

WUN Meeting Feb 3, 2005 Synopsis

7-9pm, Central Presbyterian Church

See http://groups.yahoo.com/group/west_university_neighbors/ for the longer version of this file. Not a member of Yahoo Groups? Contact Deborah Healey at healeyd@onid.orst.edu or call 683-7454 to get a copy of the file.

Present: WUN Board members: Adam Walsh, Deborah Healey (Secretary), Don Goldman, Drix Rixmann (Chair), Kellyn Gross, Steve Jarvis; 15 other WUN residents (who signed in); 8 visitors.
Notes by Deborah Healey

Intros and announcements: 1-2 Board members are resigning, so we're looking for volunteers. Nominations at the March meeting; possible elections at the April meeting. We'd like volunteers for committees: contact Drix at drix@msn.com or 451-1585 for information.

Public testimony: Zach Vishanoff talked about the need for the WUN to take a public stand about the UO's arena siting process. He would like the neighborhood to encourage the City of Eugene, City Council and Mayor and/or Lane County Commissioner to immediately initiate a series of forums to gather input on the University of Oregon's new arena siting. The University has held forums without listening to the input. A resolution would be a symbolic gesture. The Fairmount University Neighborhood [where the arena would be located] has members who are not opposed to it.

Comment from David Kelly, City Councilor: Forums are a good idea, but you should call on the university first. An arena on the Williams Bakery site is an outright permitted use, so the City has no jurisdiction.

With only 17 WUN residents present at the time, no motion was offered. People were encouraged to speak with Zach about his idea. [UO relations is a proposed topic for a future WUN meeting.]

City Council report from David Kelly: The City is drafting a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the next 30 years for parks and open space development, including acquisition of open space, maintenance, etc. A priority one activity is to enlarge or replace the closed West University Park by either acquiring the property on one side or the other, or finding another space in West University. About \$150 million worth of proposals is in priority one with \$30 million available to do the work. A Parks open house about the area affecting West University will be on Tuesday, Feb 15 4-7pm, Campbell Senior Center on High Street. The South Eugene Park District includes the last block or so of West University, so it's another possibility: Tuesday, Feb 22 from 4-7pm at the Hilyard Community Center. It's important to be come and be heard. Road maintenance: an ongoing issue; some of the increased gas tax will go to Hilyard Street. Feb 14th meeting, 7:30, City Council will address changes in the fee structure for the Toxics Right to Know amendment and a proposal to ban motor-assisted little scooters from bike paths. March 7th meeting: discussion of the three proposals for low-income housing in the lot to the east of the WOW Hall.

Trees discussion with Mark Snyder, Eugene Urban Forester. A few programs of interest: NeighborWoods provides street trees for people to plant (Rick Olkawski is the Coordinator: rick.g.olkowski@ci.eugene.or.us; 682-4831). Call to get on the list. They also have a Tree

Stewards program, where we will train you in pruning and maintaining trees. We have a series of walking tour brochures, including one for West University. Contact our office to get one. The Legacy Tree initiative lets people nominate trees for listing, which recognizes and honors them. It does not protect the trees specifically. The City of Eugene and the Eugene Tree Foundation choose the trees to be listed each year around June. Contact the ETF or check their website (www.eugenetreefoundation.org) for information and a nomination form.

The Historic Tree amendment does protect trees. This charter amendment says that without a general vote of the city of Eugene, no tree shall be removed if it's historic (over 50 and bigger than 8") and if it existed in the area of Eugene in 1915. This is why LTD is no longer proposing a rapid bus transit line down the middle of Franklin Boulevard, but will widen the street instead. Any damage of more than 30% of the root is considered felling the tree, so they will be very careful. There will be three trees taken out to build bus stations on Franklin.

The Trees for Concrete Program (TFC) has the city taking out concrete to put in trees, where they can do so without Americans for Disabilities Act impact. One place is in front of the Post Office. We do one or two TFC projects each year. Saturday April 9 is Arbor Day - we'll be planting trees at PC Market and the old Romania site.

Q: Why do you take out large trees and replace them with twigs?

In my experience you cannot transplant a tree over 4" in diameter without its survival being just a matter of luck. For every inch of caliper (diameter at 8" from the ground), there's a year of transplant shock. People want a larger tree, but buying a larger tree is more expensive (\$250 versus \$50 dollars), and it takes much less time for a smaller tree to grow out of transplant shock. We maintain a tree for three years, but we don't have the budget to deal with longer than that.

Q: How is a determination made that a tree is hazardous?

Eugene makes a great deal of effort studying and reporting on a tree before it is removed. The reports are available for public viewing at our offices. We mark the trees with a bright yellow sign. The placards are up for at least 15 days for public comment. If you don't like something, call me. If you don't like my decision, call the City Manager, then the Mayor. We use a resistograph, a special 3/16" drill bit to drill into the tree with a motor that charts the resistance it meets. When it hits a hollow, it shows on the chart. We plug the data into formulas determined by empirical research to see if it meets the threshold for safety. If it's possible to mitigate by cutting off a branch, we do that. Where the base is rotten, the upper part catches the wind and tips the whole thing over. We don't have a cabling program. The one exception is the Owens cherry tree, a state heritage tree. Sperry Tree Care donates time and cables to keep it intact.

Security discussion with Jack Dawson and Jack Backes, Eugene Police Department: Let me start with the difference between burglary and robbery. Robbery is when someone comes up and takes something from you. I can't say there's a lot of robbery in this area. There are problems with car theft and home burglary during the day. People will come up to your door pretending to be a salesman. If no one answers, they try the doorknob and walk in. When you leave your home, lock it. Bicycle thefts are going up, even in the daytime. There are debates about the best lock - probably good to have both a cable and a U-lock. The best thing you can do is use your neighborhood watch. If you see someone taking a long time to unlock a bike lock, call about it. On campus, you can call Dept of Public Safety - they're less busy. If the 13th Street police office is open, please call us first for this kind of thing - not life-threatening. 682-8350 is the station number. Jack Backes' personal office number is 682-5642.

Q: What can people do to prevent car theft?

Cars are stolen all over the city. People joy ride with them then abandon them. We process them for fingerprints - we see the same people doing this. The Honda Acura is the #1 car stolen. The older the lock is, the easier the key will slide in and out of it. You can get an ignition cutoff switch that you mount in the car. For the bikes, get a good lock. You like to think you live in a safe neighborhood, but don't leave your doors unlocked. Burglars stay out of houses with dogs. Anytime I contact anyone on the street doing something that looks suspicious, I fill out a contact card. If we have a burglary in the area, I check the cards and it helps us find people of interest. We are keeping track of people who are out of place in the neighborhood. Drug deals happen in this neighborhood. 90% of the bike theft, car theft in this neighborhood is because of drug dealing. We stop a lot of what is going on.

Q: Have you noticed an increase in risks to personal safety?

I work nights and haven't noticed an increase. I encourage people, especially young women, not to walk home alone. There are still some dark streets. I don't escort women home any more. Recent problems in the department mean that I can't do that any more.

Call for volunteers for committees and newsletter distribution: contact Drix at drix@msn.com or 451-1585 for information on how you can volunteer to help.

Next general meeting: Thursday March 3, 2005, 7-9pm, Central Presbyterian Church, 555 East 15th Street (enter via the alley). Topics: Parks; possibly UO relations. April meeting topic: UO relations (if not in March meeting), WUN housing issues

Next Board meeting Wednesday March 2, 2005, 7-pm, place TBA (probably the Sloat Room in the Atrium Building - contact Drix for confirmation). Public testimony is usually not taken at Board meetings, but the public is invited to attend.