

Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

*January 13, 2016
Springwater Trail Room
7:00 p.m.*

Officers present: Jim Buck, president; Sandy Davidson, vice-president; Lynn Saint, secretary; Tracy Slack, land use chair. Thirteen members present.

7:00 p.m. Opening

President Jim Buck called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Two police officers, Mark DeLong and Dave Anderson, gave a surprise visit to field questions about any concerns association members might have.

7:06 p.m. Officers DeLong and Anderson

Jim expressed his concerns about illegal camps which he had heard about at a coalition meeting. He has seen evidence of damaged trees, litter on green space areas and creek pollution. These individuals consider themselves sovereign. Jim's personal concern is the Hogan and Palms area in which he observed a propane tank and a satellite dish.

Camps are shifting with high waters in the creeks. All debris will end up in the waterways. Question: "Why not establish enforcement of current codes?"

Officer DeLong explained that two new NET (Neighborhood Enforcement Team) positions will be added. "The two current NET team officers, Estes and Luck, are very efficient as they know the laws. We need crime statistics. Since they have been on patrol, there has been a 10-15 percent reduction in the homeless population."

Some homeless individuals have made lifestyle choices. Many county resources are directed at Portland. Portland is looking at spending \$90 million to mitigate this situation. Gresham has the refugees from the highly structured and more aggressive homeless population in Portland.

Officer Anderson further enlightened the attendees, revealing the law is in a state of flux. Under the current laws, unless there is an ongoing legal problem, a camp cannot be broken up. The camping ordinances are difficult to enforce. The constitutional rights of the individuals cannot be violated as a tent is considered a domicile. Corrections officers need a soft touch to break up the campsites.

There is little of value in the camps. Heroin addiction appears as a major factor among almost 90% of the homeless. Therefore, addicts focus on smaller items when they break into cars or steal from other locations. The drug is bought in \$20.00 increments.

The participants were encouraged to not be victimized and to report a problem. Exercise proactivity by reporting people camping in close areas. There is safety in numbers for those who wish to traverse the walking and riding trails. (Tracy mentioned that he and his wife will not bicycle solo anymore because of the dangers.)

The Power Line Trail was cleaned up last week. There is a huge homeless camp near the Boeing business complex with over 100 people residing there. Truthfully, the Springwater Trail has attracted more homeless people to come into the Gresham area.

More than anything else, the growing homeless population affects livability. Jim mentioned the situation is exacerbating. Services, unfortunately, create an attractive nuisance.

Sandy expressed concerns regarding health issues, and in particular, mental health. Mention was also made that those with serious mental health issues have been de-institutionalized. Problematic situations exist because many of these individuals cannot adequately live without help of some kind.

7:25 p.m. Stacy Humphrey – Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet?

Stacy Humphrey, a city employee working with code improvement, is conducting research regarding the naming protocols for all the buttes in Gresham. Only two buttes have names listed with the U. S. Geological Society, Gresham Butte/Walters Hill and Grant Butte. The others, Jenné Butte, Gabbert Hill, Hogan Butte and Towle Butte do not have any presence on the national database.

The question remains. How do we get names for buttes? These are found in application forms, maps, and historical documents. To further enlighten on the history of the area and common names, Eli Hogan was a timber man; Gabbert Hill was part of the Oregon Trail system but the historical data remains a mystery; Jenné Road, thus the butte name, was perhaps donation land from a family; Towle Butte is a question.

Buttes are known to have had volcanic origins. A butte is a hill with a flat top. Another commenter queried, “Why can’t there be a consistency with names?”

Kat Canard offered some 1930 maps to show land ownership and names from 80 years past. Over 1300 residential owners will receive letters asking advice about naming the buttes.

Stacy also mentioned she needs a letter of support from the Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association with regard to this project. Related to naming and renaming, Jim also mentioned the city has currently cancelled renaming streets within the Gresham city limits.

7:37p.m. Emergency Preparedness

Jim introduced the theme of emergency preparedness with a booklet which emphasizes the importance of staying in control in the event of being cut off from regular routes and disruption of services. An emergency calendar for the year presents different scenarios and how they can best be addressed.

The Gresham Fire Department is one of three Metro fire departments possessing a CPR unit, costing around \$15,000.

Does the city also have a calendar/pamphlet for CPR and first aid procedures? Sandy mentioned there is training online. First aid classes can cost around \$45.00. The Red Cross may be willing to conduct a CPR/First Aid class. Also, the city of Gresham has an emergency preparedness staff.

Ahead of time, it is best to prepare with grass roots support. Each neighborhood needs a cohesive organization. Mary Ann Buck mentioned that we have been advised to know all our neighbors both for safety and emergency events. Once something occurs, how do things start moving? Where do we need to be in the event of an emergency?

Byerly Woodard and Sandy will look into organizing small neighborhood groups. Hill dwellers will need extra assistance in the event of an unforeseen event. They will also check into resources for CPR and first aid.

7:48p.m. Goal!

Tracy presented his SMART goals as a way to stimulate us to define our purpose as a group:

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Result

Time-bound

As way of illustration, one goal could specifically state: "Let's increase GBNA memberships." He expounded how each of the SMART attributes could be addressed within that statement. In light of this, it was noted that members of GBNA are not always measurable as there is a good number of people who help out with other projects as they participate in the wayside work parties.

More ideas for the association: to conduct a neighborhood party (pointed out that these are probably more preferable within smaller groups), adopt another improvement project, eradicate blackberries, increase membership and volunteerism, sponsor a part of the trail, try to address and prevent illegal camping on the trail, especially to prevent environmental damage.

To further improve the trails and the environment, trail walkers could focus on pulling up invasive plants. One of the plants returning to the region is Herb Robert, a wild geranium with an extremely pungent odor. All are invited to pluck up, pull out and discard this plant

Crime prevention

Because there has been a crime increase within the neighborhood boundaries, there was a call to look at increased security 24 hours/day with time stamp indicators. Discussion addressed a feasibility study for a CAM to determine equipment costs, privacy issues, police department assistance. The advantage of a neighborhood CAM is that residents will feel more secure. Costco has \$1,000 camcorders which may present a way to institute these into a few neighborhoods. Butler Road has camouflaged CAMS. Cameras on the trail should be employed. METRO has the capabilities of installing them.

Citizen patrols are not on the trail. These patrols are in vehicles on roadways. Individuals can be identified by a distinctive logo on their shirts.

On the part of the homeless, an accepted code of conduct needs to be accepted. Service organizations can also address some of these issues.

8:17 p.m. Reports

Minutes

The minutes were accepted; however, someone did question information about the vacant Ambleside house and accompanying residences - there are actually renters at the site.

Land Use

Tracy reported on the land use situation regarding Southeast Hogan Road. At an early notification meeting, attendees were informed that a four acre plot of land was being subdivided into nine lots. There is another subdivision which will also need to be part of this plan, 1,000 feet northeast of Butler Road. An approved lot will also be subdivided in the Regner Road area. The City of Portland is attempting to sell property on Walters Hill, also.

Treasurer - State of the Finances

Because Theresa Tschirky was attending another meeting, Jim presented the treasurer's report.

As of December 15, 2015 the balance of the GBNA account was \$1,814.04. There were two deposits made the previous month totaling \$600, both earmarked for the Dawncrest Wayside Restoration project. Schmidt's Nursery made a \$500 donation, also.

Of the 1,814.04 balance, \$1,488.00 is reserved for the Dawncrest Wayside Restoration project. Jim submitted receipts totaling \$1,346.68 for materials used on the restoration project to date. These receipts will be forwarded to the East County Soil and Water Conservation District as they have given \$1500. Area neighbors have also donated \$400. This leaves \$141.32 in the dedicated restoration project funds.

Barring any additional donations or deposits, the balance of the GBNA account should be \$467.36 next month.

8:25 p.m. Old Business

Dawncrest improvements

The city gave \$588. This amount is unnecessary for materials but will probably be spent for a missing bench. The manufacturer of the bench has been located and, hopefully, a match will be made.

Due to low funds, the city will not remove Norway maples. A nursery has donated large maples but there is no money to remove the offending Norway version.

This area has experienced a huge improvement. Most major costs have been covered.

One way to continue caring for this is to divide the area into eighths which individuals or small groups can claim as their own responsibility for upkeep. A weed preventive, soil fabric has been laid down which will last for 20 years. Hopefully, good pollinators will encourage growth of desired plants and flowers. The deer have not been much of a problem.

Lovhar cutting

A couple of laborers, operating a chain saw in the woods off Lovhar, were encountered by a pair of hikers. A local business had ostensibly been hired by one of the home owners, hoping for a better view to sell a house. The city is continuing to investigate the matter. Property size governs the amount of trees allowed to be harvested; trees with an eight inch diameter may be removed after obtaining a permit. An aerial photograph showed that trees had been removed illegally in 2009; in the fall of 2015, more trees were illegally cut down. Hazardous trees do need to be removed.

8:32 p.m. New Business

Regarding the grant application, members need to consider a project for which the association may apply to the city for 2016.

Meeting signs can be posted on Thursday, prior to the following Wednesday night meeting.

The coalition of Gresham neighborhoods is once again holding a Repair Café at the end of February or early in March. Individuals who have transportable items in need of repair can take them in for volunteers to repair. The Gresham Library is a possible location because of its foyer and large conference room. The Rockwood community center is another possible venue.

On weekend days, the East County Soil Water Conservation District will present a number of topics with workshops available.

For next month, the Citizen's Patrol could be a possible topic. Of interest, also, is the marijuana issue as unincorporated areas outside Multnomah County will be affected.

8:40 p.m. Meeting Adjourned