

# Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

March 8, 2016  
Springwater Trail Room

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

## 7:05 p.m. Opening

President Jim Buck called the meeting to order and asked the 19 attendees to introduce themselves.

## 7:07 p.m. Kirk French – Gresham City Current Events

Kirk distributed the **Council Work Plan for 2017** and introduced the first speaker, David Berniker, director of Planning and Design, who explained the Ambleside house pre-application, the potential approval for Robin's Terrace and SW 23<sup>rd</sup> Terrace, along with a pre-application conference for another development.

**The One Gresham Downtown Development Initiative**, from Powell to Division, Eastman to Hogan, presents an overview of the whole area, emanating from the Gresham Transit Center, which is "downtrodden." Surrounding that locale are areas with tremendous development potential including a plethora of vacant lots. More focus remains on economic development. Walker-Macy, an urban design landscape company, is researching what may be done to improve the milieu. A visioning exercise is requisite for Rockwood, Civic and Downtown Gresham. Question: How do we get more people to be a part of the discussion? How can we engage the entire community? A third puzzle piece responds to updating the environmental code. Three different techniques exist for determining the district lines; confusion reigns as to which line to follow and why.

The next city hall officer, Eric Schmidt, addressed **the three hubs**. Rockwood Rise exists as a Rockwood improvement endeavor. Many different initiatives dovetail into each other as development attempts increase within the city. Some sites remain vacant. Metro is actively looking for a developer through solicitations. The owner of the K-Mart property has been working with developers – the lease will terminate in 2019. How can that property be redeveloped? Civic design standards are important.

**City and Metro properties reflect long-term vision for the city**. Conversations are taking place with developers. Most projects are inching forward. Many people, Portlanders, in particular, remain unaware of the opportunities available in Gresham. Other current projects relate to Specht Development and engaging in active conversations with potential tenants. On Glisan, near Hogan, there are three more possible industrial spaces. One million square feet of industrial space encompasses two potential projects. Business proposals? What does this mean as far as possible job markets?

Several years ago, City Council attempted to **codify processing timelines** regarding new business developments. A 66-day turn-around time reveals a better effort than any within the state of Oregon. The city is trying to attract quality development as it also cares for the various stake holders. Collaboration is occurring, as far as land use and building permits. Development fees and incentives reveal Gresham's pride in its ability to serve.

**Industrial development adds more value and income**, contingent upon the type of industry. The current proposals aim to blend a mix of office, retail and industrial as they join the community.

Where will those dollars go within the community? **The community does need to create the attractors** for people to come to downtown Gresham, eat at the restaurants, grab a cup of coffee, etc. The planners want people living here to make the city attractive to businesses which may potentially come.

Jim Buck commented on the **need for a greater variety of shops**. The response: Main Street is a definite draw for developers. Iconic Main Street can be built upon. Some businesses are not doing as well

as others. Those businesses situated away from the center are not as strong. The high school on the north end of Main Street and Gresham City Park at the other end create a unique venue. Development will come but there needs to be maximization of the potential.

Another challenge is to **connect civic with downtown Gresham**. The Town Fair Shopping Center has its back towards Main Street. Bicycle paths and the light rail pass much flat ground with no development, a highly unusual scenario. Rockwood, Civic and Downtown, each with its own personality, need to maintain their integrity and their diversity. Connectivity should exist between all three.

**7:35 p.m. Chris Strong – road conditions.** Gresham residents have finessed playing Frogger with their cars and potholes. Normally, one crew fills ruts; because of this winter's storms, three crews currently address the pothole dilemma. Beyond holes in the roads, longer term help and maintenance are needed – with five years' duration. My Gresham will help track changes.

Question: "Why are people using studded tires on roads? Studded tires create more damage to the roads." No answer was forthcoming but the complaint was registered.

Long-term transportation plans reflect the 900 lane miles of Gresham streets – the majority need repair; \$9 million have been received but \$60 million are needed. One and a half million dollars are allocated per fiscal year.

Relating to GBNA, Walters Hill should be revamped this year by July and August. Elliot, feeding into Regner, will be repaired, also.

Creative financing holds the key to obtaining more money for roads as Council has approved some new allocations and responsibilities:

1. Street sweeping paid by gas tax, now storm water
2. Vegetation right of way...no longer gas tax, now storm water
3. Highway runoff – take it away from gas tax, now storm water

Franchise utility fees: pay a certain percentage of revenues to the general fund. Council has increased designated franchise utility fee money for street repair. With this five-year rate package, nominal increases will aid in improving the condition of the streets. Additional monies will amount to \$32-35 million. That should take care of all the failed streets in the city. Families will see a 5% increase in the city utilities - water bill. The program anticipates a \$3.93 increase per home, on the average. Jim thanked the crews for all the work they have done during times of ice, snow and the inclement conditions which have affected our roads.

**7:47 p.m. Parks and Trails.** Despite negative attention, the city needs trails. Connections need to be made.

Question: Hogan Butte project was delayed a year but it is now under construction. Ambleside has been delayed. The City is currently targeting March 31 in anticipation of finding a purchaser of the house and a mover of said estate.

**8:52 p.m. Emergency preparedness** concerns Councilor French. Discussion ensued.

## 7:55 p.m. Minutes and Reports

**Approval of Minutes.** Moved, seconded and approved.

**Land Use Chairman Tracy Slack** stated that the Schacht house must be moved or deconstructed; it needs to be out of the way to restore the flood plain. Metro would like to sell it for the cost of moving it. Hearsay indicates the cost would run approximately \$150,000.

There is also an annexation of acreage on the west side of Regner and south of Butler. The developer is seeking approval for 34 lots.

**Treasurer Theresa Tschirky** reported that, as of January 15, 2017, the balance remains at \$1081.91. Of that amount, \$343.86 has been earmarked for the Dawncrest Wayside Project; \$518 is being held in reserve for the sign venture. CAL people may spend \$199.35 as Jim has an invoice for that sum.

### 8:03 p.m. Old Business

Jim has selected a metal to be used for posting the sign. CAL has two sets of students who will engage in this work – one for posts; the other for the map sign itself. Jim will approve the map. The signage for the saddle trail is still in process.

Hoping for a non-materializing Asplundh donation, Jim may go on ahead and order wood chips.

As far as ivy removal, volunteers must chop off ivy on the trees. The ivy plants need to stay at the base because of salamander breeding grounds. Pruning saws and loppers are the key tools...even a crowbar would be effective in removing ivy before sawing or lopping it off.

There is still a campaign to change the traffic.

### 8:10 p.m. New Business

Jim solicited ideas for a grant from the city. In the past, the city has offered groups \$600, but the powers that be may diminish the quantity. The monies usually arrive in May.

This would not require many funds but a pond in Bob Canard's neighborhood has a large bamboo stand; this was previously a homestead but now harbors all kinds of junk. Home on a hill above. Next to the water tank...prehistoric landslide, a large scarp on the Gresham Butte side; then, to the south side of the water tower, there is a potential way to remove bamboo. Cut it out until it dies.

Another idea is to ask for a sidewalk extension in a neighborhood.

Tracy advised that Jim Buck may not wish to continue as president of GBNA. We may need new officers for the coming year, in the fall.

Laura Pramuck, on the Gresham Planning Commission, asked about concerns people within the GBNA may have. She also endorsed new officers taking over by stating, "Everyone needs to take a turn. New blood and new energy are essential." She previously crusaded for "Slow the Hill Down," an effort to encourage safer driving and slower speeds in the neighborhoods.

The timing of the Hood Street and Powell Road light has been extended to allow better traffic flow, on the request of GBNA.

The city will install a stop sign by the middle of March at Towle and Butler. A bed and breakfast owner at that corner expressed his preferences about the traffic. Social media has changed traffic conditions. As traffic has increased because of various factors, people enter sites to check traffic congestion. Thus, they are steered through previously unbeknownst (to them) roads resulting in more traffic in those private or more isolated areas, too.

### 8:32 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

The next meeting is on April 12<sup>th</sup> and will address Ambleside.