

***Neighborhood Contact Meeting***  
***Virtual meeting hosted by SMILE Land Use Committee***  
**Meeting Notes -- Dec 16, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Committee Chair David Schoellhamer. Land Use Committee members present: Vikki DeGaa, Rocky Johnson, Francisco Salgado, Kirsten Leising, Bob Burkholder and Shari Gilevich. Casey McGuirl, McGuirl Designs and Architecture, attended to discuss the project. Ten community members attended.

David Schoellhamer reviewed the protocols for the neighborhood contact meeting. He advised attendees that the meeting will be recorded. Vikki DeGaa will monitor the comments entered by attendees into the Chat box.

**Neighborhood Contact Meeting for 5252 SE 18th Avenue:**

Mr. Schoellhamer gave an overview of the project and zoning standards: The proposed development is a 4-story building with 38 dwelling units. The 7,000 square foot lot is zoned RM2d, Residential Multi-dwelling with Design overlay. Development standards for RM2d include: maximum building height 45 feet; FAR (Floor Area Ratio) 2.25:1 for projects with Inclusionary Housing units; front setback 10 feet; minimum side and rear setbacks 5 feet; maximum lot coverage 70%; minimum landscaping 20%. No on-site parking is required for the project with affordable units.

He noted that this neighborhood contact meeting is informal and advisory to the developer; the focus is on the proposed design, not on whether a project should be built. The city process does not require a public hearing or public comment for this development because the proposal will meet the required and optional Design Standards. This is one of several current projects under development -- the Land Use Committee will have hosted four neighborhood contact meetings just this December for new projects.

Rocky Johnson took over facilitating the meeting as Mr. Schoellhamer had to leave for another commitment.

**Project team presentation**

Casey McGuirl thanked Mr. Schoellhamer for the introduction. He presented power point slides to show the site plan and building elevations.

- The project has 38 units: 36 studio units (300 square feet) and two, 1-bedroom units (450 square feet).
- The ground floor has a common area.
- The outdoor space faces SE 18th. This space will have a planter to deal with storm water runoff.
- There's a significant amount of bicycle parking, but no on-site vehicle parking.
- A few units have full balconies, and many have a "Juliette" balcony to embellish the façade and provide the look of balconies.
- Building material is fiber-board cement and metal guards for the balconies.
- They intend to plant conifers that eventually will grow into the large trees depicted in the renderings of the development.

If anyone wants to be included in follow-up notes, please leave contact information in the Chat box.

**Questions, Comments and Responses**

Rocky Johnson thanked Mr. McGuirl for the presentation and asked for questions from the attendees. Topics addressed were the following:

Impact on existing structures. Concerns were raised about the impact on houses in the area and on the Hollywood Lights building, a warehouse on the lot to the east of the site. Mr. McGuirl said that the single house on the subject property will be demolished, but there are no impacts on adjacent houses. While the Hollywood Lights warehouse building is located right at the east property line, this project will not impact that structure.

Building permits: Mr. McGuirl said that they can file for building permits after they have completed the neighborhood contact meeting process.

Parking issues: Comments were made that the current on-street parking conditions are "abysmal" and that adding this development is a recipe for disaster. Mr. McGuirl said parking is always a concern, but they really don't have a good answer. The City's goal is to reduce or eliminate parking on a site so that there will be more space for dwellings.

Affordable housing or Section 8 housing: Mr. McGuirl said that to meet the Inclusionary Housing code, 15% of the apartments, six units, will be affordable, based on 80% of median family income for Portland. He has not seen the pro forma statement for the project, so doesn't know what the expected rental cost will be. That cost will be based on market conditions when the apartments are rented.

Construction impacts: Concerns were raised about impacts on on-street parking and street closures during construction. Several attendees said that SE 18th essentially functions as a one-way street due to parking and will become more dangerous. It was noted that there are no sidewalks to the south of the subject property. Also, there is a fire hydrant at the southwest corner of the property, so there's concern about blocking that during construction.

Mr. McGuirl said the 20 ft.-by-20 ft. outdoor common area in the northwest corner of the lot will be used to stage construction equipment throughout the project. He said there will probably be a sidewalk closure or partial closure at times and explained the signage for these periods. He will note these concerns in the construction documents, but added that they don't yet have a contractor who can address these details. He expects that construction will last 12 to 14 months. Street closure would happen for a few days when the utility connections need to be made, and there may be some half-street closures.

Neighborhood information: Given neighborhood interest to be informed about construction activities, Rocky Johnson asked Vikki DeGaa to explain having a neighborhood liaison during construction. She explained that for several other projects in the neighborhood, a resident who lived near the project volunteered to be a liaison between neighbors, including businesses, and the construction manager. She did this for the Meeting House development, the block between SE Rural and Ogden Streets, west of Milwaukie Ave. She acquired emails from interested neighbors, met weekly with the construction manager, and emailed project updates to neighbors. If anyone is interested in volunteering to do this, please contact Vikki DeGaa and she will help set up the process. She left her contact info in the Chat box. Mr. McGuirl said to definitely reach out to him when construction is closer to get contact information.

Traffic issues: There's concern that SE 18th cannot remain as a two-way street after this project. It's recommended that the developer: 1) look into how SE 18th will function as a one-way street; 2) realize that the city is "daylighting" intersections, removing parking at intersections to make them safer; that should happen here, but would reduce the amount of on-street parking; and, 3) it would be great if this project could extend the sidewalk to the south of the subject property so that the area at least gains a continuous sidewalk.

Mr. McGuirl said they have not yet talked with PBOT, Portland Bureau of Transportation, about traffic issues. Also, extending the sidewalk beyond their own property would be a challenge.

Landscaping: Attendees asked about the type and size of trees to be planted, whether the landscape plan illustrated in the project images could really happen, and impact on existing trees. The community wants as many trees as possible. Mr. McGuirl said that the hedges illustrated along the south lot line may be replaced with a fence. The intent is to plant the conifers and evergreens so that the site would eventually have large trees. The flow-through planter in the northwest corner and other landscaping still work. He said that the parking strip in front of this property has only one big bush and that will be removed. The flowering cherry trees are in the parking strip in front of the adjoining lot to the north, and those trees will not be impacted. If the neighbors' preference is for trees similar to the flowering cherry, they could plant that type if it is a street tree allowed by the city. The Princess tree growing over the lot in its northeast corner will need to be trimmed back to the property line.

Apartment size and density: Comments were that the very small size of the units and the large number of units don't feel like they fit in here. This is very dense and over the top.

Building design / façade / building material: The attendees commented on building materials, design features that would meet Main Street design guidelines, full balconies vs. Juliette balconies, and the target market for renters. Mr. McGuirl said that the building material is fiber cement board with metal trim. For the Main Street design elements, he identified vertical windows and noted that their designers had looked at other Main Street design features. They will give more detail about the Main Street designs in their response letter. The number of full balconies is actually limited by the maximum allowed building coverage. He said that they can look at placing full balconies on the front of the building and fewer on the sides. He agreed that these units might be rentals for college students, and that they're too small for families.

In regard to other Main Street elements, a more articulated, significant cornice was discussed. Mr. McGuirl said that the building does have a band on the top, and even that's expensive. He noted that the Main Street guidelines include an example of a 4-story building and refer to that often, so they considered that in this design. He will pull out that reference and send to David Schoellhamer.

Other issues: Other concerns are that the arguments here are about parking and construction impacts, but neighbors can't really do anything about those. One person hoped that the city does not approve the permit and would love to raise concerns, but realizes the architect isn't going to change the parking. Rocky Johnson agreed and that we are all frustrated with this.

Design changes: People would like to see design changes before the permit is submitted because we residents will have to look at the building. Mr. McGuirl asked for suggestions.

Design issues: Some do not like fiber cement and prefer brick. Building looks like a white box with cutouts. However, don't just add some embellishment that doesn't fit with the building anyway. The building on NE corner of 18th and Insley has a chunky cornice, and he thinks that does NOT look good. He suggests a pop of color for the new building. Mr. McGuirl said that the city has improved requirements for fiber-cement, so it's a better product now, but that they could look at a brick base for the building. Mr. McGuirl said the metal was supposed to add the color.

History of zoning in this area: An attendee gave brief history of zoning for this area: When there was going to be a light rail station at Harold Street, the zoning was high density, multi-dwelling. When that station was

eliminated, the neighborhood worked with the city and agreed on rezoning to R2.5, a single family zone that allowed two units per 5,000 SF. Then the city reworked zoning and applied R1, a multi-dwelling zone that would allow five units per 5,000 SF. Finally, the city's "Better Housing by Design" project transformed R1 to RM2, and effectively changed density from the five units per 5,000 SF to an infinity number of units.

Future meetings for neighbors. There was a suggestion for neighbors to meet and further discuss this project and to meet with the developer. People hope that SMILE can help with that. Rocky Johnson agreed that it would be great for the LUC to hear that discussion and work towards some improvements that would help with livability.

Outreach to more people. Another concern was that the same voices are heard at these meetings and there are not enough people involved. More voices and views would be good. Vikki DeGaa said the Land Use Committee wants that, too. She said that the group uses Facebook, NextDoor, Instagram and ListServe email to let people know what's going on, but people tend not to participate unless the project is right next door. If anyone has ideas on how to bring in more people, please let us know. Ms. DeGaa said that about a week before a Neighborhood Contact meeting, volunteers with the Land Use Committee distribute flyers to residents and businesses within a block or two of the development site to let people know about the meeting.

The recording of this meeting should be posted by SMILE, but it was not known when that will happen.

Mr. McGuirl thanked the group for the introduction and good comments to work with, and Rocky Johnson thanked him for listening and responding to questions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.