

April 24, 2010

FAN^Forest Hills Neighborhood Association Invitation & Newsletter

YOU are a member of the First Addition/Forest Hills Neighborhood Association, one of the most involved and active in the City of Lake Oswego. Our boundaries reach from the west side of State Street to the corner of Andrews and Iron Mountain, from Tryon Creek Park to the north side of A Avenue. We're a mix of single- and multiple-family residences and downtown businesses. Within our borders are Forest Hills Elementary School, the Adult Community Center, two small City Parks, and the Public Library. There's always a lot going on in Lake Oswego that affects us, and we like to make sure our voices are heard in City decisions. To make sure we're representing the neighborhood's needs, we need to hear your voice. **Please join us at our Neighborhood Association's Annual Meeting on Friday, May 7**, in the Oak Room of the Lake Oswego Adult Community Center on G Avenue (between 4th and 5th Streets). The Annual Meeting is the perfect chance to meet your neighbors, enjoy some music and refreshments, and learn a bit about what the City has in mind for economic development in our downtown. Here's the Program:

6:30-7:15 Mixer

FAN resident Jim Bolland will be providing live, acoustical music for our enjoyment. Say "hello" to old friends and make some new ones. Pizza, drinks, and a delicious sampling of pastries and desserts will be available for a very nominal amount (which will help refresh our treasury so we can continue to be an active Neighborhood Association).

7:15-8:00 Program

"Planning for the East End; Foothills, the streetcar, and economic development downtown," presented by: Brant Williams, Economic & Capital Development Director; Bob Galante, Redevelopment Director; and Jane Blackstone, Economic Development Manager. A question & answer period will follow their presentation.

8:00-8:20 Business Meeting

Election of Slate of Officers
Election of Coordinating Committee members

Our Neighborhood Association's Coordinating Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm at the Adult Community Center (except August, when we take a break; and May, when we hold our Annual Meeting). We use these meetings to inform ourselves of what is happening in the City and to discuss concerns that arise within our neighborhood. All interested neighbors are invited and encouraged to attend—we post each month's agenda on our website www.fanforesthills.com a week before each meeting. Among the issues we expect will influence our Neighborhood in the coming year are: the next steps in the development of the Foothills area; the on-going effort to invigorate downtown and to build a new library; the City Council elections; and the Periodic Review of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Come join us, there's always a lot to learn and discuss!

Following are some of the issues your Coordinating Committee members have been actively involved with this past year:

ALLEY TRASH COLLECTION

Diana Bouwer

After more than 15 years of working together with the City of Lake Oswego, garbage, recycling and yard debris collection has been returned to the alleys in FAN. This was a long process and many changes have occurred in the neighborhood since this plan was first included in the First Addition Neighborhood Plan. Continuing efforts by Chairs old and new helped us reach this long established goal and bring a long awaited project to closure with great rewards. We now have cleaner, more accessible alleys, safer streets for pedestrians & bicyclists, and less clutter to mar the charm of our neighborhood. Thank you to all of the folks that worked on this project over the years, but especially to Lisa Shaw-Ryan who helped develop reasonable expectations and guidelines and move this project into a reality!

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Maria Meneghin

The City's Capital Improvement Plan is a working list of all Lake Oswego's capital projects (one-time costs). Each year the CIP is used to prioritize needs throughout our community. Depending on available funds, the City Council adopts some of the projects for attention in the upcoming fiscal year. Our Coordinating Committee spent several hours reviewing our Neighborhood Plan and identifying those neighborhood projects that we wanted to be sure were included in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan. We submitted a list of three to the Public Works Department: a pathway along E Avenue, a survey of drainage problems in First Addition, and bike lane striping along the length of C Avenue. All three of our projects have been added to the CIP, making us eligible for consideration during the upcoming budget cycle. While we can't guarantee that our projects will be seen as the most cost effective and urgent to the City, it does mean we stay in the running for funds for the next few years.

INFILL

Jim Bolland

After three years of work by the Infill Task Force and over a year of review by the Planning Commission, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed infill modifications on April 20th. Modifications of interest to FAN/Forest Hills residents include allowing minor building height adjustments to homes constructed on slightly sloped lots, changing the minimum side yard setback in the R-6 zone from 5 feet to 7 ½ feet (the total of both side yard setbacks would still be 15 feet), and requiring a side yard setback plane on corner lots. The City Council adopted the Infill recommendations with the exception of the RID review, and acknowledged the need for further study of steeply sloped lots.

5th STREET and A AVENUE CROSSWALK SYSTEM

Diana Bouwer

After years of active campaigning to improve safety for residents trying cross one of our busiest downtown thoroughfares, our push for crosswalk improvements at 5th Street and A Avenue came to fruition as the City of Lake Oswego completed construction of an enhanced crosswalk, September 25, 2009. The new crosswalk system provides street light illumination, a curb extension on the south side to reduce the crossing distance, overhead warning lights activated by pedestrian push buttons, and high intensity pedestrian crossing signs to provide more attention to the presence of pedestrians in the crosswalk. Successfully working with the City and the Evergreen Neighborhood Association, we can celebrate the completion of another important project.

HISTORIC HOMES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Sharon Gustafson

There are 16 City of Lake Oswego historic landmark structures within the First Addition Neighborhood. One of those included on the list, the Marion Platts House, located at 595 Sixth Street, is being watched closely by the Neighborhood Association as its status is reviewed by the City. The current owner submitted an application to either demolish or move the landmark. As required by city code, the owner advertised the structure for sale for 120 days. The 120 day advertising requirement expired on November 9, 2009. A land use application for demolition was submitted in November, 2009 and rejected by the City of Lake Oswego for “incompleteness” in December, 2009. The owner submitted additional material the week of March 8, 2010. The city has 30 days to review the new material for “completeness”. If the application is complete, a hearing before the Historic Resources Advisory Board will be scheduled. A comment period and public hearing will follow. If you have comments or questions regarding the Marion Platts House contact Leslie Hamilton, Associate Planner for the City of Lake Oswego, at lhamilton@ci.oswego.or.us . In the event the demolition permit is approved, the FAN/Forest Hills Neighborhood Association has suggested that the home be deconstructed to preserve reusable materials.

STREETCAR

David Jorling

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has been studying the alternatives for mass transit on the Macadam corridor. The three alternatives that have moved forward to our Committee include: No-Build, used as a basis for comparison for the other two, Enhanced Bus, and Streetcar. Our meetings are basically educational sessions which include the opportunity to ask questions, hear citizen input, and voice concerns. Our latest meeting reviewed legal requirements for a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). The requirements discussed included land use impacts such as zoning and development, safety and security impacts, community impacts such as demographics, and the restrictions required by public parks and other recreational services. Still to come are ridership and cost studies. The DEIS is currently expected to be ready for the Committee's review in July. It will be published in August and a 45-day public comment period will begin. The CAC's meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the month. As the representative from FAN/Forest Hills, I encourage all of you to attend the meetings. In addition, any comments you may have on this analysis can be submitted to Metro in writing or by e-mail. Finally, if you have any questions of me about the process, please contact me at djorling@comcast.net.

TREES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Sharon Gustafson

Our Tree Subcommittee monitors neighborhood tree cutting permits and tree mitigation planting, encourages the City's efforts to plant new trees in the public right-of-way, supports the City's Forestry Program, and nominates our special trees for the Heritage Tree Program.

The Tree Subcommittee has commented on three pending tree cutting permits, so far, in 2010. A list of current and past tree cutting permits plus other tree related information can be found on our web page at www.fanforesthills.com/tree.

In conjunction with the Lake Oswego Centennial, the City of Lake Oswego has honored several very old trees to be designated as Century Trees. The first 20 trees (three in FAN) have been decorated, but residents can nominate trees until July 1, 2010. Every Century Tree with public access will be included on a Century Tree map produced in August, and the first 40 to be identified will be marked with a plaque. For more information visit www.ci.oswego.or.us/plan/nature/centurytreeproject.

Another way to recognize trees that are special because of their size, age or history is the Heritage Tree Program. The beautiful Chinese Elm on the corner of Sixth Street and D Avenue was recommended for nomination and accepted in April by the Natural Resources Advisory Board as a Heritage Tree. The Tree will be marked with a plaque this summer.

SCHOOL LOT COVERAGE

Carole Ockert

When it comes to code, it's in the details. In 2009, the City decided to review the code relating to lot coverage for schools and church/school mixed-use facilities. Our Neighborhood Association wanted to be sure the City considered the issue of neighborhood livability while allowing for needed use, but assuring there would be no unintended consequences from any code change. Over the past 12 months, our Neighborhood Association has actively participated in a city-led process that examined this issue. Of major concern to us was that the code definition of "school" included in-home daycare. If not handled properly, a code change would allow massive homes to be built, under the heading of a mixed-use home/daycare structure, next door to a normal-sized residence. The City Council did amend code section 50.13A.025, creating parity in code between public and private school lot coverage; and we are pleased to say, they also included language that defines the applicable schools as having at least 2 grades of K-12 and be of a size that would accommodate a minimum of 100 students. This prevents the change from impacting the lot coverage for a single family home. Livability of our neighborhood is a dynamic and on-going process. Your Neighborhood Association cares and we appreciate your participation and support.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Maria Meneghin

As you know, our Public Library sits in the middle of the First Addition neighborhood. Apart from the traffic and parking issues, this placement has been an asset to our neighborhood, but not really an asset to the Library itself. A change in this situation will affect the whole community, but will have particular significance to our neighborhood.

The building, though well-designed, has been failing physically for many years now (the staff does its best to hide this from the public). The staff have been forced to "retire" books and other media that are still requested and used because of lack of available shelf space. Programs and services have been truncated because of lack of public space and parking. Our community is, quite literally, loving our library to death. Many, many studies have been done over the 27 years of the current building's life to try to ameliorate these problems, but given its location in a residential area not much can be done.

An opportunity has recently arisen to design and build a new library in our downtown. If done correctly and in a way that is both fiscally and civically responsible, this can result in the right type of building in the right location to meet this community's needs into the next century. A discussion of this option has been broached at our Neighborhood Association meetings and will be continued. We will be discussing not only what we want from a new library, but what we will find acceptable in the space it currently occupies.

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