

**Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods
Land Use and Transportation Committee
Wednesday, May 22nd, 2013, 7:00pm
Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods Office, 4815 NE 7th Ave., Portland, OR**

MINUTES

Present

David Sweet, Sabin/Co-chair
Carol Gossett, Sullivan's Gulch
Don Rouzie, Sabin
Garlynn Woodsong, Concordia
Steve Cole, Irvington
Leigh Rappaport, King
Irene Corbin, King
Clark Pope, King
Carrie White, King
Paul Anthony, Humboldt
Jim Brown, Alameda
Allan Rudwick, Eliot
Betsy Reese, Eliot
Eliana Markel, In Other Words Feminist Community Center
Susie Thurston, In Other Words
Mary Walsh, In Other Words
Molly Keahilani, In Other Words
Tom Armstrong, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Debbie Bischoff, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Shoshana Cohen, NECN staff
Benjamin Adrian, NECN staff

Introductions

No additions to agenda

Committee quorum is not present, so past minute approval is delayed.

Betsy Reese, safety improvement project at N Broadway and Flint

Betsy introduces herself as an Eliot neighbor and relays her experience watching the problematic intersection of N Broadway, Flint and Wheeler Avenues. Betsy took the PSU Traffic and Transportation Class and the following presentation was her class project.

Betsy goes through the presentation, which is available [online here](#). The problems with this intersection have been documented in the media, and Betsy's presentation illustrates the main conflicts. Motor vehicles traveling along Broadway are heading down an incline on a curve. One major conflict was with these vehicles turning right onto Wheeler, which has already been addressed by prohibiting right turns onto Wheeler. Moreover, the slip ramp off of Interstate 5 brings significant traffic. ODOT has announced

plans to close this slip ramp. Vehicles are still permitted to turn right onto Flint, which creates a conflict area with bicycles.

Lastly, Betsy points out the number of people walking or biking up Broadway and seek to go north on Flint. These persons must maneuver across Broadway (and possibly Weidler), and then are in an against-traffic position on the sidewalk to get to Flint. Since most traffic is heading down a slope with primarily one-way movement, people driving do not anticipate people heading up towards them and this creates dangerous situations.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation has applied for a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation. Betsy is seeking LUTC support for the N Broadway Safety Crossing Enhancement Project. This project has already made the first round in the application process and the will be making the final decisions in the upcoming months. Betsy displays initial drawings of the proposal which would include a signal to help people cross N Broadway, remove the motor vehicle turnaround in the parking island of the Left Bank building, and remove the I-5 slip ramp. See presentation file for more details.

Steve moves for NECN to write a letter of support for the N Broadway Safety Crossing Enhancement project. Seconded and approved unanimously. No abstentions.

Benjamin will draft a letter for the NECN Board to consider in June.

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability Gentrification Study, Tom Armstrong, BPS

Tom introduces himself and explains the origin of this project, which originated out of the Portland Plan and is focused on addressing vulnerability to neighborhoods undergoing gentrification. Worked with various partners including PSU Professor Lisa Bates.

Project is producing a risk assessment map. Secondly, it also had a survey of what other cities have done to mitigate gentrification or displacement.

Gentrification and displacement are used interchangeably. Meaning a neighborhood which has increasing property values such that residents or business owners and have to choose to leave on a voluntary basis. Involuntary displacement, such as occurred with urban renewal in the 1960s is not the focus of this study.

Risk assessment looks at various factors in a neighborhood to identify at risk areas. For instance, how property values change over time, and how this affects different parts of the city.

Focus is on housing component. Study seeks select key indicators to identify neighborhoods at risk. When city investment or other projects are going on, the map can flag for the City that there are deeper demographic changes afoot and respond accordingly.

Four vulnerability factors:

1. Renters
2. Low-income households (at or below 80% of median income for Portland)

3. Education attainment (without college degree)
4. Communities of color

Census tract level analysis seeks tracts with higher than city averages in the above categories. More renters than average? Received one point. Maps reveal areas where multiple risk factors overlap. This is based on 2010 vulnerability levels.

Next, the study looks at demographic changes from 2000 to 2010. Looking for changes that track differently than the City as a whole. Increase in income, education (or decrease) in non-white population.

Last factor is to look at housing market conditions: low-value areas (investment opportunity), rapidly appreciating areas (shift from low to median values, or to high) and adjacent areas to capture a spillover effect.

So what does this show? Some neighborhoods have remained on the low end, or the high end, such as east Portland or west Portland, respectively.

Certain neighborhoods are undergoing the changes right now. Categorized as early stage, dynamic, or late. Late stage is where many people have already been displaced and neighborhoods have become more stable.

What are the uses of these typologies? Track neighborhoods over time. More importantly, when the City does a major investment, we have indicators that point out where we need to bring additional resources to the process early on to mitigate negative impacts from the investment. Nature of investments can make it difficult to prevent negative impacts.

Trimet is looking at high capacity transit in SE Portland, for instance. It would be a multi-million dollar investment. Looking at this map, we can already see areas around Powell are in early stages of gentrification. As such, the community engagement will need to be sensitive to these populations well before actual transit investments.

Differences between Cully and Boise- homeowners in Cully, more renters in Boise. As such, the City would need different policies to address the situation.

The City knows they need to do more, for instance Community Benefit Agreements, technical assistance, more.

In the upcoming Comprehensive Plan, BPS is looking to use tools to mitigate some of the displacement risks. Study should be published shortly, and will be made available publicly, including the maps.

Why aren't you including the large scale urban renewal project displacement? Like Legacy Emmanuel Hospital expansion? Tom says they don't see this type of displacement occurring today, but rather more subtle impacts of gentrification that accompany projects like light rail.

Buildings without cars? Is this part of the mitigation plan? Perhaps, off-street parking spots play a role in affordability. Tom doesn't see it directly impacting, it's an indirect connection.

What about changing size of new houses? Such as we're seeing around Concordia? Comp Plan has considered this issue at the residential compatibility PEG. Tom says yes, this is an issue. Not clear how high this is on the list of priorities. In the upcoming months and implementing changes to the Comp Plan, it will be determined how the City is looking to prioritize efforts.

Debbie says this is an opportunity to us as community members to get involved with the Comp Plan update process. The City will respond to community concerns. What aspect of displacement should the City focus on? Renters, single occupancy homes tear downs?

How does this specifically apply to renters? Difficult to pinpoint renters, but trends in data can be analyzed. For instance, you could have a change in renters, but from low-income renters to high-income renters. This is why BPS is looking at multiple indicators to capture as much as possible.

Skinny houses? With garages in front? Do we have an influence on these? This issue comes up periodically, and the Comp Plan update could be an opportunity to look at policies that could impact this type of development.

Three story skinny houses that block light. We see these developments come in and developers are asking for adjustments to build.

Jim points out section 5 in the Comp Plan, which he attended PEG discussions on. He thinks it is a good policy area to help address consistency in neighborhood developments.

Debbie suggests pushing for this area of policy to be addressed. Tom points out that City Council ultimately sets the direction of the Comp Plan and how planning work is prioritized.

Who allows for variance? One person mentions a specific garage and asks how it can be checked for complying with an adjustment or not.

As we have a lot of non LUTC members present, Chair David brings up how your neighborhood association and the NECN LUTC is a great venue to address development issues. Getting involved with your neighborhood association and Land Use committee helps bring neighbors together to become empowered and engage with development. Your neighborhood may not have a Land Use committee, but you can create one and NECN can help.

Are developers looking at similar maps? For investment opportunities? Probably not demographic change, but certainly the housing market conditions. Looking to get a step ahead of the developers.

Rent Control? No, state law prohibiting rent control. Inclusionary zoning is also prohibited by state law.

Housing opportunity analysis? In conjunction with this study, the housing bureau has been looking at their location policy. Where should the Bureau invest in housing?

A housing opportunity analysis looks at factors such as transit, food access, proximity to jobs, health clinics, quality schools, etc. These factors are mapped to identify parts of the city that have better housing opportunities. Generally, this is closer in on Portland's east side. Seeking to focus discretionary housing funds on these high opportunity areas. Limiting public housing to east Portland is placing people in lower opportunity areas.

Report from Woodlawn, it is very difficult to get traction as a neighborhood group with developers.

Are folks in these areas aware of what's going on and are they politically motivated to take action? Tom thinks awareness is rising and mentions recent efforts in Cully as an example.

Did you look at the elderly as a group for this study? The study did consider elderly populations, and found that the elderly were most likely included in the other categories in cases of vulnerability.

ODOT Passenger Rail Improvement project, Carol Gossett

Carol attended a Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting with ODOT on passenger rail improvements. The focus was on the Eugene to Vancouver portion, but also looks to be part of a larger rail corridor from San Francisco to Seattle. There were four route options ODOT was looking at; a map is available online of the routes. One route option was notably different and went through Sullivan's Gulch (out the Banfield along I-84). However, this was not the preferred route as it looked to interfere with future Sullivan's Gulch trail, among other things.

Carol says there isn't too much more to report on, if interested pay attention for future opportunities by ODOT, staff will announce at LUTC.

Garlynn asks about electrification as a preferred mode, plus an alignment that went through Corvallis? Carol thinks there will be an opportunity for comment on matters such as this, but not clear how much weight it would hold.

The routes in question are in the old Oregon Electric Right of Way, may be existing minor intrusions into the ROW.

Timeline? Current study is supposed to be done in the next year. Funding is of course still a question.

Focus looks to be on incremental improvements, probably not a large scale change.

Next meeting could be in July, not scheduled at this time. Carol will keep us updated.

Comprehensive Plan Update, Debbie Bischoff, BPS

Debbie has been updating this Committee over the past months, so will not give a long description today. The Comprehensive Plan is looking out to the year 2035 as a timeframe for what our City will look like and how we will develop into that. Three areas: Policies, physical map (individual parcels) and list of priority projects (such as the Transportation System Plan).

Part II. Early outreach on the map is gearing up now, with upcoming mapping conversation events in June. The NE District mapping conversations are on June 1st and 15th.

Alberta Main Street, Our 42nd Ave and NE Broadway business districts have representatives coming as well. Debbie encourages the neighborhoods which have not yet confirmed attendance at the mapping conversations to do so soon. Contact Benjamin or Debbie with any questions.

Debbie stresses that this will not include large scale changes to the zoning, but strategic implementations of improvements. In NE, there could be a focus on place-making and specific sites that could use improvements. Questions could include How can we make your neighborhood more complete?

Minutes

As we lacked quorum at the beginning, David brings up April meeting minutes for approval now. No comments, April meeting minutes are approved as printed.

Neighborhood Updates

Eliot, Allan reports on a question he raised last month, a building on MLK with a fence that appears to not meet code. The code was approved, evidently there are two sections addressing this development. One section specifies regulations for fences and another section does not mention fences, so it appears the city staff working used the section with fences.

A possible resource to address this is the RICAP process – a zoning code cleanup. You can cite the zoning code in question and ask for the RICAP process to clean up the code.

Announcements

N/NE Economic Development Summit hosted by PDC on May 30th. Staff will email out an announcement.

Also, NECN trainings, on how to deal with difficult people in meetings on June 3rd. and another on emergency preparedness, see NECoalition.org for details.

Humboldt, Paul.

N Williams and Going- building across the street from Going Street market. Site on south side is zoned residential, but was used as light industrial since the Albina Community Plan. Building burned down about 7 years ago. Has been rehabilitated, and now has a tenant who is seeking to open a restaurant. Empty lot is adjacent to the south, which could be used for gardening purposes.

Changing non-conforming use from light industrial to commercial to allow for a restaurant, possible parking concerns.

Another development in Humboldt: Albina and Mississippi, where there triangle park is. Developer is coming in and looking to tear down building that has been a rental. Site is zoned EX, so developer is seeking to put in much larger (35 unit) apartment building. No specific action requested.

Woodlawn, at the Dekum triangle, 18 unit development is proposed. Some concerns over parking availability for area businesses.

Meeting adjourned 8:55pm