

# West Portland Town Center Plan

## Community Advisory Group

Monday August 5, 2019 – 6:30 to 8:30 pm

### Meeting Notes

**Location:** Girl Scouts Building – 9620 SW Barbur

**Group members present:** Javier Moncada, Terri Preeg-Riggsby, Marianne Fitzgerald, Chris Smith, Saalim Ahmed Saalim, Katherine Christensen, Ramsay Weit, Dacia Grayber, Pam Phan, Rachael Duke, Tony Hansen (Crestwood alternate)

**Group members absent:** Beth Omansky, Chris Chiacchierini, Adrenalina Corrales and Brandon Brezic

**Staff present:** Joan Frederiksen, Ryan Curren, Samuel Garcia

**Partner staff:** Libby Winter -TriMet, Seemab Hussaini and Millie Hobaish - UniteOregon

#### **Introductions, updates/announcements, meeting summary, sign collaboration principles, events summary:**

After introductions, Seemab Hussaini of UniteOregon led a native land acknowledgement and a moment of silence for recent mass shooter tragedies in El Paso and Ohio. He then engaged the group in setting group agreements for the evening.

Joan asked for any group announcements and asked for any comments or edits on the meeting notes from the June CAG meeting. There were none. The meeting notes will be finalized per the draft shared and posted online soon.

Joan then asked for each group member to sign the Collaboration Principles, which reflect no changes since last reviewed by the CAG, and circulated a copy around for signatures.

Joan provided a brief summary of public events since the last CAG meeting and invited CAG members who attended to share their perspectives as well:

*June 15 - WPTC Community Walks:* We had a really good turnout. We created a summary of what participants told us, shared with you last month, and also found online.

- Overarching themes were about getting through and around TC area safely, comfortably and having a broader range of services in the area, including culturally specific and supportive ones.
- Staff learned a lot and hope that the community appreciated hearing each other share thoughts/ideas

*July 25 - Fair Housing Community Conversation:* It was an excellent opportunity to learn about some very impactful and relevant history. There were around 30 people in attendance, though at any point there were probably 20 people engaged at once. There were fewer than we would have liked from SW, and others came from many parts of the city.

- It was a combination of presentation and small group conversations, with the last discussion questions asking to use the lens of the history and issues covered on the SW Corridor work.
- It was noted that a similar but presentation was also being offered in a partnership between Fair Housing Council of Oregon (covering a historic perspective largely) and Community Alliance of Tenants (covering current issues and efforts).
- Joan asked any present who attended if they wanted to share any comments or impressions. Three attendees shared thoughts that included appreciation for the opportunity to hear and learn new information and interest in learning more (including the 2014 Fair Housing Guide handout), noticing that a good number of attendees were from housing agencies or non-profits but not many from SW neighborhoods, as well as a concern from one member that there was an undercurrent feeling that somehow blamed homeowners for exclusionary zoning and that more be done to emphasize the common ground issues between renters and homeowners. Another member responded that regardless of intent, the City has kept in place single family zoning that has hurt renters who cannot afford the higher priced housing.
- Joan then noted that we are hoping to host another 2 or so of these opportunities. The ideal would be for a group of NAs to co-host. I will be following up with the four NA represented here to talk about ways you might be able to help us get a group of interested NAs to work together. BPS would still do the lift of logistics/materials. She also noted that though aimed more for neighborhood and general public there may be interest from other groups, like immigrant communities, who may also not know this history.

### **Review of draft goals**

Joan introduced recent draft of the project goals. Copies were included with meeting materials and shown on the screen. The previous version shared in June had had a goal that everyone had voted as number 1. That goal had a bit of everything in it and will now instead serve as part of a vision statement. The remaining evolving goals will parse out how and what from the overarching language we want to make sure the plan and framework achieve.

A *Goals to Policy Crosswalk* has been created as well, but at 17 pages it is too long for a quick scan at a meeting, so opted not to print. We will have it up online soon.

Joan asked the group to take another look at these goals and give some thought in the next week as to whether we are getting close to covering desired outcomes. If you can think of things that are missing, not emphasized enough or if there are ways to call out things specific to West Portland please email your thoughts.

Brief discussion included points around:

- Defining “accessibility” in terms of transportation to include making facilities/infrastructure useable by people of all abilities, noting that many trails in the area are not “accessible” in that sense
- Connecting availability and access to affordable housing to health and safety outcomes. How does housing burden affect physical and mental health? CAT noted their involvement in new research looking at this question, and how unsafe, rundown housing creates mental stress like limited access to affordable housing.

- There is also the issue of the physical state of housing/buildings and how it effects health and how can it be addressed.
- Can we look at Comp Plan policies that conflict with these goals so we can work to change those policies if needed?

Joan noted that we expect more revisions to these after the fall workshop, which will focus on the physical form and infrastructure of the town center. Want to bring these to that setting in as good a shape as possible. Somewhat related, there may also be an opportunity later in the process to create a design character statement for the area. Such a statement would help inform future design review decisions that would apply for redevelopment proposals in the town center. Such a More on this in the fall.

Next Ryan went over the budget snapshot (Community Development Matrix) handout that had been requested at the last CAG meeting. It lists 3 years of city agency budget and philanthropic requests related to affordable housing, displacement and equitable development. Ryan noted that a lot of the things we are concerned about are also important in east Portland. He stressed and called attention to the fact that 3 years in a row funding for business displacement protections were requested and denied for SE Division Corridor. Also noting that out of all bureau coordinated efforts proposed, only Cully Urban Renewal Area was approved. The reasoning from City Budget Office for not recommending some of these requests has been that there is not enough information or commitments in place to merit the funding.

A brief discussion followed and interest was expressed in both forming a sub-group of the CAG to advocate and put pressure on council members and allocating time in the coming months/meetings to strategically crystallize CAG budget priorities. Staff and the group in general responded affirmatively to these ideas. Staff will consider future CAG meeting opportunities to revisit and move this item forward.

### **Barbur Transit Center – concept development updates/discussion**

Joan next introduced the Barbur Transit Center (BTC) Transit Oriented Development Concept work. Parallel to the WPTC Plan effort, are looking at the Barbur Transit Center site as an opportunity site should light rail get built. There has been a staff workgroup that’s been convening since May and work will continue through fall. A key piece of this work will be a September 6 workshop – that we keep mentioning. **The CAG is invited to participate.**

The Concept produced will not be a directly developable plan but will serve to provide more information and something of a roadmap that City can use in considering partnerships and opportunities for the future of the site. **Importantly it is intended to inform a memorandum of understanding between the City and TriMet and ODOT (both key players, ODOT is owner) on the future redevelopment of the site.**

The resulting concepts will have considered community input, feasibility – looking at basic physical, infrastructure and financial/market issues; and best ways to support the desired community benefits,

urban form, connected mobility, and accessibility for the surrounding area. The final concepts may be an appendix to the West PTC Plan or a separate report.

In addition to what could be developed on this site, we want to get to accessibility to the site right. Providing a quick re-orientation, Joan showed an aerial photo, other maps of the BTC site area and general information including that the site is approximately 4 to 5 acres, has 1,000 feet of frontage along Barbur, is owned by ODOT, and is currently zoned Commercial Mixed Use 2 (CM2) which allows for 4-5 story buildings.

Joan also showed slides and reminded the group of some of the big influencing pieces for this site, many of which are still in flux, including:

- Light rail station location – TriMet is still refining station locations in this area. Consequently, the concept work will look at both a station in center of Barbur as well as one on the BTC side of the road. Either way the rail would still be in a structure over Capitol Hwy and Barbur to the south.
- Parking – The park-and-ride lot size and location is also a remaining question. The current surface parking lot today had 365 spaces. The analysis as part of the Draft Env Impact statement included up to 825 spaces at this location to understand the traffic impacts of that much parking here. The BTC concept work will consider park-and-ride numbers, phasing options and parking structure costs as well as needs for potential redevelopment concepts - retail, office and residential. TriMet staff in attendance noted that no decision about parking space numbers has been made yet for this station or others.
- Access to site and connections to the surrounding urban area are a significant factor in how site could be planned.
  - A group member commented that more feeder bus services and safer bikeways are needed.
- An initial market analysis done recently for this area is part of the context for the BTC. Highlights include:
  - a. Area has lower commercial and residential rental rates today than elsewhere in city. This can mean higher displacement risk as rents rise in response to light rail induced market changes in the area.
    - A group member asked for staff to provide the actual dollar amounts for rents to compare with other places.
  - b. There has been limited new development in the area. This lack of recent comparables could be a challenge for private financing.
  - c. Need greater number of housing units and types to support a mix of new commercial development and equitable outcomes - 75% single family today
  - d. Analysis looked at commercial service “surplus” and “leakage” in both 10-minute walkshed and 10-minute driveshed. “Surplus” meaning commercial services that are abundant or well represented and “leakage” meaning services that people have to travel out of the area to access. In the walkshed there is an unmet need for pedestrian-scaled places/streets to locate specialty food, shoe, luggage, book, music, clothing, general merchandise, gift stores, and florist shops. The driveshed leakage shows a need food, beverage uses.

A group member noted that the 10-minute walkshed shown on the map (on the slide) may not match the walkshed shown on other maps shown so far. Staff will compare, correct if necessary, or provide explanation if there are set differences.

Katherine Christensen then provided an overview of the *What We Heard – Barbur Transit Center* handout, which reflected community input summary from both April and June public events.

Input was requested of the group on what we have heard from the community and if there are other things we should be sure to raise as part of that upcoming workshop.

The group then broke in two to cover the following discussion questions:

- *Are there any details missing that you want reflected at Sept 6 concept charrette/workshop?*
- *Are there any considerations (broader themes/issues) that should be front and center as we work on the concept? (i.e. access to /designing with nature; accessibility, etc.)*

Notes from each group follow.

Group 1:

- Stormwater → creative, safe designs, railings
- Properly size water, sanitary systems → accommodating for future growth
- Earthquake, Seismic standards
- Affordable family sized housing
  - o Houses can be affordable with good utilities
- Different types of homeownership models
- What income levels qualify for affordable housing? Is affordable housing *affordable*? Consider spectrum from apartments to single dwelling homes
- How community oriented is the community space?
- Mixed use businesses are unaffordable
- Strive for locally owned businesses in mixed use building
- Local jobs that hire local people
- Oversight for affordable housing
- Healthcare access
- Safety → Barbur
  - o All streets leading to transit center

Group 2:

- Make sure Barbur World Foods is included/prioritized as an anchor
- Preserving existing low-income housing stock
  - o Not just preserving rent, but making sure the housing gets healthy
- Explore removing on-ramps/off-ramps
- Pedestrian bridge over Barbur
- Traffic calming, safe turn lanes
- Library services at BTC, and creating resilience with libraries as emergency community connector space

- Thinking about serious noise/air quality that's healthy (mitigations provided on affordable housing which gets overlooked)
- Large lots → developing greenspaces, multi-modal, connected, infrastructure
- How do you make multi-modal flow between neighborhoods?
- Speed of Barbur and Things that make safer make slower
- Careful about focusing too much on density
  - o Preserving current character
  - o 3-4 stories height
  - o Lu Don [apartment building in area]
  - o Fresh air quality
- Making sure there's good, public access for safety vehicles
- Unimproved roads
- How to ensure all improvements are made without transit price raise

### **Health Equity Assessment – update/discussion**

Ryan introduced and shared a few of the Health Equity Assessment results recently produced by project consultants. He referred the group to the four-page summary handout.

A group member asked about what data was used for the cancer rate information, as it seemed low. Ryan responded that he did not have that information, but that source information would be included in the report.

There was an appreciation from one member for the infographic data comparing the north side of WPTC to the southside. The disparities were new to some members.

Referring to the last page of the handout, which called out Health Equity Strategies, a group member asked if these could be visually mapped to the project goals.

### **Public comments, next steps, reminders and closing:**

Staff thanked everyone for attending and participating. There were no attendees from the general public.

Next meeting Monday October 7, likely back at Markham Elementary.