Leslie, Ben Poe, Rob Metnick, Adam Robins

About 80 other community members were present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Shamus, the night's presiding officer.

Josh motions to approve minutes from June 8 as written. The minutes are approved.

THE TREASURY

No numbers presented. Adam was absent. There was only one expenditure since last month: a donation to the Willamette River Revival.

SAFETY AND LIVABILITY

Ben, board liaison for the Safety and Livability Team, aka SALT, is asked to explain the team is for the many newcomers in the crowd. It's an opportunity to share concerns on any issues that affect safety and livability, including public safety, traffic, property crime, environmental issues, and gentrification concerns. It's an open forum. They meet 7 pm the first Tuesday of the month at the Main Street office, 8250 N Lombard, right across Charleston from Signal Station Pizza. Agendas are posted on NextDoor and Facebook.

Shamus says the team is important for SJNA because of SJNA's role as official interlocutor with the city. The city may not mess with issues that aren't raised or championed by SJNA.

ANGIE RUSSO from the Office of Neighborhood Involvement

She has crime stats through May 31. The people who produce crime stats are backed up because the police bureau is changing systems. The numbers she has also include Linnton and Cathedral Park, so she says not to be alarmed by what may seem like a disproportionate amount of crime in St. Johns.

The combined area saw 87 cases in January, 83 in February, 86 in March, 93 in April and then 109 in May.

Angie points out larceny-related crimes, which remain high. She also mentions residential burglaries and talks about prevention.

Does your house look inviting to a burglar? Do you have accessible windows hidden from the street? Do you leave windows or doors open?

Also, take note if you leave your curtains or drapes closed. You may think it affords privacy. But it also means someone can't see what's going on inside. So that can actually make your house more inviting.

And you want solid doors and deadbolts at least an inch long. Make sure all of your windows lock, including upper-floor and basement windows. It's easy enough to climb to upper-story windows. Make sure any ladders you own are locked up/secured.

Only one business was robbed in all three neighborhoods in the affected months. The gang shootings that had been seen elsewhere through May 31 had not been seen much here.

Angie also wanted to talk about the city's Public Safety Advisory Committee, which meets 7 to 9 pm the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Kenton firehouse. They always give guest speakers. In July, they were set to talk about marijuana legalization policies in Portland.

On the subject of marijuana...

Angie shares info from a handout and reminds interested growers that new laws limit you to four plants — total — on your property. The limit is NOT four plants per person. It can be a misdemeanor even if you have just a few more; eight or nine total could be a felony. And it's still illegal to smoke in public. If you can see it from a public place — the sidewalk or the street or *the common areas in an apartment building* (emphasis mine) — those are public places. That may mean it's illegal to smoke cannabis on your front porch.

Angie also reminds that it's still technically a federal, state-line offense to carry marijuana between Washington and Oregon, even though both states have passed ballot measures making pot legal.

A man asks about having a tiny house or accessory dwelling unit (ADU, in the parlance of city planners). Angie says that's a good question. It could be two households. But she deferred to the police officers speaking later in July at the Public Safety Action Committee.

She also talked up National Night Out, starting Tuesday, Aug. 4.

LAND USE UPDATE

Josh, the chair of SJNA's land use committee, explains that the association plays a substantial role in shaping land use in St. Johns, in that it receives and responds to land use and permitting notices. Shamus clarifies that SJNA weighs in only when someone is asking for an exception to zoning requirements. That's called a variance. People challenging appeals normally pay fees for the right to pursue that process. Those fees are waived for appeals filed by neighborhood associations. And comments from NAs, as opposed to private actors, receive a bit more weight.

The land use committee meets the second Thursday of the month at the Main Street office. The group reviews ongoing and new proposals and projects. It's also been examining how to negotiate on affordability with new developers and find likeminded agencies.

New projects

- **Recently it was announced that The Baowry**, at Charleston and Ivanhoe, will be torn down and replaced with a pair of three-story structures, potentially offering live-work opportunities. The developer of that project used to own the house next door, too. He doesn't own that house now. It's just The Baowry.

A woman asks when the city decides to send notices about projects. Many neighbors apparently found out about the change after reading a blurb in Willamette Week. "How are supposed to know if the city doesn't advise us?"

Jen, a co-chair of SJNA, says the city filters notices through SJNA and that we, in turn, bring up projects at our committee and general meetings.

The woman then asks why the city wouldn't post a public notice? Shamus says, in this case, it's because there isn't a hearing planned. Jen says the city will sometimes do that when a public comment period is planned.

Josh reminds neighbors that SJNA often doesn't receive notices until late in the development timeline: when a final application is presented and there's a 30-day comment window.

Jen says project involving The Baowry property is clean in terms of zoning issues — no variances, no code irregularities — which means SJNA may not have much leverage. The neighborhood's leverage is largely contained to cases when developers or builders are asking for exceptions to current rules.

- **At Ivanhoe and Leavitt, there's an empty lot across from US Bank.**

It's part of a larger plan to redevelop the Letson Garage property, an earlier phase, in fact, Jen explains. The project consists of a 3-story building, with studio apartments, and 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. It's technically within Cathedral Park, because it's on the other side of Ivanhoe, but it's close enough that SJNA also receives notices.

At this point, a KBOO reporter with a microphone raises her hand and asks whether anyone within SJNA ever encourages neighbors, or speaks up on their behalf, to demand affordable apartments in these new developments. "How come you are not asking these developers to put in below-market units?"

The short answer? We are. Shamus says city planner Leslie Lum, the planning bureau's North Portland liaison, is working with SJNA's land use committee to help educate neighbors on how to better encourage affordable housing construction. The volunteers on the land use committee is working on a package of information and requests it would share with developers, with the hopes of agreeing to trade certain code variances within reason for additional affordable housing. "We're just citizen volunteers," Shamus says. "The proof is in coming to the meetings and listening to our discussions."

Karl Dinkelspiel of the city's housing bureau, and a frequent point person when Portland officials talk about anti-displacement strategies, is set to attend the next land use meeting to explain how affordable housing pencils out, or doesn't, for developers. SJNA has also joined a North Portland coalition group on affordable housing. "We are doing the work," Shamus says.

Josh says we already ask developers. Jen says SJNA can't always stop a project if it's in code.

Another woman speaks up and reminds the room that state lawmakers, during this year's legislative session, held up Oregon's longstanding ban on letting local governments require developers to set aside a portion of new units for below-market renters.

Other notes...

- Friends of Cathedral Park, the neighborhood group on the other side of Ivanhoe, down to the river, every other month on the second Tuesday, over at the water lab building.
- New Seasons, with construction proceeding apace at its N Lombard store, is appearing a public meeting hosted by the University Park NA at University of Portland. That meeting was set for July 27 at 7 pm. SJNA's regular board

meeting for July was called off so board members could attend that meeting instead.

- Jessica Bond presents on behalf of Clean Energy Works, a local nonprofit that helps single-family homeowners make their homes “work better.” They work with governments, lenders and contractors to help homeowners design and pay for improvements targeting heating/cooling efficiency, weatherization, seismic resiliency, and radon mitigation. They offer free “100-point performance checks.”

Right now, they’re intently focused on helping homeowners prepare for a megaquake along the Cascadia subduction zone. Scientists estimate a 10 percent chance of a magnitude-9 quake over the next 50 years, with a much more awful 33 percent of a(n only slightly less awful) magnitude-8 quake in that same span.

Clean Energy Works is working to help Portlanders obtain federal emergency grants that would pay for work on 100 homes, bolting foundations to help them avoid collapse, with almost no cost to homeowners. That work is vital for older homes, but can cost thousands of dollars.

THE LOMBARD/RICHMOND/CHARLESTON DEVELOPMENT

Shamus Lynsky, presiding officer and SJNA vice chair, explains that this discussion really dates to 2001, when the city worked with neighbors to craft the St. Johns/Lombard Plan.

It’s a community-constructed blueprint for how development in St. Johns should proceed over the next 20 years. It focuses on land use and transportation issues and responds proactively to community aspirations. The community, through the plan, expressed its desire for a more robust downtown business core. It also acknowledged that change and growth are both necessary and inevitable — but still compatible with livability.

The Bureau of Transportation approached the developers, Shamus says, and showed them the plan, which very specifically called for eliminating the slip lane on Lombard into downtown and creating a traditional intersection at Jersey and Richmond. PBOT officials also told the developers the city couldn’t afford to do the work on its own. So they made an offer: If the developers paid for the traffic changes, the city would compensate them with some of the freed-up rights of way. The developers then redesigned their plans to accommodate the city’s request.

This marks the development team’s second meeting with SJNA. They’ve also met with St. Johns Main Street business owners twice. (And SJNA’s land use committee)

Shamus also mentions the frenzied Facebook discussions in recent days, with rumors mushrooming to include The Baowry project (happening) and the destruction of Signal Station, the Parlour building, and Tulip Pastry (not happening... any of it).

The developer at Richmond/Charleston/Lombard does own Signal Station and the Parlour building. But that's all he owns. And he has no plans to attempt any further development on those sites.

The presentation then begins, with four large poster boards placed in the front of the room. They show the project's footprint and the current and reconfigured intersection. One of the posters lists three concerns looming over the project and downtown in general: a lack of signage defining the district, poor communication about closed streets, and the relocation of the St. Johns entry marquee.

Alan Jones, the project's architect, stands before them and says he's a huge fan of St. Johns and that he's been a seven-year resident.

He reads from the St. Johns/Lombard Plan. It mentions the eventual arrival of mixed-use developments and hopes for a vibrant shopping district. It also talks about a better-designed town center, the river and the need to retain industrial jobs.

Alan says the project took shape last September, as the developer, Farid Bolouri, assembled the lots at N Charleston and Lombard and design work started on a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use project with retail on the ground floor, apartments on the top two floors and 80 parking spots below ground.

The city, right now, is backed up with projects, so the team called the city earlier than usual for a guidance meeting on the project. PBOT called the day before that meeting and asked if the team could assemble in PBOT's offices to discuss the plan and the Lombard fixes.

Now? There's the slip lane, Alan says. It's akin to an exit lane, except it exits *into* St. Johns. It came to being because of an old Union Pacific line that swept into downtown. That right of way was later improved into what we know as Highway 30/Lombard, and then the town developed and the two awkwardly came together.

Alan says the St. Johns/Lombard Plan design called for a public plaza someday at the reconfigured intersection.

By creating that corner plaza, the hope was to improve life for pedestrians and help the corridor continue past the town border. "The town fabric breaks apart"

at that point, Alan says. “It’s really more vehicular in nature than pedestrian in nature.”

Alan also points out that the first light on Lombard after Mohawk comes *after* James John Elementary, the library and the playground outside the school. The plan calls for a stop light at Richmond. The turn light will allow people to cross. They’d also like to put a pedestrian crossing at Charleston and Lombard, too.

The development team was taken aback when they realized the scale of what was in the plan. PBOT admitted the plan was aspirational and that it lacked the funding to move the streets and add sidewalks and a new light. That’s when it offered to give up two parcels.

Alan explained how the rights of way will be used. One piece will be privately owned but publicly accessible. That’s the plaza on land closest to The Colony. The other, at the newly designed corner, will be public and open and never developed. Adding the former right of way land also will allow the project to add more underground parking spaces.

Early design discussions have mentioned murals, a fountain, and tables and chairs. The plaza near The Colony will be generously landscaped to buffer it from traffic coming from Highway 30. The other plaza

The building will be set back from the planned plaza at Lombard/Richmond. They might add tables and chairs. They might also commission an artist to do a piece. “It won’t be closed off from the sidewalk in any way,” Alan says. “The building opens up to the plaza, the plaza opens up to the sidewalk.”

The other plaza, near the Colony, aka Richmond Plaza, will have generous landscaping “to buffer the feel of cars hurtling at you” from Highway 30. It will help pull people into the internal workings of the building’s ground floor, likely an assemblage of 400- to 700-square-foot offices, studios and other work spaces.

Alan starts talking about how the building will be designed. They’re not interested in large-box stores. They’re hoping for smaller shops, with the facades broken apart. So far, nine or so retail spots are in the plans. The larger spots are 2,500 square feet, perfect for a mid-size restaurant. Smaller storefronts would line Charleston, too.

The corner spots would likely be reserved for cafes and eateries, because they open to the plazas and have more sidewalk space.

They might change plans for the traffic signals at Jersey. Now, westbound traffic into town from Jersey isn’t allowed. PBOT would like to see Jersey feeding

downtown. But neighbors may not want that, because that might lead to cut-through traffic and traffic backing up past homes.

“We can see how that would be the case,” Alan says, “so we’re willing to go back and talk to PBOT about that.”

The renderings he presents show steel street-level facades with masonry on the top two floors. But the building’s three main modules are all meant to look distinctive, with setbacks, varied storefront treatments, and bricks of different colors.

“We don’t see a big, full-block monolithic building,” Alan says, explaining that something more traditional better reflects St. Johns. He mentions the streetcar era that birthed many of Portland’s most iconic older neighborhoods and how the building block of those neighborhoods was the 200-foot lot, often broken down into 100- or 50-foot storefronts.

Alan says the project will face what’s called a “Type 2” design review hearing. Type 2 means the project will be reviewed by city staff. If a Type 3 hearing was in the cards, the project would require a public hearing. Neighbors will still get to weigh in with the city, but instead of a hearing, they’ll have a 30-day window to submit comments and call planners with concerns.

That step hasn’t happened yet, though.

The audience begins asking questions and sharing feedback:

- How many total living units? 106.

But with 80 spots?

Alan says “instinct would say 1 to 1, right?” But he says the city requires only 33 spots for every 100 units. “We have 80.” (Underground. The project will also share the parking lot next to the library.) He also notes the city requires 150 bike parking spaces for every 100 units, by way of contrast.

- A man named John says the project seems “really big” and out of whack with St. Johns’ small town feel. He thinks the slip lane nicely brings people in that Ivy Island — which will be torn out — is distinctive, lovely, iconic and a “nice introduction.”

He suggests fixing the blind intersection at Charleston by setting whatever building replaces the old Weir’s building back five feet and also by adding a bike lane or sidewalk to the slip lane.

- Barbara Quinn says “You can blame me and others for that plan,” and that the “slip lane is a blind curve from hell.” She says the current lack of a crosswalk at Charleston and Lombard is intentional because “we didn’t want kids crossing in that spot to school.”

At the time, Ivy Island was a hill messy with ivy. Now, Barbara says, drivers will have a clean sightline into the town center instead of zooming around to find oneself suddenly there. “Ten years ago, we couldn’t get developers here. This is kind of what we were wishing for. We were dreaming about this 10 years ago.”

- Will the project be all rentals? Yeah.

- Another man asks about the entrance to the underground garage, guessing it has to be on Charleston — spilling cars out next to the library and across from the school and adding to cut-through traffic down Charleston, Smith and Fessenden.

“Has anybody been talking about this, the negative impacts on the other side of the project?”

Alan says he’s heard some about construction conflicts involving the school. “I understand your concern.” But he’s heard nothing on the ramp issues.

He says ODOT doesn’t allow new curb cuts on a highway like Highway 30, ruling out putting the entrance on that side of the project. And the city won’t allow driveways too close to an intersection.

The entrance, he confirms, is in the back corner right next to the library. “We believe it is a safe distance from the intersection, from the crosswalk.” He argues 80 cars is not a lot in comparison to the cars driving down Highway 30 and Lombard.

- Shamus steps in to extend the meeting 10 more minutes, but says he plans on capping this particular discussion at five minutes.

Shamus says he understands concerns about conflicts with the school. He says the school could talk with parents about shifting pickup and dropoff to Kellogg and away from Charleston. He also mentions adding planters to divert traffic at Charleston and Central.

- A man who’s “never been a fan of Ivy Island” says he feels for the people who worked on the new, non-ivy plantings there. “Would you transplant what’s there?” Alan says they’ve been emailing with Main Street to see what kind of plants are there, which would guide what time of year transplanting might make sense. They would need a place to put those plants and would like help.

- A man worries about buses getting through that intersection. Josh Leslie, SJNA's land use chair, says Ivanhoe will likely become the new route for buses through town. The man then says he wants buses to remain on Lombard and says Ivanhoe is already congested (because of the bridge)

Alan says the new turn will be a bit easier than other turns in town. There won't be a curb extension on the new intersection, for example, making things tight. They will, however, add those at Charleston.

- A speaker named Scott wonders about roundabouts, saying they are poorly understood but effective at reducing speeds. Traffic lights increase speed sometimes, he says, because people gun it to get through lights.

Alan says turning radii get bigger when ODOT is involved (ODOT manages Highway 30 before it swoops into town). He said that kind of radius wouldn't fit here.

- A man asks about a timeline for completion. Alan says work would start in January or February 2016 and last 15 months, into early to mid 2017

- Shamus says businesses have asked the developers to wait until after the holidays to do significant street closings. Alan says street work would likely be first thing, with the slip lane out and work starting on the new intersection by February.

- A woman wanted to talk more about the streetcar and how the slip lane was made for rail. She's worried not having the lane will make running a streetcar to St. Johns — admittedly unlikely — impossible.

Alan says the new turning radius is still doable for a streetcar. He knows that based on projects he's working on streetcar lines in other parts of the city.

- A man asks if they've considered a "your speed" speed-display sign or rumble strips, which he says are also mentioned in the St. Johns/Lombard Plan as traffic-calming options. (That's true, but the intersection is the preferred option.) He'd like to have two lanes swooping in together to downtown, in part because he worries about traffic backing up near his house on Mohawk.

Alan replies that the current plan is best for pedestrian safety and that it's also what city wants.

Shamus reiterates it's worth talking to PBOT about preventing cut-through traffic on Smith and Fessenden.

- A woman asks if the mural on the Charleston side of the Weir's building can be saved. She says it would help her not to freak out. Alan liked the idea.
- Shamus asks about the marquee. Are their plans to include that in one of the plazas?

Alan says it may not work well in the current design for the Richmond/Lombard corner. The Fixin' To, he says, has expressed interest in hosting it. *(After the meeting, once provisional minutes for this discussion were posted, Alan asked to retract that statement, sharing information that suggested an agreement about the sign might be out of reach.)*

- A woman who saw Alan's last presentation says big change is really hard. She suggests doing whatever's possible to retain existing elements.

"I totally support that," Alan says. She talks about saving the trees planed on Ivy Island. "You can't add an old tree."

That was the last question. The presentation ends with applause.

EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A N Kellogg homeowner has been shooting and editing portraits of neighbors as he encounters them out walking around. The vacant Huk Lab building's current owners will let him set up a studio inside in August. He'll hang dozens of past portraits there and shoot fresh portraits of St. Johns residents for free.
- SJNA board elections are coming soon, in October. You have to attend either the August or September meeting to be able to vote in October for board members. "We are all volunteers and we need your help."
- The Constitutional, an art walk/street fair organized as an extension to Saturday's farmers market, is planned next for Aug. 22.
- Roosevelt High School: The fight over a more equitable career training and technical education center at the remodeled high school appears to be headed in a better direction with the new board.
- Willamette River Revival was on Aug. 2, featuring a traditional salmon bake by the Grand Ronde tribes and an environmental fair. SJNA was there, helping Bike Index register bicycles.
- On Saturday, August 15, the Port of Portland will open Terminal 4 for behind-the-scenes tours and boat rides as part of its annual Seaport Celebration.

- SJNA's August 10 general meeting will feature a twist. We'll meet at the St. Johns Community Center at 6:30 instead of 7, conduct some housekeeping business and then go on a "walkability tour" of the neighborhood led by Scott Bricker, a new resident who also happens to be the executive director of the national group America Walks.

The meeting adjourns at 8:46 p.m.