

Northeast Neighbors (NeN)
Eugene, Oregon

SUBJECT: General Meeting minutes

November 11, 2020

Attendance:

Elected officials: 5

Board members: 5

Guest speakers: 2

Attendees: 25

Total: 37

Opening remarks and review of agenda. Chairman Kevin Reed opened the meeting with welcoming remarks and reviewed the agenda with the guest speakers. In his opening remarks, he announced that Evergreen Housing Development Group will be holding a public meeting as required, to answer questions regarding the development at River Ridge. Evergreen Housing Development Group is planning to build 612 new housing Units on the remaining 9-hole golf course during Phase-3 of the project. The City of Eugene will allow Evergreen Housing Development Group to use the Northeast Neighbors platform for their required public meeting, but Chairman Reed emphasized that NeN is neither facilitating the meeting nor endorsing the project. The Chairman said that the public meeting will be on Thursday, November 12th at 7:00 pm and he advised anyone interested to participate.

Approval of minutes from the Annual Meeting. The Chairman stated that the minutes from the Annual Meeting on September 29, 2020 have been posted on the website for review, and then asked for a motion to approve. A motion was made by Anne Millhollen to accept the minutes as written by Richard Edwards. The motion was seconded by David Martin and the minutes were approved by unanimous acclimation.

Acknowledgement of Elected officials. Chairman Reed welcomed and introduced our elected officials; Senator James I. Manning Jr. District 7 of the

Oregon State Senate, Representative Nancy Nathanson, District 13 of the Oregon House of Representatives, Councilor Jennifer Yeh, Ward 4 on the Eugene City Council, Councilor Mike Clark, Ward 5 on the Eugene City Council, and Commissioner John Brown who represents both Wards 4 and 5 on the Eugene Water & Electric Board, (EWEB).

Presentations by Elected Officials

Representative Nancy Nathanson – Oregon State House of Representatives. Representative Nathanson talked about how to contact her and also encouraged everyone to sign up for her email newsletter.

Senator James I. Manning Jr. – Oregon State Senate. Senator Manning thanked the Northeast Neighbors for organizing and inviting him to the General Meeting. He said there are a lot of things going on in the Senate and it's possible that there will be a Special Session in December. As Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform, he is involved in working on policies with a wide range of stakeholders including the public. One of the policies that he is developing is a new tactical uniform to replace the traditional riot gear, in an effort to avoid using inflammatory terms that aggravate tense situations. In summary, he said his goal is to take care of officers but be transparent.

Commissioner John Brown – Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB).

Commissioner Brown reminded everyone that there would not be any rate increases this year. He said that EWEB reliability successfully achieved less power outages this year, so they are in the 90th percentile for providing consistent power. He said that EWEB received a FEMA Grant for high risk areas to improve reliability. They now have six emergency water sites. They have provided a million dollars for restoration allocation along the McKenzie River. They have had to impose a 3-5 dollar fee per month to restore and preserve the integrity of the water shed.

Councilor Mike Clark – Eugene City Council. Councilor Clark appreciated the chance to be here and said he welcomed anyone to contact him. He said he was on the committee that created the naming policy for new park space and offered to provide assistance during the process of renaming Striker Field. Councilor Clark said that it is unfortunate that one of the criteria is that the park cannot be named after living persons, because two people who had more to do with acquiring the

land and were heavily involved should get recognition; Jim Torrey and Commissioner John Brown.

Councilor Jennifer Yeh – Eugene City Council. She talked about the naming of Striker field and gave out the link to the website. She said there are 3 steps in the process. First is asking anyone to submit suggestions on the link until November 13th using the website. She asked NeN to put out the information via e-news and on the website to get nominations from as many people as possible. The second step is a review of the nominations to disqualify the names of living persons and eliminate inappropriate names before publishing the finalists. The last step will be another round of public participation in a vote to narrow down the names to the top three nominees. Councilor Yeh said she will make the final decision around mid-December and offered to come back for the next meeting. Following her remarks, Chairman Kevin Reed announced that the Northeast Neighbors will follow the naming process as outlined by Councilor Yeh, and forgo any naming contests as previously discussed during Board meetings.

Marissa Cade - Home Share Oregon program. Marissa Cade said she is a former legislative staffer and now works for the non-profit Home Share Oregon program. She is also involved with a program called the Turn Key project that converts former hotels and motels into housing. Oregon Harbor of Hope created a statewide sharing program, and the Here Together campaign bond was created a year ago. The programs have all been impacted by the wild fires and Covid-19. Home Share sometimes takes on renters in their home and online sites like Craig's list have been added as a resource. As home sharing evolved, it started the old fashioned way which was face to face matchmaking. With the advent of technology, it's been possible to look for compatibility when listing available housing. Instead of creating something new, they found the existing Silver Nest software that matches people with someone that has room to rent. While the housing crisis was getting worse, they looked into the 1.5 million owner occupied homes in Oregon with a spare bedroom. They used an algorithm to make a conservative estimate of actual availability and determined that there are approximately 1 million available spare bedrooms in Oregon. Next, they did fund raising to start a non-profit program so that they could access Silver Nest technology. So they are now a referral program for housing, ride share services, home repair services, background checks, and other services in Counties around the state. They create housing without having to build anything. Basically, the

program works partly in-person, but 90% of the enrollment process is online. They are available to assist people with completing the enrollment. They have a fund for home repairs, legal aid and mediation services. They are now looking to grow their partnership with non-traditional providers. When the wild fires happened, they decided to expand to offer temporary housing. The result was they have 145 participants statewide who have signed up; 38 in Lane County. In Lane County, 15 are homeowners and the typical homeowner to renter ratio is 1 to 8. The combination of using existing resources adds capacity without creating additional structures. They have expanded the program to let participants open driveway space on their property for home share such as an RV. They are now fundraising to get marketing and education materials. They are also working on a tax abatement program and planning a pilot program in four counties. She is optimistic that Lane County will be one of the counties chosen for the pilot program. In conclusion, she thanked everyone for listening and gave her email address for anyone that wanted to help or had questions:
marrissa@homeshareoregon.org

Question & Answer period for the Home Share Oregon program:

Question: What other services do you partner with?

Answer: We are partnering with other non-profits such as White Bird Clinic and St Vincent DePaul. Our referrals tend to go both ways and they coordinate with Red Cross, FEMA, the Oregon Community Housing Agency, and Network of Community Action. They are also working with the State legislature.

Comment: Rep Nathanson commented on affordable housing and said Home Share can provide emergency short-term or temporary or permanent housing. She said this program frees up existing property and expands available housing.

Additional comment: Senator Manning said that there are not hotels and motels available in every community, so they are considering other structures such as quadplexes for the Turn Key project. He said they have approved 3 million for the Turn Key project and the Department of Administrative Services has been tasked to distribute the money. He said he is looking at making sure the money is distributed equitably throughout the State. He added that the old VA clinic on River Avenue has been converted to a transitional living site for people who are recovering from Covid. He encouraged everyone to be part of the process.

Kirstin London – Housing and Homeless response. Kirsten London said she grew up in Eugene and went to North Eugene HS. She has worked for the past 16 years with a non-profit in Cottage Grove. Station 7 provides emergency shelter for 11 to 21 year olds and the focus is reunification. They primarily work with runaways, and homeless because it is not illegal to be a runaway in Oregon. They offer six transitional beds, and she also oversees a drop in school for 4-j. They use the point in time numbers to count homeless and unhoused. She stated that the Point in Time numbers are only an estimate but there are not enough services to accommodate the homeless and unhoused. She expects to see the homeless numbers increase, especially as the Covid pandemic spreads. The eviction moratorium ends in December so she predicted that after the moratorium expires, the homeless numbers will increase more than usual.

Question & Answer period for the Housing and Homeless response:

Comment: Heather Silecki said it's going to be a cold winter and they expect the largest group of unsheltered this coming year. The Eagan Warming Center was only able to support 80 people last season and they are not expecting to be able to support the increased numbers this winter. She said there is also less emergency shelter so they expect more need for tents and other supplies. She said they can provide education for neighborhood associations to explain resources available.

Comment: Kirstin said the Covid-19 epidemic has also started infecting the homeless camps. When someone is infected, that makes it harder to place people in shelters so they are also looking for more sleeping bags and tarps.

Food for Lane County. NeN Board member Anne Milhollen spoke on behalf of Food for Lane County. In February the Neighborhood Associations are going to do a food drive so they are looking for volunteers and also need a drop off site. More info to follow in December.

Public Comment period:

Question: Unnamed participant said he rides a bike on Coburg Road and there are sections that are covered with sand and gravel. He contacted Lane County public works on October 28th about the problem, but there have been no results.

Answer: Councilor Clark said anyone he's talked to at the County answers to the County Commissioners, and the section of Coburg Road he's concerned about is in Commissioner Pat Farr's district, so he should contact Commissioner Farr next.

Question: Chairman Reed asked Board member John Faville to comment on any plans to reduce the speed limit on Gilham Road since plans to improve the road north of Ayers Road has been delayed.

Answer: John Faville said that he has no new information but will look into it.

Comment: Resident Lefty Dundee said there will be Veterans Day program tomorrow at 11:00am at the Veterans Memorial Building. He also said that he contacted LTD regarding the Number 66/67 Bus route that is affected by the construction on Delta Hwy, but LTC did not have any information on changes.

At the conclusion of public comments, Chairman Reed reminded everyone that Evergreen Housing Development Group will have a meeting to answer questions about Phase 3 of the plan to build 612 new housing units on the remaining 9-hole golf course at River Ridge. Chairman Reed reiterated that NeN is not facilitating the meeting and has not taken a stand on the project. He said the meeting is on Thursday, November 12th at 7:00 pm and invited anyone interested to participate.

The Chairman gavelled at the meeting closed at 8:08pm.