

LAURELHURST

L E T T E R

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Celebrate Neighbors

The holidays are a time when many of us reflect back on the year and feel appreciation for neighbors who do the little things that make Laurelhurst such a special place to live. Do you have a great neighbor who deserves a special thank you? Nominate them for a Good Neighbor Award!

The Laurelhurst Community Club will host a special event to honor those nominated on Saturday, February 10, from 10 a.m. to noon at a location to be announced. A city official will preside over a ceremony to recognize these special people, each of whom will receive a Good Neighbor Certificate of Appreciation.

The Laurelhurst Community Club's event to celebrate neighbors follows a ten-years tradition. Past recipients have done things such as bring in mail when you're away on vacation, bring dinner when your family needs support, take care of your kids in an emergency, and host neighborhood gatherings to welcome newcomers. Or, maybe they are just always there for you and your family.

Please take a minute to write a short note about the person/family that has done something for you, and include examples of their acts of thoughtfulness as well as their full name(s) and address.

Please send your nominations to LCC special events coordinator Coco Sherman at 4113 55th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105, or e-mail cocosherman@comcast.net. Questions? Call Coco at 525-9850.

Deadline to submit nominations is Friday, February 2, 2007. ■

Christmas Ship Sails

**Wednesday, December 20
8:55 to 9:15 p.m. at Magnuson
Beach at Magnuson Park**

The Laurelhurst Community Center invites you to join us for some holiday fun! Gather your friends and enjoy the bonfire, free refreshments, hear the choir, and see the Christmas Ship.

Searching for a Sensible SR520 Option

LCC continues to advocate for the creation of an environmentally and fiscally sound SR520 replacement alternative.

On Nov. 10, LCC transportation committee member Jean Amick and LCC president Jeannie Hale met for coffee at the Burgermaster with University of Washington president Mark Emmert. Discussion centered on the costs and impacts of the Pacific Interchange alternative and the inadequate analyses included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The UW estimates that mitigation for the Pacific Interchange alternative could be over \$1 billion. LCC will continue to work with the University on SR520 issues.

The City Council was scheduled to vote on a resolution Nov. 13 selecting the Pacific Interchange alternative as its preferred alternative for SR520 replacement; however, the vote was postponed. Many community groups and citizens have expressed opposition to the Pacific Interchange due to its enormous cost and impacts to the Arboretum, the University of Washington, and the surrounding communities.

In the meantime, a Green Alternative Coalition has formed supporting a four-lane approach as the preferred alternative for bridge replacement. The Coalition has proposed amendments to the City Council resolution and has asked the Council to defer a decision on its preferred alternative until December, after it has had a chance to review comments and study this alternative.

The Green Alternative is more affordable than other options, with a price tag of under \$2 billion, compared to \$4.38 billion for the massive and destructive Pacific Interchange alternative. It is a modification of the four-lane alternative that was in WSDOT's SR520 DEIS. The Green Alternative protects the Olmsted legacy of the world-famous Washington Park Arboretum. The plan includes the following features:

- Four lanes on the floating bridge, the superstructures, and on the Portage Bay Viaduct (not seven as in the SR520 DEIS's "four-lane" alternative).
- Narrower lanes, and intermittent rather than continuous shoulders.
- Permanent closure of SR520 on- and off-access ramps in the Arboretum.
- Priority for buses on the Portage Bay Viaduct, on the ramps to and from I-5 and I-405, and on nearby City streets.
- New, reserved bus transit lanes, in anticipation of a stadium light rail station, and retention of the bus lane on Pacific Street.

On Nov. 12, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* endorsed the Green Alternative.

The LCC Board of Trustees voted unanimously to encourage the direction provided in the Green Alternative and to support a more environmentally-friendly and fiscally responsible solution than those included in the DEIS. LCC opposes the Pacific Interchange and supports a four-lane option.

A brief summary of LCC's comments on the DEIS is outlined below.

The full document may be viewed at www.laurelhurstcc.com.

Arboretum: We are concerned about the impact of all of the proposed alternatives on the Washington Park Arboretum. All proposals would take Arboretum land, destroy valuable plantings and tree collections and destroy wetlands. In this regard, the Pacific Interchange alternative is particularly detrimental to the health and well-being of this treasured park setting that serves as a habitat for birds, wildlife and endangered species. The DEIS should study ways to minimize impacts to the Arboretum and preserve the beautiful and pristine open space to ensure no net impact. Further study of the pollution and noise that would result from the Pacific Interchange alternative and vehicle traffic through the Arboretum is necessary.

continued on page 2

Keeping Neighborhood Sidewalks Safe

The dark winter season is upon us, and walkers are slogging through rain, wet leaves, and even snow and ice. It's time to take a close look at your sidewalk and make sure your property is clear and safe for walkers.

Are shrubs or hedges sprawling across the walk or overhanging the sidewalk's edge? Do tree branches droop causing passersby to duck? Are leaves covering the walkway? Have plantings grown so tall that drivers can't see past them?

If so, it's time to get out the garden tools. City Code requires property owners keep adjacent sidewalks, roads, and alleys clear of all obstructions (SMC15.72.010 and SMC 15.42.020). This means shoveling snow, raking leaves, and repairing damage sidewalks (for example, fixing the sidewalk if a privately maintained sewer or tree damages it). Encroaching shrubs and hedges must be cut back, and a minimum eight-foot clearance must be maintained above sidewalks (14 feet above roads and alleys). Vegetation that obscures an intersection at a distance of 30 feet should be trimmed.

Failure to observe these laws may result in a Notice of Violation, which comes with a \$25-a-day fine for each day out of compliance. Fines aside, keeping your sidewalks clear is a neighborly thing to do.

So, please do your part. As a property owner, be a good neighbor and keep your trees, bushes, hedges, and ground covers trimmed back from walkways!

If your street light is out, please report it. With more than 100,000 streetlights to maintain, City Light appreciates your help in finding lights that are out or malfunctioning. You can report problems online at www.seattle.gov/light/streetlight using the Streetlight Trouble Report Form, or by phone at 684-7056. ■

LCC Comments on the SR520 DEIS *continued from page 1*

Coordination with other planning efforts: The DEIS does not discuss how the various options, especially the Pacific Interchange, would fit in with the goals and action items in the University Community Urban Plan, which envisions restriction of vehicular traffic and creation of a pedestrian-friendly environment. Building more lanes and the massive Pacific Interchange is contrary to the neighborhood plan.

Air Quality: Is creation of more traffic lanes into Seattle and the Puget Sound area counterproductive for the city's anti-global warming efforts and pro-clean air efforts? What is the impact on the Arboretum's trees, plant collections and habitat?

Wetlands: We agree with UW wetlands consultants that "several important analyses of environmental effects are either not performed, performed using questionable assumptions or inappropriate analyses...." Statements about the shading impacts on the wetlands are inconsistent and not substantiated by the scientific literature.

Cost: The four-lane alternative is considerably less expensive and a more fiscally sound approach than the \$4.38 billion Pacific Interchange alternative.

Noise: It defies logic to suggest that more vehicles will not result in more noise, or that Laurelhurst will not have noise impacts with a new six-lane alternative 400 feet closer on the north side.

Visual Blight: The proposed Pacific Interchange literally runs a string of concrete arches the length of a pristine natural area, destroying peace and quiet and views. The visuals from the Arboretum were not included in the DEIS and should have been, along with further study of the impacts.

Transit Connections: Costs of providing such transit connections should be incorporated in the DEIS and the budget modified....

Traffic: We agree with UW transportation consultants concerns that levels of service may be seriously understated. The DEIS also fails to show the impacts on Montlake Boulevard.

Impact of tolls: The DEIS fails to analyze the impact of \$6.70 round-trip tolls and the likelihood that single-occupant drivers will use routes other than SR520 due to the toll. How will the occasional cars, nonlocal drivers, trucks and buses from instate and out-of-state pay under an electronic toll collection system, rather than manual collection at a toll plaza? ■

Laurelhurst Street Improvements on Way

LCC's applications for traffic circles and sidewalk improvements were selected for funding through the highly competitive 2007 neighborhood grant program. The projects are included in the North Laurelhurst Transportation Plan and represent two of 28 such improvements planned throughout the City next year.

■ \$20,000 was awarded for design of asphalt walkways on Sand Point Way (near the curve in the road close to Katterman's where it is dangerous for pedestrians).

■ \$70,000 was awarded for installation of two traffic circles with curb bulbs. One will be located at 50th Ave. NE and Nicklas Place NE, and the other at 50th Ave. NE and NE 52nd St. Laurelhurst and Hawthorne Hills applied jointly for these projects.

Each year, the City allocates \$1 million from the Cumulative Reserve Subfund (CRF) for major maintenance projects identified in neighborhood plans. SDOT allocated an additional \$233,000 to the Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF) for 2007. Projects are identified and prioritized by the community and selected for funding by the Department of Neighborhoods, SDOT, Parks, and the Department of Finance. LCC is delighted to receive these highly competitive awards to improve the safety of our neighbors. ■

CALENDAR

December 11, January 8 (Mon.) 7 p.m.
LCC Board of Trustees meeting
St. Stephen's Church

January 26 (Fri.) **Deadline for Laurelhurst Newsletter copy and advertising**

January 27 (Sat.) **Gallery Concerts "Viennese Virtuosi."** St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 4805 NE 45th St. For tickets and information, contact: Gallery Concerts at 206-726-6088, or visit the website at www.galleryconcerts.org.

February 2 (Fri.), **Good Neighbor Nominations Due.** See page 1 for details.

Master Gardener Clinic, Mondays, 4 to 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Center for Urban Horticulture Atrium. Free

University District Farmers Market, Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
University Way NE and NE 50th St.

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DERMATOLOGIST John Streidl, MD, has joined The Polyclinic and sees patients at NW Medical Center, 10330 Meridian Ave, Suite #290. For appointments call: 860-4748.

DOG WALKER: Experienced, honest, reliable dog walker with excellent references and reasonable rates. For more information, visit www.walkdogwalk.com, e-mail walkdogwalk@gmail.com, or call Erin Eskenazi at 384.2125. Licensed and insured.

EXPERIENCED NANNY: I am a college graduate and experienced nanny. I am looking for part time work (ideally weekends) or evenings, if you would like a date night out. 380-1718

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FOR RENT: Laurelhurst Triplex Apartment. Walk to Children's Hospital/Near UW. 950 sq ft, 2 bdrm, 1 bath. Large sunny living/dining with gas fireplace. Kitchen with lots of cupboard space. \$1500/month. 522-3119 or 953-2282.

JOB WANTED: Housecleaning, light gardening, part-time babysitting or elder care. Exp., refs., own car. Prefer NE Seattle. 206 674-5356.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN: Innovative sustainable residential garden designs for you to enjoy. Dog Day Design, Patricia Gibbon, MLA and Master Gardener, 715-6541.

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STANDARD CAR SERVICE: To and from SeaTac, all other occasional needs. Efficient, reliable, prompt. Fully licensed & insured. Visit www.standardcarservice.com or call 930-0316.

SUSAN'S CLEANING SERVICE: Cleaning specialist. Dependable, reliable, efficient. Licensed/bonded/insured. 781-8876.

Kindergarten Open House Tours

Laurelhurst Elementary Open House Tours for upcoming kindergarten parents will be Wednesdays, January 10, 17, 24, 31, and Tuesday, February 13.

Tours start at 9:15 a.m. in the library. No reservations needed. Please call the school at 252-5400 with any questions. ■

YOGA CLASSES: OmTown Yoga Winter Session begins Jan. 8. New students are welcome! Visit us online at www.omtownyoga.com. OmTown offers outstanding instruction for all levels.

The Laurelhurst Letter is published ten times a year. DISPLAY ADS cost \$75 per space per issue, with a five-issue commitment paid in advance. Laurelhurst-area businesses have priority. Call Leslie at 525-0467. UNCLASSIFIED ADS are free for paid members of the Laurelhurst Community Club, except that repeat ads or ads deemed commercial (including home businesses, real estate rentals, and houses for sale) cost \$20; 25-word maximum. Sorry, no unclassified ads taken by phone. Email copy to laurelhurstnews@comcast.net or mail it to 4721 47th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105. Please include your name, address, and phone number. All ads are subject to space availability.

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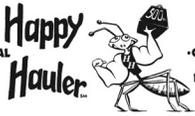
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