

Candidate Questionnaire – Adam Light

Why are you interested in serving on the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association (HNA) Board? *

I have been a resident of SW Portland for almost 20 years. Four years ago, my wife Melissa and I made a very deliberate choice to move to Hillsdale with our two children young children. We found no other neighborhood with the same sense of community. We love the closeness of neighborhood schools from elementary through high school and we participate and volunteer extensively in the schools. I want to expand the sense of connectedness for neighbors of all ages and backgrounds.

What strengths and perspectives would you bring to the HNA Board? *

Professionally, I help teams and organizations become more productive, innovative, and effective. I've run my own consulting practice for almost ten years. I know how to build alignment and get things done. And I'm a skilled facilitator of meetings and groups.

I received my Ph.D. in Geography and bring a keen understanding of the dynamics of human and natural systems that integrates economics, urban geography, ecology, geology, and land use.

What neighborhood issues and topics do you feel strongly about and why? *

I feel strongly about creating goodwill and neighbor-to-neighbor connections through volunteer action and shared interests. Hillsdale residents have incredible skills and knowledge and I believe that a well-informed, well-connected neighborhood can be a tremendous source of positive change. I envision HNA as a welcoming inquisitive institution that brings neighbors together to solve problems, create opportunities, and build networks.

How will you ensure that the HNA reflects the views of the neighborhood as a whole? *

Simply stated, I'll facilitate neighborhood conversations. When I previously served as an Alternate on the Board, I conducted multiple public meetings which were always interactive. I will continue to focus on broad participation, high-bandwidth communication, and ongoing data collection that informs what the focus should be.

What would you like to accomplish as a Board Member? What would be your priorities? *

At present, 99.9% of Hillsdale residents are not counted as voting "Members" of the HNA; I find this shameful and absurd! My top priority, therefore, will be to open wide the doors of

participation. I would like to begin by rewriting the by-laws to correct the vicious cycle of non-participation that has created an echo chamber.

Second, I will insist that the HNA Board get of the meeting room and into the community. Direct, continuing interactions (both in-person and online) should form the foundation of our vision and that vision should be validated by broad feedback.

Which Board committees and activities would you like to participate in? (Options include: parks, schools, land use, watershed, etc) *

With my children in kindergarten and third grade, I am keenly interested in schools. I am also interested in bringing new development to Hillsdale in ways that benefit both current and future neighbors. I have helped several of neighbors move forward with developing new housing on their existing lots and I believe we get the best quality and the greatest value to our community when development is home grown.

What is your prior volunteer experience? Have you previously served in a board or leadership role? How have you interacted with local government around land-use or public policy issues? *

Since I moved to Hillsdale, my biggest volunteer accomplishment was co-leading fundraising, design, and construction of the new Hillsdale Community Playground at Rieke Elementary. I also served previously as an alternate on the HNA Board.

Previously I was an active member of an organization called Social Venture Partners where I participated in all aspects of “venture philanthropy” including grantmaking and providing pro-bono consulting services to a range of highly regarded Portland non-profits. My most significant contributions focused on Board and staff development, IT infrastructure, and strategic planning.

When I lived in what is now the South Portland neighborhood I worked extensively with the Bureau of Development Services as I completely remodeled my 1903 home in an historic district. I also participated throughout the public process associated with building the OHSU tram and the related pedestrian bridge across I-5.

How will you work with Board Members and residents who do not share your views? *

I will build relationships based on direct and honest communication and I will run effective meetings and other forums where everyone can participate to produce something that no one could achieve individually.

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