

SULLIVAN'S GULCH LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Holladay Park Plaza Community Room

6:30 p.m., Thursday, December 22, 2016

Members: DJ Heffernan, Connie Cleaton, Miles Crumley, Kathy Hansen, Andrea Meyer, Bob Leopold
Guests: Davia Larson, Chris Tanner

1. Davia Larson introduced herself. She's doing a profile on Sullivan's Gulch on her website wheresyourlivingroom.com and would like to contact a wide range of residents to get photos: homeowners, renters, people with ADU's, etc. It is a lifestyle blog, not political.
2. Chairman's report:
 - There was a glitch and our letter about Gabriel's Bakery didn't get into the City's record. DJ will try to get it added.
 - Portland Streetcar was at the Broadway-Weidler Alliance looking for support for its proposed streetcar extension on NE Broadway-Weidler to Hollywood. Other possible extensions are NE Sandy to Hollywood, up NE MLK to about Alberta, in the SW Macadam corridor, or in NW Portland to Montgomery Park.
 - After they narrow down the options they will begin design and look for funds to cover the local share. That will take about two years.
 - The Broadway route seems to have the fewest problems, though they would probably have to tear down a structure at 24th in order to make the turn from Weidler to Broadway.
 - It wasn't clear that the small businesses on Broadway were in support. Could they survive lengthy construction in front of their stores?
 - There is no rush to reply unless we want to support the Broadway corridor, and we are not ready to do that. We need more information, including how it would affect existing bus routes and whether there is demand for this line. The eastside line is not attracting good ridership and it slows down the number 6 bus on MLK. It has also not spurred the kind of development they were looking for because zoning in the Central Eastside district is not appropriate.
 - We would also definitely want to tie our support to decoupling Broadway and Weidler, If they built the eastbound streetcar on Weidler, that would make decoupling much harder; but if we can insist that both directions be on Broadway, that would implement a long-standing goal of SGNA.
 - If they select Broadway as one of their final corridors we will definitely want to get involved. If that happens, DJ will invite them to make a presentation to SGNA.
 - DJ talked to Nan Stark, our planning liaison, about updating our neighborhood plan. She was very supportive and will try to find funding for it. We might use a student intern to take high quality photos of all buildings in the neighborhood or do a demographic study or work on open space design.
 - We could look a creative ways to deal with the many nonconforming multifamily structures in the neighborhood. We could grandfather them in if they go through design review, but this could be difficult since the City wants to reduce the areas subject to design review. Another approach would be to let them sell their density to more appropriate locations when the structure is torn down, replacing it with one that conforms to the residential zoning.
 - The Sears wing of Lloyd Center will be converted to offices.
 - Holladay Park will begin construction on their annex on January 9. They have sent immediate neighbors a note with contact information in case there are any problems.

3. Andrea brought up several problems associated with the new bike route on NE 26th:
 - They changed the stop sign pattern and didn't put up signs warning motorists of the change.
 - At 27th and Weidler there are no stop signs. Every other street is stopped in one direction, so motorists are likely to assume the other way stops if they do not have a stop sign.
 - Street lighting is very poor along the bike route, increasing safety issues.

4. 21st and Multnomah intersection:
 - The intersection is confusing and functions worse than before.
 - They will upgrade and retime the light after the apartments are built.
 - The traffic study for the apartment on the corner did not recommend any improvements to the intersection.
 - Synchronizing the lights along 21st/20th could help, since the back-up extends to NE Irving. Miles will email the traffic engineers in January.

5. DJ led a brainstorming session on how to approach the neighborhood plan.
 - We should integrate climate change and social justice into the plan rather than have them be separate sections: set guidelines favoring street trees that do not block solar access.
 - Neighborhood identity and livability might be a good place to start, needing less effort to build consensus. Could we have a gateway to the neighborhood like Irvington? A common design on street lights or toppers for street signs?
 - We can establish guidelines for us to support new development beyond what the city requires, encouraging developers to go in the direction we want.
 - We can bargain with developers to set aside public spaces since there's no large spot for a park. It can be helpful to be able to call the owner when there are problems: Fred Meyer responds to complaints about their park.
 - We should also consider flexible amenities: using empty storefronts as meeting or classroom areas, have a bookmobile park in the Lloyd Center area on a regular basis.
 - The City does not have a park plan, so we miss opportunities like the Grant Park development to get new public spaces. We should advocate for public spaces along the Gulch bike trail when it is built. We could also make a side street into a mall or mini-park.
 - Transportation is key to livability and will affect all our other plans. We should minimize through traffic while enabling easier travel to and from places within the neighborhood. Getting data on the percentage of through traffic on Broadway/Weidler would be useful.
 - A parking district would help on the west end of the neighborhood, but we should also look at how to engage residents in reducing car use and encouraging developers to provide spaces for car share organizations.
 - Joe Weston will be selling his apartments at some point. The City could buy them for affordable housing, upgrading their appearance at the same time.
 - We are already more dense than the Pearl and have met the 2030 density goal already—before the big new projects have been completed.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 26, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., HPP Community Room

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.