

NWNA General Meeting Minutes **Monday, February 8, 2021**

Kat called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- The meeting was held on Zoom. Twenty people attended, including NWNA board members, Kat Todd, John Bildsoe, Dave Dyk, Chris Fast, and Barbara Adams.

- Kat introduced Mayor Stovall for the first presentation.

Stovall began by discussing priorities, in particular the priorities of Gresham residents. He said he plans to be inclusive and listen to all voices, adding that also has lots of ideas.

He explained why he moved to Gresham and what he appreciates and enjoys about the Northwest, including living on a floating house on the Columbia River.

He was on the Trimet board for nine years. During that time he learned a lot about the Portland metro area, specifically mass transit and the needs of the community in the form of expansion of services.

Opportunities to be visionary: What goals do we have for our community? Equality is one of Stovall's visions for the area, citing the tragedy of George Floyd's death in 2020 at the hands of police. He said he believes in equitable economic development.

The higher the poverty, the higher the crime, he said. He pointed out that the problem isn't race, but poverty. The way to positively impact crime is to address the issues of poverty—how do we improve quality of life for the masses? He said Gresham has 20% poverty, and this is a challenge. He says he sees this as an opportunity to address the challenges of poverty and how to empower and invigorate lives.

How do we want our community to grow, to be? How will we design our path to get to where we want to go?

Dave Dyk asked M. S. to give an update on Gresham's water supply. Gresham buys its water from the City of Portland. He said Gresham is drilling wells to add to the current number of wells in the city. These augment the supply, and help reduce our dependence on Portland's water (which will see rate increases soon). He said construction has started, but he can't give a timeline at this point. Ultimately, this will keep the water rates lower in Gresham.

John Bildsoe asked about balancing between the need for housing and the ability for industry/commercial land to expand. Stovall said he can't say he has an answer to this complex question at this time. He spoke about the urban growth boundaries and the constraints that currently exist. He pointed out that

when you constrain supply (housing) while demand increases that causes the problem of increased cost. This shuts out many people from finding adequate housing. He said one of the things the city will look at to address this issue is building codes. He added that housing is critical to the city, including wrap-around services to serve people experiencing homelessness. He said he is a fan of affordable housing, although there is a challenge to having a high density of affordable housing. He said two challenges for many are affordable, quality child care, and access to transportation. He said the more we can build an environment where people can live where they work that will help ensure giving residents the opportunity to improve their lives.

John spoke about the Shaul property (30 units of housing on Powell), and a recent Gresham Outlook story regarding the development plans. Stovall said he is supportive of keeping the property in the “public space.”

- Paul WarKing moved that the November 26, 2020 meeting minutes be approved. John Bildsoe seconded with one name spelling correction.

- The Nwana board was introduced.

- Britt McConn, Urban Forestry subcommittee member, spoke about her committee’s work.

Implementation of goals to improve the urban forest canopy to begin in 2022. She said the committee plans to ask each neighborhood association for input to help guide goal planning.

How will each association formulate a tree plan that works best for their area? These goals will be communicated through the subcommittee to the city.

There will also be a city-wide tree canopy plan.

Q: How is this different from Metro’s 10-year-old plan? McConn said the canopy data from 2009 is out-of-date, but this will drill down to more specifics, like looking at individual parcels. This is about increasing urban canopy through individual properties. She said it will help in “granular goal setting.”

Q: The challenges of living in a mature growth area where trees are now needing to be removed. Will this tool address underground utilities, spacing between property lines, etc.? McConn said choosing the right trees to plant will help address these issues.

Q: How do we balance clear-cutting acreage for development and planting trees to offset the loss? McConn said there does need to be a balance between development, private property, and retaining/maintaining/cutting down trees. She said goals of the neighborhood tree plan is focused on how we can positively affect the urban tree canopy—how can we influence the tree canopy by encouraging/enabling residents to plant trees? She said it’s also about maintaining the health of mature trees.

McConn shared this tool link:

<http://trees.milwaukieoregon.gov/#14/45.4416/-122.6162>

She asked that individuals send her comments in the zoom chat, or send her or Tina Osterlink with the city and email. She said she is looking for interest or a “champion” in within the Nwana to work on creating a neighborhood plan.

Sellwood example:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/392754>

Naomi Butler, Nwana treasurer, gave a presentation about a plan to apply for a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant this year.

We would like to be prepared to apply this year, so we are planning ahead.

The project would have to meet at least one of nine set goals.

Naomi went over the timeline for 2020 grant winners. There were 12, including the Gresham Japanese Garden. They ranged from \$1,000-\$5,000.

Between now and the end of March, if we move forward, we will gather project ideas from neighbors. April-August would be spent researching and cost estimates. During our October NA meeting we would present the most viable ideas for the grant, after agreement we would then complete application materials and submit by the December deadline.

Naomi asked for input about soliciting ideas, etc.

Board reports:

Kat: Adopt-a-Park on Jan. 16 focused on picking up sticks from wind storms. One of the benches has been installed at the northwest corner. The other bench, near the water tower, cannot be place in the location that was selected. An area just south of the site has been identified.

Naomi: We purchased one of 2 benches, the current balance is \$2,389.67.

Barb: she has an appointment at the Gresham Historical Society this coming weekend to continue her sign research.

John: He talked about the development south of Bella Vista Park. He also talked about the Shaull property, which is in the Centennial NA boundaries, but that NA is inactive. He said the property is currently slated for 30 units of housing. The hope is that the property will be retained as is (forested).

Announcements:

April 26, 2021: Nwana general meeting, 7:00 p.m.

July 29, 2021: Tentative picnic at Bella Vista Park

October 25, 2021: Nwana annual election meeting, 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.