

Laurelhurst Letter February 2006

Neighborhood opposition to subdivision unanimous

Around 70 neighbors attended a public meeting Feb. 8 to voice concerns about a proposal to subdivide a property at the corner of 47th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 47th Street, diagonally opposite Laurelhurst Elementary School.

The proposal would create two additional building lots, and three new houses would be built facing Northeast 47th Street after the existing house at 4702 47th Ave. N.E. is torn down. A sliver of land from an adjacent property at 4716 N.E. 47th St. would also be incorporated into the project, and all four lots would then be smaller than the minimum 5000 square feet required by zoning.

Those attending the meeting were unanimously opposed to the project. They told city planner Lucas Deherrera that if the project is approved, it will decrease the value of nearby properties, adversely affect traffic and parking in an already heavily impacted area, result in the loss of open space and trees, and lead to a domino effect in which more and more large houses are built on ever-smaller lots.

PTA Co-President Coco Sherman asked Deherrera to consider the impact of additional traffic and off-street parking on pedestrian and bicycle access to the school. She said the PTA has been working very hard to increase the number of children walking and bicycling to school and that any perception of decreased safety could jeopardize the program.

The Laurelhurst Community Club also opposes the project and has submitted an extensive list of written comments. First and foremost, it argues that the developer has incorrectly applied the so-called 75/80 rule, which requires that substandard-sized lots be at least 75 percent of the minimum size required by zoning and 80 percent of the mean size of the other lots on the block face.

In this case, the developer has calculated the mean size of only those lots facing Northeast 47th Street, and not those facing 47th Avenue Northeast (which are much larger). If the size of the lots facing 47th Avenue Northeast were taken into account, the project would not pass muster.

The club argues that the proposal also violates the spirit and intent of the land-use code, which states that additional building sites must be “compatible with surrounding lots.” With a side setback of only 10 feet, the back of the new corner residence would overshadow the front yard of the house to its immediate north and intrude into the continuous front-yard setback that characterizes the 47th Avenue Northeast streetscape.

The club requested and that the project, if approval, be limited to the creation of one additional building lot and that the new corner house be oriented toward 47th Avenue Northeast.

LCC undertakes boulevard restoration

It's not a crime scene, and no, the trees are not about to be cut down. The yellow

ribbons you see along the planted boulevard on Northeast 41st Street are to keep pedestrians from cutting across the islands and trampling the new shrubs that were recently planted there.

The shrubs are part of a \$5000 plant renovation project paid for by the community club. In the dozen or so years since the boulevard was built, much of the understory has become ragged looking, mainly because of people who park on the north side of the street and walk across the median to access the Center for Urban Horticulture. Their relentless crossings have simply worn the shrubbery down.

The new shrubs were selected to help solve this problem. Among them are three types of barberry, which when mature, bear thorns. The barberries also have the virtues of bearing fragrant yellow flowers in spring and colorful foliage in fall. One variety has showy red leaves all year long.

Also selected for planting were a variety of hebe bearing white flowers and blue-green leaves and one of heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*). A variety of yucca with blue-green leaves with white margins will be added later—138 plants in all.

The trick is to keep them alive until they're big enough to discourage foot traffic. At the moment, some of the shrubs are just little sprigs with hardly any leaves.

In other boulevard news, the community club has reached an understanding with the University of Washington and the Talaris Research Institute to share the responsibility for maintaining the planted median—a responsibility that up to now has fallen exclusively on the LCC.

In the future, each entity will undertake to maintain about a third of the median, with the LCC continuing to pay for all sprinkler repairs.

Talaris gets go ahead; neighbors get increased protections

After several years of negotiations, the Laurelhurst Community Club and the Talaris Research Institute have reached consensus on a package of amendments to the 1991 settlement agreement that governs redevelopment of the former Battelle Memorial Institute site at 4000 N.E. 41st St.

The amendments will enable Talaris, which bought the 18-acre site in 2000, to pursue its plans to build a new, 98,000-square-foot facility in the northwest corner of the property. At the same time, they will provide additional protection for neighbors from any possible negative impacts of the project.

For example, the amendments substantially increase the setback for buildings along the east property line, as well as the setback for surface parking. The setbacks along other property lines remain unchanged, except that limited portions of the building will be allowed to project into the west and north setback areas.

The driveway on the east side of the property will be moved further west, allowing for a larger landscaped buffer on that side. Other very minor shifts and widening of portions of the internal roads will be allowed.

There will no reduction in the amount of parking required under the 1991 agreement (something the developer had sought). A provision was added stating that 407 spaces will be provided for the new building and 233 spaces for existing buildings D, E, F, and G, which will remain on the east portion of the site.

For the first time, the site's wetlands and buffers are acknowledged, their locations generally defined, and their restoration and long-term protection and maintenance required. A boardwalk or pathway and informational signage will be installed to increase public awareness of the wetland ecosystem.

In addition, the amendments provide for a sidewalk to be built, at Talaris's expense, on the north side of Northeast 41st Street. Talaris has also agreed to maintain the landscaped median in front of its campus, as well as the pedestrian island at the intersection of Northeast 41st Street and Surber Drive Northeast.

The original 1991 settlement agreement was negotiated between the LCC, Battelle, the City of Seattle, and a group known as Battelle Neighbors. In return for regularizing Battelle's existence as an "institute for advanced study" in a single-family zone, it imposed substantial restrictions, incumbent also on subsequent owners, on future development of the property.

Ceremony honors neighbors whose good deeds inspire all

Some 65 guests attended the LCC's ninth annual Neighbor Appreciation Day celebration Feb. 11 at Villa Academy. Mayor Greg Nickels and Councilmember Sally Clark, chair of the council's neighborhood committee, officiated. Councilmembers Richard Conlin, David Della, and Tom Rasmussen also participated, and each spoke briefly.

More than 20 individuals and families were honored at the behest of their neighbors: Joe Coates, Christine Gardner, Jeannie Hale, Charlie and Gina Hampson, Becky and Mark Johnson, Wally Keyser, Gretchen Lee, Bruce and Jolene McCaw, the Roske family, Dwayne and Lorelle Shearer, Coco Sherman, Jerry Sherrard, Terry and Sue Showman, Jim and Karen Skaden, and Phyllis Swenson.

Good Neighbor Certificates were also presented to members of Girl Scout Troop 2509 who assisted during the event: Catty Colee (leader), Julia Mirick, Kristin Mirick (leader), Elliott Moore, Brenna Nordstrom, and Grace Trask.

The LCC would like to thank the following local businesses and institutions, who generously provided refreshments, doorprizes, gift certificates, and other valuable services: Great Harvest Bread Co., Maristella Spa Services, Mrs. Cook's, QFC, Starbucks University Village II Store, Villa Academy, University Frame Shop, University Village Shopping Center, and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods.

PHOTO CAPTION: Mayor Greg Nickels and newest city councilmember Sally Clark present Good Neighbor certificates to Girl Scout Troop 2509 members (left to right) Brenna Nordstrom, Elliott Moore, Julia Mirick, and Grace Trask.

Are you interested in neighborhood issues?

The Laurelhurst Letter needs a new editor. The right person will have a keen interest in community affairs and be willing and able to attend once-a-month evening meetings of the LCC Board of Trustees. He or she will be responsible for all phases of newsletter production, including writing articles, laying out pages, coordinating printing and distribution with the printer and mailer, and communicating with advertisers. This is

a paid position for an independent contractor.

If you are interested in applying, please submit a brief resume and letter of interest to Jeannie Hale, 3425 W. Laurelhurst Dr. N.E., Seattle, WA 98105 or email her at jeannieh@serv.net.

Calendar

Mar. 12 (Sun.) Music at St. Stephen's presents Luigi Celeghin, emeritus professor of organ at the Conservatory of St. Cecilia, Rome, and his daughter Angelica Celeghin, professor of flute at the University of Perugia, in a concert of mostly Italian works for organ and flute, 4 p.m., St. Stephen's Church, 4805 N.E. 45 St. Suggested donation: \$15 general, \$10 students and seniors, \$5 children. Call 522-7144 for more info.

Mar. 13 (Mon.) LCC Board of Trustees meeting, 7 p.m., St. Stephen's Church.

Mar. 25 (Sat.) Groundbreaking ceremony for construction of the addition to Laurelhurst Community Center, 1 p.m. (approximately), Laurelhurst Park. The mayor is expected to attend, and refreshments will be served.

Unclassified advertising

AVAILABLE VARIETY SERVICES: Housecleaning, laundry, ironing, alterations, cooking, etc. Mary, 286-8093.

BOAT OWNERS: Boatbuilder seeks restoration/remodel project. Woodworker with over 20 years' experience is looking for long-term projects. Craig, 523-6655.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC CLASSES: Rising Song offers parent/child Kindermusik classes (newborn - 7 yrs) and piano lessons (from 5 yrs). 726-3677 or www.risingsongschool.com.

COMPUTER HELP-RAPID RESPONSE: Experienced teacher/tutoring.

Hardware/software installation. Microsoft certifications: Word, Excel, Access.

Laurelhurst refs. Matt, 525-8077.

EYE EXAMS: "Clear vision begins with healthy eyes." Comprehensive, thorough eye health exams with Dr. P.J. Bingham @ Market Optical in University Village. 522-9323

FOR RENT: Kihei, Maui, 2BDR/2BA condo, sleeps 6, 3rd floor, ocean view, fully furnished. Beautiful pool & grounds. Great family unit. Avail. June 18 to July 2. \$2800. John, 525-5580.

FOR RENT: Sun Valley/Warm Springs. 2 bdrm + loft, 3 bath condo. Across from ski lifts and hiking/biking trails. Pool. NSNP. Julie, 527-9769 or julielafleur@comcast.net.

FOR SALE: 29-gallon aquarium with stand, bottom filter, 2 heaters, and air pumps, gravel. Tank needs resealing. Best offer and you take the lot. 525-5282.

FOR SALE: Laurelhurst view home for sale. Lovingly restored, light-filled 4-bedroom home in Beach Club area. For more information visit www.4520eastlaureldrive.com or call 522-3646.

FOR SALE: New Dutilier mission-style brown leather glider and matching ottoman, \$700; 21" Sony Trinitron color TV, good cond., \$75 OBO. Jack, 729-6637.

FOR SALE: Three 30-inch-high bar stools, 5 castors, multi colored check fabric, comfy. \$150. 525-7065.

FOR SALE: Wood-burning fireplace insert, fits 27.5" x 43.5" opening; convection grate heat exchanger w. blower; brass front w. folding glass doors over chain screen. \$75

OBO. 525-5282.

GARDEN DESIGN: Beautiful, durable, award-winning. From consultation to installation, we meet our clients on any level. APLD member. References. Karla Arnold Design, 301-9301.

HOME MAINTENANCE: Gutter cleaning & pressure washing: driveways, stairs, walks, decks, patios, tile, bricks, etc. Experienced, local refs. Will also house sit. Thomas, 478-8776.

House Cleaning: Crystal Cleaners. Reliable service, prompt, honest, references on request, 8 years' exp. in The Highlands. 930-0316.

HOUSE WANTED: Family seeking home in Laurelhurst or Windermere. Avoid real estate fees! No agents, please. 613-0844.

LADY GOLFERS: Are you interested in joining other women on Thursday mornings for a round of golf at Jackson Park? If so, please call Betty at 525-6355.

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

PAWS & PLANTS: Personalized care for your pets/plants. Litterbox cleanup, indoor plant care, mail & newspaper pickup, garbage & recycle, dog walks. Lic/bond/refs. Teri Hall, 547-5225.

STANDARD TOWN CAR SERVICE: To airport, \$40; from airport, \$45. Corporate accounts and city tours welcome. Puget Sound area. By reservation only, 930-0316.

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

TUTOR: Teacher/school counselor, 17 years' exp., master's, available for reading, language arts, math, organization/study skills. Elementary/middle. Will work with child's teacher. 525-3758.

WANTED TO PURCHASE: Small home in Laurelhurst, Hawthorne Hills, or Bryant areas. Fixer OK. 524-5981

WANTED: Laurelhurst family wishes to rent neighborhood home during remodel, 6-12 months. Please call Lee, 522-1021.

WANTED: Old Green Egg or Kamado BBQ/smoker (egg-shaped clay cooker). Also wanted: old bearskin rug, antlers, hunting stuff. Pat, 595-1522.

WANTED: Older, active Laurelhurst couple looking for home to rent or housesit during remodel, April through July or August. 524-6687.

WANTED: Styrofoam packaging peanuts (no blocks, please). Can leave in driveway at 3415 W. Laurelhurst Dr. N.E. 527-0582 for more info.