

CITY OF GRESHAM

Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

March 11, 2020

Officers present: Jim Buck, President; Sandy Davidson, Vice-President; Theresa Tschirky, Treasurer; Tracy Slack, Land Use Chair; Lynn Saint, Secretary.

7:03 p.m. Introduction

President Jim Buck called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves, including three police officers (lieutenants) and Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick. Initially, twelve individuals were present with two coming in later.

7:07 p.m. Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor

Slated topics for tonight include Gabbert Butte, Ambleside, the Express Transportation Route and the Housing Bond.

Shirley Craddick is on her third term for **Metro which was created by the voters in the 90's to address land use**. Every city in Oregon must have an urban growth boundary and needs to demonstrate the ability to set forth these boundaries. There are 24 contiguous cities in the Portland area.

The voters approved the renewal of the bond measure – **Natural Areas Bond Measure** to protect streams and uplands in our area. Gresham has 16 lava domes, among them Gabbert and Gresham Buttes, which are a part of our landscape. With the new program, there will be a building out with new trails. There will be a public access road on Regner Road plus a new sidewalk. Metro is working with the City of Gresham to form an agreement with the two entities. This will take another year or so before any construction is started.

Metro has a policy of not allowing dogs on trails. The idea is to protect habitat for native species. Many would like to bring their dogs onto these paths. Jim Buck commented, “There is a fairly large pond which indicates, ‘wetland’ and as seen in the schematic passed out by Ms. Craddick. The trails are veered away from the wetland.”

Metro is now in the process of refinement. There are six categories which will be designated for improvements. Sandy River, Johnson Creek, Clackamas River and Tualatin River are significant water systems within the boundaries.

Each park system receives a local share of around \$5 million dollars. Another \$40 million is for trail improvement. Grande Ronde has purchased Willamette Falls which will be open to public access in Oregon City after 125 years.

Parts of our region do not have greenspace. The question is how to return areas back to providing parks for the public to appreciate and enjoy. The public will have input as to how the areas will be shaped.

Question: **How are funds divvied up?** This is intended to be fair to each jurisdiction. More density magnifies the need to preserve more open spaces and park areas. The money will not build sports parks or soccer fields, etc. Some money will fund Gabbert Butte.

Ambleside, in the past hosted a picnic area. Families purchased land at Hogan Road and Johnson Creek to construct seven to eight homes which, unfortunately, rested right in the middle of a flood plain. Metro purchased the property and removed the homes plus the dam, retaining

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wall and bridge. Invasive plant species have been removed to make way for native ones. The site holds over 700 Hogan cedars, a cedar specific to this area.

Transportation

Ms. Craddick gave another handout to attendees for the “Get Moving 2020” projects. With the economy picking up, there is little housing for newcomers. A **\$652.8 million measure passed by Metro voters for housing** at the end of 2018. Six housing authorities exist in our region including Home Forward, combined with Multnomah County. Four cities, with populations of 50,000 or greater, receive money through HUD. They need an implementation plan for how to use these funds. Some of the housing is under construction. The City of Gresham has plans and intentions but has not yet implemented the plans.

Each area has a designated location for transportation. Each city needs a regional plan. During the Eisenhower administration, the federal highway fund was established for construction of roads, highways and bridges. Congress has not raised the gas tax since 1983. It is no longer viable for construction of highways. Local communities carry a great burden.

More people live here now. About 2,000 people per month have been moving into this Metro region which impacts the transportation system. There are many more accidents and deaths. Metro council has been working on this issue and has identified 16 corridors on which to focus. Among them are Burnside (lifeline road), Powell Boulevard, North South – 181st, 190th, 172nd to Highway 212. The Sunrise corridor, the Clackamas Estacada exit which ends at Carver, 122nd and 82nd avenues are challenging. After identifying corridors, programs are developed. The transportation bill is focusing on a request of three billion dollars.

We want roads but **there isn't enough space for automobiles.** What is the best way to get around? One of the answers is a better bus system. Funds will give buses their own lanes. The mass transit system needs to be a system we all value and use. Safer routes to school are essential. Improving dangerous intersections is another vital requirement. Cameras and lights help bring effectiveness to traffic control. Allocations for police officers regarding protection of individuals in traffic areas also needs to be addressed. Greenhouse emissions are a focus. Metro has the responsibility of monitoring green-house gas emissions. A survey is available for tax payers who will be involved with paying for the transportation programs.

Powell in Gresham is owned and operated by the City of Gresham, but Powell from 122nd to 82nd is a state highway. City standards require new sidewalks for both sides of Powell, along with bicycle paths to create improved safety. Pedestrian safety is a priority. Buses will be allowed to pull off the road. The challenge is having a space for the bus to move out.

Tracy Slack questioned the headlines about **land being sold for \$1,000 which was valued at \$6 million.** Did Metro get a good deal for its money? The land was a gift. Was something given or promised? Is there any enforceable contract law for property? Can citizens review how their money is being spent? The funds were received through the Federal Transit Administration – land for 20 years. It would have been converted to some other use. Building housing along transit corridors is essential. Population density, a shopping plaza and affordability are desired aspects of this transit oriented development.

Housing

Gentrification is an issue which **will push people out** of an area. People need to be helped to live in an area. In May, the voters are being approached again. All people in affordable

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housing need to pay rent, based upon their income. It becomes about one-third of their median income. Residents with Less than 30% of the average median income usually need supportive services as they frequently have addiction and other behavioral issues. The Community Based Initiative bases the bill on greater income individuals (\$125,000 and \$250,000) along with businesses which earn greater than \$5,000,000. Gresham will receive \$27 million from the housing bond with a total of 187 units targeted. Four thousand units are expected to be constructed.

Affordable housing is considered a bridge for about four to five years. Home Forward, Hacienda and other non-profit organizations want to stabilize the community of people who are not in situations to fully fund themselves now. One housing measure is a property tax from 2018. Gresham has the funds and will distribute the funds to the organizations which are involved.

Property taxes do not pay for resources such as fire and police. Revenue from one area cannot be given to another needy one.

There are **more tents and therefore more homeless** along the Springwater Trail. Are there resources and programs for treating individuals in need?

8:17 p.m. Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

8:18 p.m. Reports

Land Use Chair Tracy Slack indicated there are two flag lots on SE Roberts for a third-time application. Are there avenues for a traffic calming project? Tracy is looking into assisting the neighbors. Another single-family residence will be applied for. Hogan development will be sizable with many houses on the east side of the road. The hillside above is supposed to be park land. They will be preserving a certain portion for park land with the projected 200 homes.

Treasurer Theresa Tschirky specified \$504.15 remains the current balance.

8:20 p.m. Remote Meeting

Tracy Slack is checking out an app for audio only or audio video, connecting to the **conference call** via the city's wi-fi. The host (GBNA) will start the video. It supports sharing of screens and windows and screens. The presentation is sub-optimal. The city has an IT department which will protect the internet. Freeconferencecall.com is the one that is being used for our purposes as of this date. The view of the room to the Power Point remains crystal clear.

The situation does not require remotes to buy anything. On the host's part, a web cam costs approximately \$50 with an outlay of \$20 in cables. If this works for GBNA, the city may think more seriously about adapting this as a viable neighborhood host. Any neighborhood association would need permission to log into the city's internet. Other neighborhoods are becoming very interested in this as a possibility.

8:30 p.m. Old Business

A full class for **edible landscaping** was conducted in March and opened a viable topic for GBNA and other neighborhoods. Next year, Jim Buck would like to introduce plant bee pollinators as a possibility.

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8:18 p.m. New Business

Four acres north of the Saddle Butte will require new small trees and shrubs. Man-power is needed for cutting out blackberries. Leaving snags in the Saddle Butte presents a tremendous forest fire risk. Snags are coming down and presenting a great hazard. Young alders are dying off, along with established ones. It needs to be explored as far as what is safe for volunteers. Blackberries rob the soil of nutrients and those need to be eradicated.

Asplundh is cutting lower...no more than within 20 feet of the high voltage lines due to fire danger. Street improvements become heat islands in the summer. Canopy trees should not be trimmed.

Tracy reported the city's street lighting has dropped from \$800 thousand per year in 2015 to \$250 thousand a year this past year.

8:35 p.m. Anticipated Topic for May

Priority will be open for when the city can present issues regarding revenue constraints. More than likely, all within the finance department will be available in May. We also need to address the grant project.

8:39 p.m. Adjournment

Post Script. Some of the information contained herein may no longer be applicable as we are all under quarantine restrictions. Therefore, meeting dates remain an ambiguous option.