

Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations
September 8, 2020 – via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES	NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES
Centennial	INACTIVE	Northeast	INACTIVE
Central City	INACTIVE	North Gresham	Mike Elston, Linda Van Deusen-Price, John Weigant, Linda Parashos
Gresham Butte	Jim Buck, Theresa Tschirky, Tracy Slack	Northwest	Kat Todd, Dave Dyk, John Bildsoe
Historic Southeast	Allan Krim	Gresham Pleasant Valley	
Hogan Cedars		Powell Valley	INACTIVE
Hollybrook		Rockwood	
Kelly Creek	Charles Teem, Carol Rulla	Southwest	Brandon Harer
North Central	Maggie Anderson, Mary Gossett	Wilkes-East	
Staff & Guests:	Kathy Majidi, Sarale Hickson, Jeff Lesh, Tina Osterink, Michael Gonzales, Ken Koblitz, Katherine Kelly, Ricardo Banuelos, Olena Turula, Sue Ruonala, April Avery, Lee Dayfield and Stella Butler		

Carol Rulla convened the meeting at 7:02 and a quorum was achieved. July minutes were accepted without correction. In the August minutes, John Bildsoe asked that his stated location for industrial land that was converted to other use should have said “South” waterfront, not “North” waterfront, and the minutes for August 2020 meeting were accepted with that change.

Carol asked if any guest had comments to share with the group, but none did.

Environmental Overlays Code and Map Update

Carol introduced Kathy Majidi from the City of Gresham, and Kathy introduced other city staff Jeff Lesh, Ken Koblitz, Katherine Kelly, Ricardo Banuelos, and Sarale Hickson. Sarale asked Coalition members to put questions they had in the chat box rather than interrupting the presentation. Sarale presented a number of slides reviewing the purpose for the review of the environmental overlays and noted that an update of the code in relation to floodplains and buffers was completed in 2018. The overlays project was initiated in 2016. The timeframe changed when in 2019 DOGAMI (Department of Geology and Mineral Industries) provided new landslide risk data and a review of the Hillside Overlay was incorporated into the study. In 2020 code changes were drafted and public outreach commenced but COVID-19 caused a pause. The project is now being completed although later than originally planned. The project seeks to protect natural resources at the same level as current code, but is now trying to unify the code requirements between the city, Pleasant Valley and Springwater areas. The intent of the Hillside code is to protect personal safety and property from geologic risks. Staff is finding natural resources code, which is over a decade old, difficult to use and it needs updating to meet regulatory compliance regarding streams, wetlands, uplands, and riparian areas.

Kathy Majidi said we have two Environmental Sensitive Resource Areas — in Pleasant Valley (ESRA-PV) and in Springwater (ESRA-SW) – and Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs) in the rest of the city. ESRAs were

adopted as buffer zones not overlays which posed a problem. A challenge has been marrying LiDAR surveys with the buffers because they lacked alignment. The buffers also did not correspond well to the meandering nature of streams in this area. More inputs to model did not result in better buffers. Kathy explained that different models posed conflicts on almost every parcel. Neighbors did not have similar buffers, for example. The one that made the most sense and built on protocols for the three models was standardizing the buffers. Springwater and Pleasant Valley had buffers twice as wide as in the city. These buffers were averaged out in terms of width. Average buffer width was selected in 2017. The new mapping has not significantly changed the total area protected: ESRA-PV went from 252 to 271 acres, ESRA-SW from 395 to 443 acres, and HCA from 2052 to 2043 acres.

Sarale shared the code highlights—simplifying maps with easy to identify boundaries, clearly identifying the areas near wetlands and waterways that require protection and limits on development, establishing the requirement to look for wetlands in areas they are likely to be, creating a simple review process for new single family homes on vacant lots, providing clear and objective standards within the resource areas and increasing availability of density transfer to avoid negative impacts to resource areas. Other highlights were to prioritize ecological needs for increased habitat diversity, designating basking areas for reptiles and turtles, edge habitat for native birds and mammals, slope protection areas for past slide activity and plans for dealing with sun exposure for plants that can help remove pollutants from waterways.

A 2,000 sq.ft. maximum temporary disturbance area was explained in terms of its use during construction and the requirement for restoration afterwards, and a 4,000 sq.ft. maximum permanent disturbance area with cash in lieu of mitigation required for homes on existing lots. For other development, cash in lieu is allowed only if there is insufficient room to provide mitigation on-site. Sarale said that maintenance of mitigation may be challenging in some circumstances, especially on single family lots. A question was asked about mitigation cost and the response dealt with examples of how that would be determined. Jim Buck asked about who decides if it occurs on or off the site for non-single family development. Staff noted that there has to be justification for moving it off site and this would be subject to a Type II review. There will be opportunity for public input therefore. Sue Ruonala asked where the mitigation fund would be used. Kathy explained how sites would be selected for the mitigation. Tracy Slack said sometimes owners don't know of a mitigation requirement on an existing developed lot, and Kathy said some staff don't know about area protections since they don't have that historic memory. She said there may be a problem, for example with renters or others to check on whether a tree that should have been planted actually was. The city is largely trusting that the planted materials have remained intact. Sarale said most people don't read their deed or title documents that carefully to know. She said it was easier for the city to handle mitigation rather than the backyard approach left to home owners. Often there isn't room to handle mitigation in a backyard. Kathy said if you remove a tree and need to plant 10 others, there simply isn't room for that many additional trees in the space. Carol asked, how will people know the 4,000 sq.ft. permanent disturbance area? Sarale said that the city will be keeping records of it and people will be able to pull it up online. Ken Koblitz chimed in to say a key nuance with subdivisions in Pleasant Valley is that the developer will be required to protect resources so the homeowner won't have to deal with it. Thus "temporary impacts" affect only current vacant lots, not new development. Tracy asked a question of mitigation and both Kathy and Sarale responded. Sarale said every mitigation that needs to happen will occur.

Sarale talked about zone map update. ESRA is being removed from the zoning overlay so the gaps behind the overlay need to be filled. If ESRA is out, then a substitute needs to be selected. The map in hatched areas are new Resource Area (RA) overlays which says "this can't be disturbed" and a base zoning is added underneath to provide zoning if the RA moves. If you are allowed to touch a portion of the RA, then the objective was to minimize the impacts in the RA.

Jeff Lesh then presented on the updates to the Hillside Code for steep slopes or where slopes are prone to slide activity. This is informed by geology and history. It was determined that old data was not that accurate so staff used new LiDAR data and 2018 DOGAMI landslide data risk data and the 2019 State Landslide Land Use Guide. Kathy showed a map with changes in the risk assessment after using the new data. Proposed area classified as hillsides would be reduced by about 500 acres from the existing hillsides area. Sarale said the new code will define when geotechnical review is required for proposed development, will ensure protection for forested hillsides, and will institute a simple review process for building single family homes. She said this would establish clear and objective standards within overlay areas and developers can predict the number of lots that would be available to them on a parcel.

By September 9, code language will be available for public review along with GIS maps. On September 17, public work sessions will be offered at 2 pm and 7pm. Thursday, October 1 comments are due for this round: Overlays@Greshamoregon.gov. Hearings by Planning Commission will occur on 11/23 and with the Council on 12/15.

Carol asked, how will a density transfer be dealt with? Ken said they are trying to find the right balance for developers and he said trying not to have the density occur near the protection area. One approach is to adjust the number of lots for example. Sarale said that density can't be transferred from PV to Rockwood but would have to stay within the specific plan areas. There would be caps on extra density also. Sarale said they are trying to figure out those balances but that will be challenging. Ken said most developers will be doing density transfer on their own sites. Carol asked if this applied to homeowners or was it for developers only. Sarale said it was not practicable for regular lot owners, but may apply if they have larger parcel or sites.

John Bildsoe asked about Grant Butte property and also about the Shaull property which borders a headwaters area. Staff explained that the forest stand on the Shaull property is not close to boundary of wetlands so the grove would not be changed by this code. It is a wooded parcel but not part of the overlay. There was a question whether a developer could donate the wetland parcel to increase the number of developable lots. Sarale said they have a maximum disturbance area—they can't get density from entire development site but only from portion you could disturb in the RA but are not going to. She said there are additional restrictions on the Shaull property because of one exit in and out which would affect the number of lots. John asked about floodplain and changes due to removal of drain tile, etc. Kathy said Centennial School District staff reported changes based on data collected by students studying the habitat area. Over time farmers had installed pump stations to remove standing water. John said there is a natural artesian well in the area. Someone shared that this is not a stream feature, but the area is filling up more than flowing toward Division St. Changes at the Knife River property are affecting this. When they pump water from the deep pit, it creates a draw from surrounding soils. That has ceased now city staff said. The city is researching this subject. If wetland is found at the time of development, it will be buffered. Jim asked about the quarry and the lake that is forming. Kathy said it doesn't qualify if it wasn't a wetland before. There are reclamation requirements now so property owners can't do what happened with Salish ponds where people just walked away after the mining stopped. She said the Coffee Creek area in Sherwood not reclaimed and is a typical reclamation approach. John asked about quarry change, but the state would be handling this with comment from city regarding extraction of material which would come under DOGAMI regulations. Sarale said if they had a permit to reclaim the land they would stay with DOGAMI regulations, but if zoned for heavy industrial they would need to meet city standards then.

Carol asked about the density transfer to another neighborhood. Sarale said density wouldn't be over 125% of original size designation (lot number). Ken said when they looked at the density issue in Pleasant Valley they found that developers usually didn't meet the maximum density for a variety of reasons.

Kat Todd had comment about cash in lieu if there wasn't room for the mitigation. Kathy said there are lots that are mostly covered by both a buffer and a given disturbance area because you can't take away the building from its site. She said there was no area on these lots for 7,000 ft of mitigation so city is losing out on getting this mitigation.

Kathy in conclusion said the code changes were intending to offer protections to natural areas. Sarale said all the neighborhood association presidents and land use chairs should have been invited to public work sessions. Website also tomorrow will show the meeting schedule.

City and Neighborhood Issues and News

Carol asked Michael Gonzales for an update from ONCE. He announced that Census Takers are now out in neighborhoods and that there is a September 10 listening session on the Clackamas to Columbia Corridor Plan, which he also posted on Nextdoor. Michael said the city is recruiting new members on some of the advisory committees and subcommittees. There were new volunteers who expressed interest in three subcommittees which was positive.

Carol suggested that association leaders practice with Zoom first before holding meetings and don't forget to ask Lina for postcards to mail to residents before the annual meeting. She also said to get public alerts on cell phones for emergencies such as wildfires.

Michael said city is not selling water bottles this year due to not holding city fest or other venues which allow for this distribution.

Carol asked Michael about racial justice listening sessions that Council discussed holding. Michael said that Council is still working on when to schedule that around candidate forums, etc. Carol asked when Gresham's YAC (Youth Advisory Council) is doing their mayoral forum. Michael said an email will be sent out when date is firmed up.

Carol asked John Bildsoe for an update on heavy industrial zoning discussion from last month. Carol noted that she recently asked when staff would be collecting input for next year's work plan since that would be an opportunity to raise the question about the location of heavy industrial zoning. She noted that the topic has been on past work plans. Carol reported that staff said there is no timeline yet on collecting that input. Since our last meeting, John had compared Gresham's industrial code standards with other jurisdictions' codes and said Gresham has more detail in its planning code than Hillsboro and Portland and other jurisdictions. John said the other cities leave it grayer in terms of what will be allowed on these industrial parcels. John gave the example of a neighbor of Precision Castparts who complained of emissions, but not much can happen except scrubbers, so being proactive now is prudent. He said the Council should be working on this and not leave it to just volunteers with the neighborhood associations. Carol said we could ask for meeting with staff like we did with Hogan Dr. pedestrian safety concerns.

Carol asked if other NAs had issues to raise. John said he had another issue. John said there were several new tent encampments but no real coordination among agencies to deal with them. He contacted NET, no response. Mike Elston said he had positive response from NET with campers on school grounds. They moved them out. John said there were 8 cubic yards of garbage and 15 carts in the Gantenbein area. John asked Michael Gonzales to whom should complaints go, and Michael contacted Kevin Dahlgren about it and they had it cleaned up.

Carol invited Tracy Slack to share an update on the City Manager job description and interview questions. Tracy said he submitted them in his own name without formal endorsement of Coalition since there was no

quorum last month and it was important to submit the information as soon as possible. He said he received a positive reception from the mayor and HR director, who said the firm involved in the search will see Tracy's proposals. It will be up to the recruitment firm to see if they will incorporate any or all of it. Tracy said he hoped to have the Coalition involved in the interview process. No word on that yet, but the Coalition will need to stay involved. His next initiative is to review first what's on city website in terms of tracking information on city work plan projects/objectives. Then he plans to give the city input on what the public would like to know about progress on its priorities. Carol thanked Tracy for his ambitious work in this area.

Carol announced that recently the Charter Review Committee met for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 emergency and decided that it will not meet again until after the election. Travis Stovall is the chair and is running for mayor, and another member is running for a state representative position.

Carol asked if anyone received an early NA notification notice with the new Early Neighborhood Notification Guidance document. Carol received an ENN meeting notice and it didn't have the ENN Guidance in there. Mike said he's received two and neither had it. No other NA leaders reported receiving a notice with the new guidance document. Carol said she will ask why staff is not asking developers to include the ENN Guidance.

Dave Dyk left the meeting, then Carol reported on plans for the October 5 and 6 candidate forums:

3 of mayor candidates coming—not heard from Travis Stovall yet.

Position 1—both coming.

Position 3—4 out of 5 said they are coming; one unsure

Position 5—Dave Dyk and Sue Piazza both are coming; other two no response so far

There have been 14 responses to the community survey to collect questions and prioritize topics for questions to the candidates. Sue Ruonala, Linda Van Deusen-Price, and Jim Buck will assist Carol with developing or refining the questions when the survey closes later this month. Carol said some candidates asked for all the questions in advance, but she shared that we can give them topics but not specific questions beyond the three advance questions. Carol asked if we should give them all the questions, not just the first three. Tracy Slack had strong preference that not all questions should be given in advance as it fosters prepared speeches. He said providing topics is fine, but not specific questions. John Bildsoe concurred, and hoped questions the second night would be different than first night. There was unanimity by Coalition members in attendance of not sharing all the questions in advance. Carol reviewed the process that will be used and Michael said he'd host a practice session on this, if necessary, for the candidates. Carol noted that the question survey has been posted to Nextdoor and encouraged neighborhood leaders to reply to the post to help raise awareness about the survey.

Jim Buck asked if Michael could update us at the next meeting on inactive neighborhoods and the status of them becoming more involved with city governance. Carol said she had invited two people interested in reactivating Centennial to this meeting.

Next meeting will address the topic of middle housing.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jim Buck, Coalition Co-Secretary-Treasurer

Next meeting: **Tuesday, October 13, 2020** – via Zoom