

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood News

March 2021

SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SunnysidePortland.org

board@sunnysideportland.org

February SNA Notes and March Plans

By Dave Boush, SNA President

Sunnyside Piazza, Green New Deal, Air Quality, Clean-ups

The February SNA general meeting kicked off with a discussion on how to organize the painting project for Sunnyside Piazza at the corner of SE 33rd and Yamhill. Recent sewer repair and repaving has completely removed the bright sunflower street painting that was approaching its 20th anniversary last summer. The usually festive project is complicated by the pandemic and has more moving pieces than the painting itself. Those wishing to help can volunteer at www.pdxstreetart.org/articles-all/sunnyside-piazza.

Rachel Slocum and Mark Darienzo shared a video and led a discussion on the Green New Deal. They reminded neighbors that the 2019 resolution by Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and Sen. Markey was neither a bill nor a policy, but rather a proposed framework for dealing with climate change and social justice. The discussion elicited comments about the desirability of electric cars, dealing with the problem of those whose jobs are displaced, and the overwhelming nature of such sweeping federal policy. Many neighbors may be familiar with Tom Friedman's use of the term "Green New Deal" in 2007, or with the Green party or Sunrise movement. However, many may be surprised by how closely President Biden's climate policy framework of "standards, investment, and justice" mirrors the GND.

Greg Bourget of Cascadia Climate Action continued the environmental theme with a presentation on local air pollution. Greg notes that Oregon ranks poorly in air quality

among U.S. states (and last by some measures) mainly because of lax emission standards. (The good news is that there are no serious air polluters in Sunnyside.)

Finally, the SNA took up the issue of dumpsite clean-ups. Vincent Dawans, one of those involved in many recent neighborhood clean-ups, was asked by the board to pursue a grant from SE Uplift to defray the costs of trash disposal. Many thanks to Vincent and all the other neighbors helping each other during this trying time. I hope to see you all at the March meeting. Stay safe.

SNA Community Safety & Livability Update

By Jes Maran, Chair, Community Safety & Livability Committee

Community Safety & Livability Committee Meeting

During our February meeting, we heard from Oriana Magnera, a member of the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission as well as the Energy, Climate, and Transportation Program Manager at Verde. The conversation started with an overview of the Shelter to Housing Continuum (S2HC) Project. This project is an update to the City of Portland Zoning code that responds to some of the challenges of locating shelter and low-income housing options by setting specific allowances for a range of shelter and housing types. The conversation covered a broad range of topics, with participants agreeing that the houseless crisis requires an urgent and tangible response that is not fully provided by the zoning code update.

Spot Cleaning on SE 36th at Hawthorne

In early February, an amazing group of volunteers from the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association, Inner Southeast Action Network, Uri from Dairy Hill, Nancy from the Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association and others turned out with shovels, wheelbarrows, and brute strength. Many hands made for light work. With 14 volunteers we got the whole 20 cubic yard dumpster full by 11:30 a.m.

SOLVE Clean up on SE Belmont and Cesar E. Chavez Blvd

Sunnyside residents joined volunteers from across the city to clean up two of our neighborhood's commercial corridors. Two SOLVE staff members – Dan Daly (program coordinator) and Peter Brewer (founder of Detrash Portland, which has recently become part of SOLVE) – joined the effort to provide their expertise.

We had volunteers from both Sunnyside and outside the neighborhood – with one volunteer coming from as far as the NE Alberta/33rd area. It was quite humbling

Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are being held virtually.

Check sunnysideportland.org one week in advance for a Zoom link and agenda.

SNA General and Board Meeting

Second Thursday of the month

7pm -9pm

(March 11th, April 8th)

Community Safety & Livability Committee

Third Thursday of the month

6:30pm - 7:30pm

(March 18th, April 15th)

seeing people come from across town to help us clean up our neighborhood. Walgreens' manager Claire generously allowed us the use of their property for volunteer check-in and as a collection point. Volunteers split into four groups. Two groups cleaned along both sides of Belmont, and popped onto side streets, from Cesar Chavez Blvd. all the way to 28th. Another two groups cleaned along both sides of Cesar Chavez, including side streets, from Belmont to Hawthorne. In total, volunteers collected about 20 bags of trash!



Sunnyside South Green Street and Sewer Project Update

By Debbie Caselton, Community Outreach, City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

Environmental Services continues to design a project in the southern portion of Sunnyside to install, replace, and upsize approximately 9,000 feet of public sewer pipes. Environmental Services will also build 25 green street planters to manage stormwater runoff from streets, roofs, and parking lots. The sewer and stormwater improvements will increase sewer capacity, manage stormwater more naturally, and reduce the risks of street flooding and sewage releases to homes, businesses, and streets.

Check out the project website to see a map showing the pipe and green street locations, as well as construction methods: www.portland.gov/bes/SunnysideSouth

Schedule

Construction is not anticipated to start until winter of 2021 at the earliest. Engineers are finishing up the design, and planting plans are being collected from adjacent property owners for the green street planters.

Construction Methods

The city plans to use two different methods to construct this project.

- Open trench excavation is the most traditional and most common method of sewer construction. This method consists of excavating down to, and exposing, the existing pipe (if there is one), so that it can be installed, repaired, or replaced. The trench is then backfilled and temporarily paved until the pipe is quality control tested.
- Cured-in-Place Pipe Lining (CIPP) is a trenchless method of sewer construction. It requires little or no digging and significantly less time to complete than other sewer repair methods. CIPP involves inserting a flexible liner inside the existing pipe, inflating the liner, and exposing it to heat or ultraviolet light to “cure,” or harden the liner inside the pipe.

There is more information about these construction methods at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/methods.

Getting to Know Your Neighbors

By Hannah Wallace, SNA Member At Large

Q&A with Vincent Dawans and Kim Alter

If you've recently seen a tall dark-haired man circling SES with a garbage bin and a shovel, or throwing Metro bags into the back of a truck, you've spotted Vincent Dawans. Vincent joined the SNA's Community Safety & Livability Committee in December 2020. Having spent much of his career working on poverty-related issues in West Africa, Dawans was increasingly alarmed by the poverty and homelessness he saw here in Portland—specifically in Sunnyside, where he and his wife Kim Alter and their son Felix have lived for 14 years. In December, he volunteered to lead a regular trash pick-up in the neighborhood with the help of other volunteers. In early February, he organized the successful clean-up of the gargantuan trash pile on Hawthorne and 36th. More clean-ups are planned.

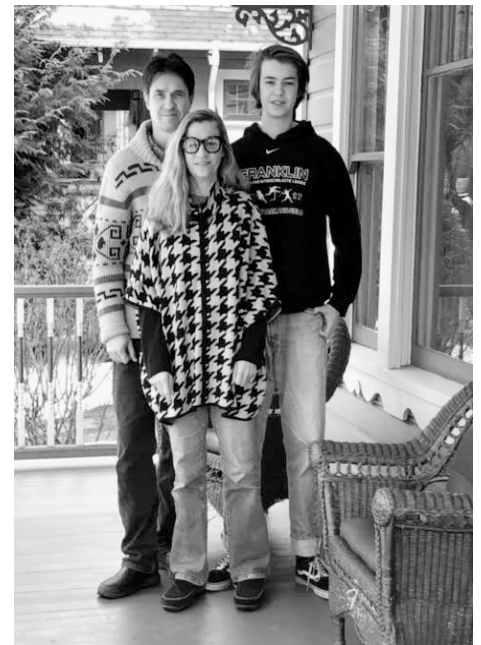
Dawans and Alter met in Brussels, Dawans' home town. Alter, who was getting her MBA via Boston University's Brussels program, was working as an intern in the marketing department at Dow Corning, while Dawans worked in I.T. “I needed a mouse and my supervisor said, ‘You have to call Vincent (vahn-sahnt) at the help desk,’” she recalls.

Even though she was transferred to the wrong Vincent (it's a common name in Belgium), the couple eventually met. The rest is history.

In 2000, the couple launched Virtue Ventures, a small social enterprise consulting firm that focuses on projects in India, West Africa, and the United States. They have crisscrossed the globe for their work—from Washington, D.C. to Kazakhstan, Brussels again (where Felix was born) to Oxford, and Tanzania to Colorado, California, and eventually to Portland.

When did you settle in Portland?

Vincent: 2007. That's when Felix was to start school, so we had to find a place that was a bit more gentle than Washington D.C. and that was Portland in 2007. We had come here for work around 2002, working at an organization in Corvallis called Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, and we liked that it was a walkable city.



Did you settle right away in Sunnyside?

Vincent: Yes. I got bamboozled into buying this house. Being the financially responsible one, I was going to rent for a year and ...

Kim: When we looked for a place to rent, the guy showed up stoned. He was telling us it was a Buddhist temple or something like that. There was a homeless person living in the garage. We were like “Does he come with it?” So we walked back to our car. I'd already seen this house online... We paid too much for it.

Vincent: It's an 1885 Queen Anne. It requires a lot of maintenance, but we love it. We do have a problem with too much demolition in Portland—turning everything into these square boxes. I understand that some of the older houses may not be the best environmental standards. We have to find a balance.

What do you love about Sunnyside?

Kim: The walkability between Belmont and Hawthorne. Being close to Powells, Movie Madness, the theaters where we would take Felix when he was younger, all the cool funky shops, access to the library and the parks. I really have appreciated all of that.

Vincent: I didn't want Felix to grow up in an environment where you have to be driven everywhere. He went to Sunnyside Environmental School. As he got older he was able to take the bus further out. Also, I'm an introvert. So for me to be able to go out in the street and be there with people, without having to interact much, is important. You can do that when you're in a walkable place.

What drew you to the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association?

Vincent: I'd grown very frustrated with the polarization of everything in this country, including the local government. We can't do anything about anything because everything is about everything. That includes the homeless issue. One side says, "These people shouldn't be here." and the other side says, "These people have nowhere to go." Somehow we manage to take these entirely compatible opinions and create two opposing teams around them and get stuck.

So when I saw the Community First Statement on the SNA website — which is nothing earth-shattering, just a pragmatic, down-to-earth statement of things to be done — I thought, "Finally! Something anchored in reality." It doesn't make for some crazy vision. I thought it was so refreshing, and the SNA had endorsed it. So I went to a CS&L Committee Zoom meeting. Then hearing the conversation of the committee, I thought, "These are people who are very pragmatic in their conversations." It's kind of sad that that's something special. But it is, now. Being pragmatic and down-to-earth, today, that's a special skill.

The trash clean-up was an easy point of entry for me. I was already doing that in my neighborhood. So that was a natural thing.

What is one thing you'd like to see change about Sunnyside?

Vincent: I'd like to have more local government. We all know that the centralized form of government we use in Portland is broken. It might have worked when it was a smaller city but now that it has grown... You should have a neighborhood area where you could get services—from getting help applying for various government services (getting a driver's license or applying for a passport) to the ability to get more basic requests answered on the spot (such as getting a permit for a block party or trimming a street tree). That's how things are done in Belgium.

Kim: I don't know if it's specifically Sunnyside or just a sign of our times, but things are changing. We're less cohesive than we were, and less friendly. The eroding of the neighborhood with these new middle-section houses everywhere are destroying the physical integrity of the neighborhood.

Vincent: We can have a smaller city in a bigger city. My example of a decentralized government gives you the best of both worlds. It actually does work. That's how Brussels is designed; it's divided into 19 little cities, or "communes." It comes from the French Revolution and it's a French concept. In Belgium, that level of government is responsible for street cleaning. So, that's what I'd like to see for Portland. If we did that type of thing, I think it would make this a much more livable city.

New Free Pantry at SE Uplift

By Irie Page, Sunnyside Free Food

We are excited to introduce a new community coalition to address food insecurity in SE Portland! Sunnyside Free Food Resources is an entirely neighborhood group working to create greater accessibility to free food and resources for our Sunnyside community.

A brand new free pantry is being hosted at SE Uplift (3534 SE Main Street). We welcome all donations of non-perishable items, including food, sanitation and menstrual products, and first aid. This pantry is available for everyone, and we accept donations from all who can give.

Our work is inspired by PDX Free Fridge and other mutual aid efforts in Portland and across the country. It is our hope that community collaboration and participation

will create more equitable living conditions for all.

Connect with us via email at sunnysidefreefood@gmail.com or on Instagram [@sunnysidefreefood](https://www.instagram.com/sunnysidefreefood) for more information about available food resources, donation details, and how to get involved.

Three Tips For Choosing The Best Shoes For Happy Feet

By Sarah Walker, SNA Member At Large

If you're similar to most people, you probably spend more time with your shoes on than off, so it's smart to spend some time and money choosing the right pair. A good pair of shoes can help keep your feet comfortable and healthy, while a bad pair can cause all kinds of problems. Below are some of the tips to help you choose the best shoes for you.

Know Your Feet!

Although you may not spend a lot of time thinking about your feet, they're at work or play a lot of the time, and they're under a lot of pressure. If your shoes are uncomfortable, your feet probably are too.

Before you buy shoes, take some time to think about how your feet move. Do you overpronate (your feet roll in), or do you supinate (your feet roll out)? Do your feet swell? Do you have a high arch or low arch?

Some of these things can be hard to figure out, but it's worth the effort. If you go to a store that specializes in supportive shoes, the staff will measure your feet and ask you some questions about your gait. When you know your foot type, it gets easier to choose shoes that fit you

Think About Your Running Styles!

When choosing a shoe, think about how you walk or run. If you're a hard-charger, you'll want a shoe that supports your foot and helps you push off. If you're a lightweight, you'll want a shoe that's light and flexible.

If you have a normal arch, you can probably wear just about any shoe. If you have flat feet or high arches, you'll have a harder time finding a good-fitting shoe. If you have normal arches but need to support a problem foot, your doctor or physical therapist can help you find the right kind of shoe.

When you get your shoes, walk around the store for a few minutes and make sure the shoes feel comfortable. If they're not comfortable, don't buy them. The sole of the shoe is the area that contacts the ground, so it's important to make sure it's in good shape. The heel should be thick and solid, and the sole should be flexible.

Shop For Shoes On The Internet

In many cases, you will get the perfect deal on shoes by shopping online. Look for a store that specializes in the kind of shoes you want at a price you can afford. Check the return policy before you buy. Some companies have a liberal return policy to encourage you to buy. If you have problems with your shoes, contact the company and ask for help. Remember that shoes are supposed to fit your feet, not the other way around. Buying shoes online isn't for everyone, but if you really love a shoe and you can't find it in your size at your local store, it's worth a try.

Final Word

Whatever shoes you buy, make sure you have a personal interest in them. For me, if shoes have excellent cushioning and ventilation mechanisms, I buy them.

The Sunnyside Neighborhood News is published monthly by the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association.

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Any opinions expressed, unless specified, are not necessarily those of the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association or its board. **Sunnyside residents are welcome to submit articles for consideration that concern neighborhood issues, by emailing newsletter@sunnysideportland.org.** Many wonderful volunteer Sunnyside residents distribute the Neighborhood News.



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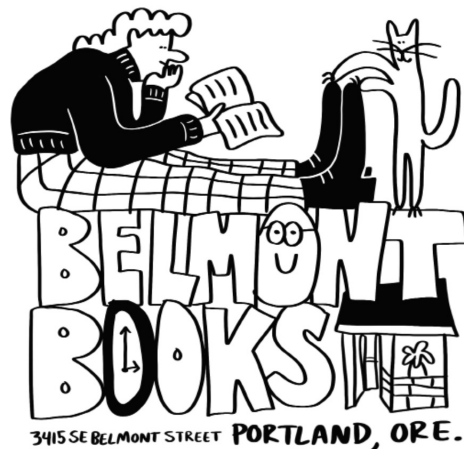
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Sunnyside Neighborhood 'Gap Map'

Live near any of the blocks marked in black below? We need your help!
Contact dianadeumling@gmail.com to volunteer for our delivery service.

Delivery help
needed here

