



Southeast Neighbors News

*Working together to preserve the livability of our most immediate surroundings,
for all the people and creatures therein, and for the generations to come.*

Inside This Issue:

- South Willamette Concept- 2
Plan and Street improve-
ments
- Eugene Park Stewards 3

SEN General Meeting Tuesday February 12 7:30 -

Please join us for the next general membership meeting at the **Hilyard Community Center , 2580 Hilyard Street**. On our agenda: City Planners are developing long range and near term plans for the south Willamette Street area. We'll have an update on the Deerbrook PUD . Learn about the Laurel Ridge PUD ; proposed for 126 acres southwest of Laurel Hill Valley adjacent to 30th Avenue near Spring Boulevard. Neighbors are working to improve the Small Dog Off Leash area near Amazon Station and we'll have an overview of key issues confronting Eugene in 2013. Refreshments will be served.

Southeast Neighbors Files LUBA Appeal of Deerbrook PUD

Editorial by Kevin Matthews - President Southeast Neighbors

Following a unanimous vote of the Southeast Neighbors Board at our January meeting, Southeast Neighbors has filed an appeal to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) of the recent Planning Commission decision on the Deerbrook PUD. We are continuing the fight to save the Amazon Creek Headwaters.

In September 2012, when the Hearings Official denied the Deerbrook PUD application, one might have thought that immediate danger had passed for the Amazon Headwaters Keystone.

But no. City planning staff responded with the very unusual approach of recommending to the Eugene Planning Commission that they overturn the Hearings Official decision, on, according to expert judgement, an absolutely counter-factual basis.

At the Planning Commission hearing on the Deerbrook PUD, Southeast Neighbors attempted to address this glaring issue of staff endorsement of a grossly inaccurate slope map, one which had already been reviewed and dismissed by the independent Hearings Official. With our attorney narrating, we did a live legal demonstration, measuring and marking dimensions in real time on an official copy of the Deerbrook site plan, illustrating key places where slope greater than 20% makes grading prohibited.

Faced with such evidence, staff simply lost it. Literally! Our site plan illustration from the hearing, key evidence in the custody of planning staff, apparently just disappeared. And eventually, after long deliberation, the Eugene Planning Commission voted to approve the Deerbrook PUD on appeal, on a strict 4 to 3, development industry/neighborhood leader "party line" vote.

As a result, I feel compelled to ask, how can the local land use planning system even be expected to function, if City planning staff are incapable of measuring the slope on a site plan? If such a plain fact as the distance between two lines on a drawing cannot be reasonably adjudicated - and on an application requiring "clear and objective standards" like the Deerbrook PUD - then how can citizens expect any of the more complicated rules in the City land use code to be judged correctly?

In my opinion, we can't lie down in front of such injustice, especially when the public interest in such a crucial natural piece of our watershed is at stake. Eugene development politics and legal loop-de-loops notwithstanding, I continue to believe the Deerbrook PUD is a clearly-prohibited project, as well as ill-advised, and I'm proud of our neighborhood for continuing to lead the challenge to such an environmental assault.

The costs are serious, with our legal fees for this round of appeals estimated at \$10,000 to \$30,000.

Southeast Neighbors needs vigorous community support to succeed in conserving the Amazon Headwaters Keystone.

To find out how you can help, please visit: <http://www.saveamazonheadwaters.org>

Project Updates: South Willamette Concept Plan and Street Improvements

By Patricia Thomas Urban Design Planner City of Eugene

Plan Area: 23rd to 32nd Avenues, base of College Hill to Amazon Park

Over the last year and a half an active and growing group of neighbors, business people, property owners and patrons of the district have helped shape the South Willamette Concept Plan for how the district will grow and change over the coming decades. The Concept Plan is part of the Envision Eugene approach to accommodating our city's growth by finding good places for homes and jobs in areas near major corridors and strong commercial centers.

Based on a broad input gathered through four public workshops, online questionnaires, small and large group meetings and individual discussions, the concept plan is nearly complete. The Concept Plan balances different perspectives across several important topic areas such as identifying places for denser housing, adding more parking options, and creating a desirable pedestrian experience in an appealing shopping, living and business environment. Specifically, the Concept Plan provides a detailed, long-term vision for future buildings and uses, the character of the streets, and ideas for improving parks and public spaces within the district. You can see the current version of the plan, workshop presentations, public input and next steps online at: www.eugene-or.gov/SWillamette



In the coming few months, a “final draft” plan will be shared online, with the Planning Commission, and in a public forum. Also see the article below about the related South Willamette Street Improvement Plan. If you would like to stay up to date on Concept Plan events, please check the web page above regularly and ask to be added to the Interest list by contacting Patricia Thomas, Urban Design Planner, patricia.thomas@ci.eugene.or.us or at 541-682-5561

19th-24th Willamette Street Pavement Preservation Project

By Reed Dunbar - AICP Associate Transportation Planner City of Eugene

This City of Eugene Public Works project includes rehabilitating the pavement on Willamette Street from 19th Avenue to just south of 24th Avenue. Rehabilitation of the pavement includes replacing the top layers of deteriorated pavement and removing sections of pavement that have completely failed. It is anticipated that the segment from 19th to 20th will be completely reconstructed. The project will also reconstruct sidewalk access ramps in several locations.

A public meeting was held on Tuesday, September 4th at Washington Park Cottage. There were 46 names recorded on the sign-in sheet. Many attendees spoke about a desire for bike lanes and safer pedestrian crossings. Some people also mentioned current conflicts caused by bicyclists occupying narrow sidewalks and that creating a separate space for bicyclists to operate within the street would help reduce the appeal of sidewalks for riding bicycles. Retaining some on-street parking and identifying ways to slow automobile traffic were also discussed.

An online survey was available from September through December on the city's website. There were 237 responses recorded. When asked to rate their travel experience on Willamette Street, the highest percentage of respondents (90.5%) selected “Insufficient: does not accommodate me to my satisfaction” for bicycling while the use of private automobiles collected 65% of responses for “Sufficient: works okay for me”. Walking was about equal “sufficient” (37%) and “insufficient” (41%). When asked what changes should be made 93% of respondents selected “add bike lanes”. The pedestrian crossing at 20th Avenue was selected #1 (Top Priority) out of a choice of 19th Avenue, 20th Avenue, and 23rd Avenue.

Plans for adding bike lanes are currently under evaluation. The project team is also considering alternative designs for the concrete diverter island at 20th Avenue. A second public meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 5th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at the Washington Park Cottage (2025 Washington Street). The agenda will include reviewing existing conditions, presenting results from the public process, and discussing proposed project elements.

If you would like more information on this project or would like to submit comments please contact Reed Dunbar, Transportation Planner, at reed.c.dunbar@ci.eugene.or.us , 541-682-5727 or visit the project website at www.eugene-or.gov/willamette19to24

Project Update

By Chris Henry City of Eugene Transportation Planning Engineer



**SOUTH WILLAMETTE
Street Improvement Plan**

Please mark your calendars for the second of three community forums on redesigning South Willamette Street:

Community Forum #2: Evaluate the Alternatives

Wednesday, February 27th, 2013 - 6-8 pm South Eugene High School Cafeteria (400 E. 19th Ave.)

The project team will describe and gather input on several options for redesigning Willamette Street from 24th to 32nd Avenue. Listening to the opinions of a wide range of users is very important, so please consider attending! The first community forum was held on November 13th and following is a recap of this well-attended event:

Community participation was robust! Approximately one hundred and fifty people filled the room to capacity and respectfully engaged with staff and consultants for two hours. Many perspectives were aired at the meeting, and geographic representation was balanced. After the Register Guard erroneously reported that the forum would be held on Wednesday, November 14, City staff quickly organized a second meeting, and this report includes the results of both events.

The goal of the meeting was to report the results of recent traffic studies, explore alternatives, and listen to community priorities for future improvements to the design and condition of Willamette Street between 24th and 32nd Avenues. The study aims to help South Willamette Street become a vibrant urban corridor accessible by bicycle, foot, car, and bus. The area includes residential, commercial, and mixed uses, and has six intersections being studied over about a ¾ mile stretch.

Participants overwhelmingly agreed that Willamette Street is a stressful experience for all modes of travel. Adding bike lanes, improving pedestrian crossings, and enhancing sidewalks were key priorities for participants. When participants were asked a specific question about improving bicycle facilities, bike lanes on Willamette Street was the preferred option of the majority. However, participants also questioned the impacts of reducing travel lanes in order to add bike lanes. Individuals who use the corridor to commute to work and school expressed a clear desire for the street to continue to move automobile traffic efficiently. Merchants located on Willamette Street stressed that they need current traffic volumes to maintain their businesses. Additionally, there was near unanimous support for undergrounding utilities, careful landscaping to beautify and to improve stormwater problems, and consolidating some of the corridor's more than seventy driveways. The idea of slowing car traffic to the speed limit was acceptable to almost all attendees.

Electronic polling, or "clickers," were used in the meeting, and are not meant to provide scientific data. Clickers ensure that everyone's opinion is heard in large time-limited meetings, and create transparency, since everyone sees response results immediately. This allows the facilitator to focus and draw out the various points of view for discussion. Also the first questions asked allowed everyone to quickly understand the representation in the room.

"The staff is here to hear what 'fix it' means to you and wants to find a solution that fits most," said Chris Henry, City of Eugene Project Manager. Ellen Teninty, who facilitated the meeting, discussed that the next steps in this project will be to have two more Community Forums – one February 27th and one likely in May- to first evaluate the alternatives and then refine the preferred alternative. These will help inform recommendations to the Eugene Planning Commission and City Council in the fall of 2013. For more information, please contact Chris Henry, Transportation Planning Engineer, at chris.c.henry@ci.eugene.or.us, 541-682-8472, or visit the project website where presentation materials and more may be viewed at <http://www.eugene-or.gov/SWillametteStreet>

Eugene Park Stewards Volunteer Leaders Orientation

By Clara Matsler City of Eugene Parks Dept.

Are you interested in learning more about volunteer leadership, park and natural areas available for adoption, and partnering with Eugene Park Stewards? Volunteer Leaders Orientation will be offered on February 6.

Volunteer Leaders Orientation will answer these questions and more. Attend the orientation and learn about work plans and safety protocols, get helpful materials in a Volunteer Leaders Handbook to have at your fingertips, and connect with other volunteer leaders.

For more information, or to reserve your seat at this engaging and informative event, contact an EPS Volunteer Coordinator. Space is limited.

Carrie Karl, South Region Volunteer Coordinator at 541-682-4850 carrie.l.karl@ci.eugene.or.us

PAGE 3

Southeast Neighbors
c/o Neighborhood Services
99 West 10th Ave
Eugene OR 97401

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
EUGENE OR 97401
PERMIT NO 377

This is the official newsletter of Southeast Neighbors.

Newsletters are published and mailed courtesy of the City of Eugene.

Newsletters are produced by neighborhood volunteers and are free to residents and

businesses of the neighborhood. Space is available for letters to the editor and

editorial comments from neighbors. All signed letters will be published as space permits.

Editorials express the author's views, not the position of the Neighborhood Association, the

City's elected officials, or City staff.

Send comments, articles, or letters to the editor to editor@southeastneighbors.org

Officers

Kevin Matthews, President, matthews@artifice.com 541-514-4766

Lindsay Selser, Vice President, lselser@gmail.com

Board Members

Madronna Holden (2012), Deborah Noble (2013), Carol Pearce (2013), , Heather Sieliki, Secretary (2013) Pavel Gubanikhin, Treasurer (2013) Kent Anderson (2012), Alicia McGraw (2012) ,David Saul, Newsletter Editor (2013)