



VIEWPOINTS

May 2014

SOUTHWEST HILLS RESIDENTIAL LEAGUE Neighborhood Association

SWHRL 2013-2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President, Treasurer:

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Land Use Chair:

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Transportation Chair:

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Adjunct Board Members:

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Simone Goldfeder

Editor: Nancy Seton

We welcome questions,
comments or concerns.

Contact us at:

swhrl@swni.org

www.swni.org/swhrl

or

SWHRL

PO BOX 1033

PORTLAND, OR 97207

Upcoming SWHRL Quarterly Membership Meeting, Wednesday May 21, 2014: Elections & Healthy Watershed

All SWHRL residents: Please join us on Wednesday, May 21, 6:30-8:30 pm at Ainsworth School, for our next Quarterly membership meeting. We will hold the annual election for SWHRL Board members and officers, so it is important that we have a quorum of the membership to invest the new Board to continue to represent your interests. Come tell us what those interests are! You can be a SWHRL member with voting rights if you are within the SWHRL neighborhood boundaries by just signing up with your name and contact details.

In addition to the election, we will have a special program on landscaping for watershed health, stormwater management, and habitat restoration in the SW Hills. Jen Seamans from SWNI's Southwest Watershed Resource Center will offer tips on landscaping on our steep clay slopes to protect against landslides and flooding. Representatives from Friends of Marquam Nature Park, the Backyard Habitat Certification Program, and the Hillsdale Community Church, which achieved a Backyard Habitat certification, will share their news.



Jen Seamans on new path



Backyard Habitat

There will also be an update on TriMet transit service (or lack thereof) in our area. Your SWHRL Board has been urging TriMet to restore some of our midday #51 bus runs, and to give us service to Hillsdale – without success so far. If you want to add your support for these or any other priorities, please let TriMet hear your views. The more requests the better.

http://www.trimet.org/mailforms/comments_general

A Big Thank You to outgoing SWHRL President Don Livingstone for his 3 years of service!

Ballot for May 21st vote: SWHRL Board – Proposed Slate of Officers for May 2014 - May 2015

President: Nancy Seton
Vice President: (Open)
Treasurer: Kelly Reece
Land Use Chair: Don Livingstone
Transportation Chair: Sean Baioni
Secretary: Margaret Gossage
Communications/Outreach (Open)

Additional Board members:
Sean Baioni
Jim Breithaupt (SWHRL Historian)
Lee Doss
Andrew Holtz
Gloria Reich
Kara Stone

SWHRL welcomes a visitor from Japan

In March 2014, Associate Professor Takatoshi Muneno of Shiga University, Japan, visited Portland to observe the workings of our neighborhood association system and their influence on city policy development. According to Dr. Muneno, the Japanese look to San Francisco, Portland and New York as models for neighborhood organization. His research targets citizen involvement in policy making in Japan and the USA. He has already written a book based on his observations of San Francisco neighborhood structure, and is now focusing on the role of neighborhood associations in Portland.

During his visit Dr. Muneno attended meetings of the SWHRL Board, the North East Coalition of Neighborhoods Board, and spoke with the Neighborhood Program Coordinator of ONI (Portland’s Office of Neighborhood Involvement).

Dr. Muneno says: “As a part of my research, I spent six days in Portland visiting some neighborhood associations and district coalitions. Especially, open-mindedness and activity of SWHRL Board Meeting was very impressive. However, I am not familiar with the neighborhood involvement system of Portland. I want to revisit Portland and get more information, so that I could realize citizenship of Portlanders in more detail.”

But the highlight of Dr. Muneno’s visit may have been the “good sunny day” at PSU Farmer’s Market: “The Market is one of most impressive places I have visited in United States.”



Professor Takatoshi Muneno at PSU Farmers' Market

Improving Neighborhood Communications

The SWHRL Board will be working on adding content to the SWHRL neighborhood page on the SWNI website, www.swni.org/swhrl. This will serve as our main SWHRL website, where you can find information on what’s happening in the neighborhood. Please check it out, and if you have any ideas on content you’d like to see or contribute, please contact us at swhrl@swni.org. Please also sign up to receive the SWHRL E-newsletter by email. Click on “Join our List” on the SWHRL neighborhood page on the SWNI website.

WANTED: SWHRL History

New SWHRL resident Jim Breithaupt has agreed to be our SWHRL historian! He would like to document your neighborhood stories and photos – stories you know of notable characters, landmarks, and events, the history of your home and its various residents, of where you moved from, when and why. And if you know of someone who is a repository of old stories, please have them contact Jim Breithaupt or Nancy Seton, or give us their contact details. For instance, we would love to get in touch with Tom McAllister or Owen Cramer, so we can record their wonderful stories of the Southwest Hills in the early 1900's.

Please contact:

Jim Breithaupt: jlbellow@comcast.net or
Nancy Seton: nancyseton@comcast.net (503) 224-3840



SWHRL Land Use Report

Land Use Notice LU 14-120457 AD: The request to exceed allowed lot coverage and height for a new home to be built at 2572 SW Buckingham Ave. was approved by BDS. SWHRL sent a response to the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) asking that the applicant not exceed the allowed lot coverage. We are concerned about adding any extra impermeable area to this very steep slope in a landslide hazard zone. We suggested that to improve slope stability the applicant add more trees and shrubs and possibly an eco-roof to absorb stormwater. BDS land use notices for SW Portland can be found at: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/42263>



Disaster preparedness and community building

How well do you know your neighbors? Many of us are fortunate to live on streets with block parties and neighborhood potlucks. We welcome new neighbors, share neighborhood stories, chase off car prowlers. Are we bucking the trend? [An article](#) in *The Atlantic*, “It Helps to Like Your Neighbor During a Natural Disaster,” references Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam’s book *Bowling Alone*, “which argued that most Americans — even those who live in safe neighborhoods — are spending less time socializing with their neighbors. People aren’t as active in their communities and are less likely to join groups like churches, parent-teacher organizations, or bowling leagues (the example for which the book is named).”

The article continues: “What does neighborliness have to do with storm preparedness?”

Quite a bit, apparently. A study from the Associated Press and National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago found that towns and neighborhoods with a strong sense of social connection recovered faster after Hurricane Sandy. People living in the areas that recovered from the storm the fastest were more likely to say that others can be trusted (44 vs. 33 percent) and that the disaster brought out the best in their neighbors (81 vs. 63 percent).” It concludes: “The less time Americans spend bowling alone during their everyday lives, the less time it will take them to recover from the next superstorm that hits their home.”

Speaking of disaster preparedness, your Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) needs additional volunteers. Team members are trained in emergency first aid, rescue and communications techniques to help those in our neighborhood in the event of any disaster, such as earthquake, mudslide, or windstorm. Monthly meetings are held to update skills. Two team members have HAM licenses, and all have local radios so we will be able to communicate with other city emergency centers. In the event of a disaster the NET team will meet at Strohecker’s parking lot, thanks to the generosity of Butch Turner and Bob Lamb.

The volunteer training is free and a new session starts in June. Please join us! For more information, contact Jeremy Van Keuren, Portland Bureau of Emergency Services at Jeremy.vankeuren@portlandoregon.gov. Kelly Reece, Team Leader, SWH Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET)

Important To Sign Up For Safety Notices

On Wednesday, April 16, a police officer and a K9 dog were shot at the corner of SW Capital Highway and Lobelia Street, while pursuing an armed suspect. The police issued a reverse 911 call to alert neighbors to stay inside. The only recipients of the reverse 911 call were people who have land telephone lines, or had signed their cell phones up at public alerts.org. If you do not have a land line, it is important for you to sign up for police alerts at www.publicalerts.org.

Upcoming 2014 SWHRL quarterly all-member meetings/forums:

Wednesday May 21, 6:30-8:30pm: Board Election & Habitat Restoration / Landscaping for Watershed Health

Wednesday October 15, 6:30-8:30pm: (tentatively) Neighborhood History

Where: Ainsworth School, SW Vista Ave. at Spring Street

Sunday August 17, 1-4pm: Annual picnic in Strohecker's Park with a barbeque provided by Strohecker's.

Meet with Tri-Met representative for briefing on Tri-Met transit plans for Southwest Portland.

SWHRL Board Meetings

Anyone is welcome to attend the monthly SWHRL Board meetings held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6:30-8:30pm at Ascension Episcopal Chapel. This is a good opportunity to bring any neighborhood concerns to the attention of the Board. The SWHRL neighborhood association is tasked with addressing any issue or matter that affects the Neighborhood, including issues related to land use and zoning, traffic, transportation and parking, crime and safety, nuisances and conflict resolution, education, social welfare, charitable organizations and communication. Contact the SWHRL Board President or any Board member to be added to the agenda.

Southwest Hills Residential League Neighborhood Association Membership

SWHRL is dedicated to preserve and enhance the character, safety, and livability of the neighborhood. We are a state-licensed non-profit organization. Every resident or a person representing a business or property owner within the League's boundaries is eligible to be a voting member of SWHRL. Just sign up with your name, address, and other contact details at any SWHRL meeting, by mail, e-mail swhrl@swni.org, or via our webpage.

Your donations help pay for the newsletter and various community events. Contributions are tax-deductible if checks are made out to Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., which is a 501(c)(3), with a note: "For SWHRL." Mail to Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., 7688 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, OR 97219. Suggested contribution levels:

_____ Up to \$35, Member _____ Up to \$50, Sponsor _____ \$100 and over, Patron

SPECIAL ADDITION!

Update on Citywide Tree Project

Some of you may remember the popular January 2008 SWHRL Tree Forum, where we looked at our relationship with trees over the decades in the SW Hills. Representatives from Portland's Parks and Recreation Urban Forestry participated in the panel discussion. City planners who have been working for years on the Citywide Tree Regulatory Improvement Project attended our meetings. SWHRL wrote letters and testified in support of the long-awaited improvement to city tree codes. Now City Council is deliberating over the amount that will be in the FY 2014-15 budget to implement the new tree code, effective January 2015. You can make your views known at the city's Budget Committee Public Hearing on May 15, 6:30-8:30pm at City Hall, Council Chambers, 1221 SW Fourth Avenue, or contact the Mayor's Office and City Council members before the end of May 2014.

From the Office of Mayor Charlie Hales:

“My proposed budget will launch the new Tree Code that the City Council adopted unanimously three full years ago,” Mayor Hales said. “Developed with broad community participation and support, Portland’s new Tree Code provides basic, common-sense safeguards for trees in our city. And it replaces current rules which are confusing, unfair and inadequate to support tree canopy goals. The community has been very patient and it’s time to move forward with protecting our tree canopy.”

From City Staff:

The Citywide Tree Project was adopted in April 2011 in response to community concern over the loss of trees as the city continues to grow and develop. Southwest Portland residents led the charge in convincing the City Council in 2007 to fund the development of a stronger, clearer, set of rules to protect and enhance Portland’s tree canopy. Stakeholders and city bureaus participated throughout the project, and the final package had support from an unusually diverse mix, including neighborhoods, Audubon, and the Homebuilders Association.

The Mayor’s proposed budget includes 4 new positions in the Bureaus of Development Services and Parks and Recreation, to improve customer service, help process tree permits, ensure tree replacement, and implement the new tree preservation and planting requirements on development sites.

Trees provide many benefits in addition to making Portland a beautiful city. They help keep our air and water cool and clean, and reduce stormwater runoff. They stabilize steep slopes and reduce risks from landslides and flooding. Studies in Portland show that trees increase property value and can help reduce crime.

The Tree Project consolidates and updates the City’s tree-related rules which are inconsistent, inequitable, and spread among many code titles, making them hard to find and understand. Title 11, Trees will establish clear, simple standards to increase tree preservation and tree planting on development sites. Changes to the Zoning Code (Title 33) will improve the quality of trees preserved when property is subdivided by focusing on preservation of large healthy trees, native trees and tree groves.

Title 11 also streamlines and standardizes the current tree removal permit system. Tree permits will be applied consistently based on the size and health of the tree, rather than the type of property the tree is growing on. Finally, the Tree Project package includes measures to improve enforcement and customer service, including a single-point-of-contact at the city to respond to questions and complaints, and a tree manual or website to provide information about the benefits of trees, tree rules, and community tree programs and activities.

Tree Regulatory Improvement Project Budget: With the effective date of the new tree code in January 2015, the Mayor’s Proposed Budget includes funding in both PP&R and the Bureau of Development Services. The Parks funding totals \$217,812 ongoing General Fund and \$128,625 ongoing fee revenue. These funds support two new tree inspectors and one dedicated customer service specialist. Three positions are added to implement the project including two inspectors and one customer service representative. One of the added inspectors is funded only in FY 2015-16, after the initial launch of the program. Additional staffing may be added if required.

For more information on Tree Project implementation contact Mieke Keenan, Program Coordinator at Mieke.Keenan@portlandoregon.gov

Have a tree emergency?

- Call Urban Forestry at 503-823-4489 between 7:00 AM-3:30 PM, Monday-Friday
- Call Stanton Yard at 503-823-1700 all other days and hours