

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood News

April 2021

SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SunnysidePortland.org

board@sunnysideportland.org

SNA March Notes and April Plans

By Dave Boush, SNA President

Building Design, Police Oversight, and Homeless Camps

The March SNA general meeting hosted Heather Flint Chatto, who spoke about building design in the neighborhood, especially along Hawthorne Blvd. and Belmont St.

Complete with photos and illustrations, Heather explained the PDX Main Street Design Guidelines www.pdxmainstreets.org/designguidelines which are aimed at improving the fit between new infill and old buildings. Heather showed how structures built at different times and with different styles could fit together harmoniously. At the April general meeting the SNA will consider whether to adopt the guidelines which have been adopted by eight Neighborhood Associations (NAs) and business districts for 12 southeast main streets, including Hawthorne Blvd.

Building design has long been an interest of SNA. For history and context, please search our website (sunnysideportland.org) using the term "land use docs". I especially recommend reading **Adopted Sunnyside Neighborhood Plan-1999**. This is far from a dry planning document; rather, it is a rich combination of history, architecture, and neighborhood aspirations. Proposed building projects above a certain size are required to notify the appropriate neighborhood association and although NAs do not have approval authority, the SNA generally asks builders to present their project designs at our general meeting. They usually seem open to questions and suggestions, which could include design guidelines.

Johanna Brenner, next spoke on the topic of increased civilian oversight of the Portland police. Johanna advocated that the SNA endorse a letter recommending specific language in the PPB contract (please see related article in this issue). The SNA encourages neighbors' emailed opinions on the potential endorsement.

Taking up the final topic of the evening, the SNA continued its pursuit of pragmatic solutions to homelessness by endorsing the Committee on Safety and Livability to respond to the Joint Office of Homeless Services' request for programmatic qualifications (<http://ahomeforeveryone.net/news>).

Both Heather and Johanna are scheduled to continue their respective topics at the April SNA general meeting. I hope to see you all there. Stay safe.

Emergency Preparedness and the SNA Board Meeting

By Jan S Molinaro, Co-Chair, Sunnyside Prepared!

Digital preparedness on my cell phone

As I look at my iPhone 11, I see what kind of resources I have to keep me up-to-date for emergency response. To begin with, I have my children, my husband and a good friend in Portland listed as emergency contacts on my phone. It's especially important to have at least one emergency contact be someone out-of-state and to have that person be aware of that role. It's likely that text messaging will be the best way to communicate, at least for awhile, if the power is knocked out city-wide or state-wide.

In the event of an earthquake or an extended power outage, having one or

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

(April 8th, May 13th)

Community Safety & Livability Committee

Third Thursday of the month

6:30pm - 7:30pm

(April 15th, May 20th)

more power banks is important, as phone batteries drain quickly in the cold. Turning off unnecessary functions like GPS, Bluetooth and WiFi will significantly extend battery life. The apps that I have installed on my iPhone are: *American Red Cross Emergency, American Red Cross First Aid, 211info, FEMA* (you can customize alerts), and *NOAA Weather*.

And, finally, when I hear of any weather event that might affect the power in our area, I immediately charge up my phone to 100%.

Are you interested in Oregon's legislative process?

To learn more about the work of the Oregon legislature, visit www.oregonlegislature.gov. These are direct links to the representatives whose districts cover the Sunnyside neighborhood:

Senator Kathleen Taylor (District 21)
<http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/taylor>

Representative Rob Nosse (District 42)
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/nosse>

SNA Community Safety & Livability Update

By Jes Maran, Chair, Community Safety & Livability Committee

Community Safety & Livability Committee Meeting

The March SNA Community Safety & Livability meeting hosted Andy Miller, Executive Director of Human Solutions. Human Solutions was founded in 1988 to provide home weatherization and utility assistance for seniors and low-income households. Over the last 25 years, the organization's mission has expanded to partner with, invest in, and advocate for people and communities impacted by poverty so that they can achieve long-term housing and economic security.

Andy Miller spoke of the well-researched idea that the most significant factor in a child's lifetime trajectory is the zip code into which they are born. With this understanding, Human Solutions focuses on fighting intergenerational poverty at the neighborhood level, with a focus on eastern Multnomah County.

Human Solutions responds to immediate crises – operating three emergency shelters and providing rent assistance, eviction prevention, and utility assistance. The organization provides affordable housing, with over 650 apartments and over 200 more currently in development. Their housing advocacy is paired with job and career counseling and skills training – providing critical resources for people transitioning from public assistance and for those experiencing re-entry from incarceration and homelessness.

Mr. Miller notes that housing insecurity is a pervasive impact of our nation's racist past and present. Black and brown people have been denied generations of wealth and opportunity — denied actual housing opportunities. Even though we've changed many of the laws that were in place for those generations, we are left dealing with profound consequences of insecurity. "For folks sleeping outside, you are 50% more likely to have a tent if you are White."

Andy Miller also noted that he's not a fan of shelters; they are an important stop-gap resource, but shouldn't be more than a stepping stone to more stable housing. However, he notes that when he started working with Human Solutions, the average shelter stay was three weeks. The average now is six to twelve months.

There just isn't enough affordable housing for folks to transition into.

The work Human Solutions does is working; there just aren't enough resources and people in need are being underserved. Millar notes that, "For every one person we help, there are nine we have to turn away."

Why are there so many people who need the services that Human Solutions provides? Opinions about the causes of homelessness and housing insecurity vary widely; some blame addiction, mental illness, laziness, or bad luck. Human Solutions identifies poverty as a root cause – the significant gap between the high cost of housing and the low values of income. For example, in Portland, the hourly wage required to afford a studio apartment is \$22.92 while the median hourly wages in the largest employment sectors – food & bar service, retail, and home health care – range from \$12.47 to \$13.74.

Andy wrapped up his presentation with an inspiring case study from Helsinki. Similar in population to Portland, Helsinki implemented universal basic income and a Housing First policy that provides unconditional housing. Finland is the only EU country where homelessness rates are falling.

The Equal Times website describes the simple idea at the foundation of Finland's Housing First policy, "...everyone is entitled to somewhere to live, even people with complex psychosocial, health and financial issues such as addiction or poor credit ratings. The theory is that it is easier to tackle the multiple issues often faced by a person experiencing homelessness if that person has a stable home."

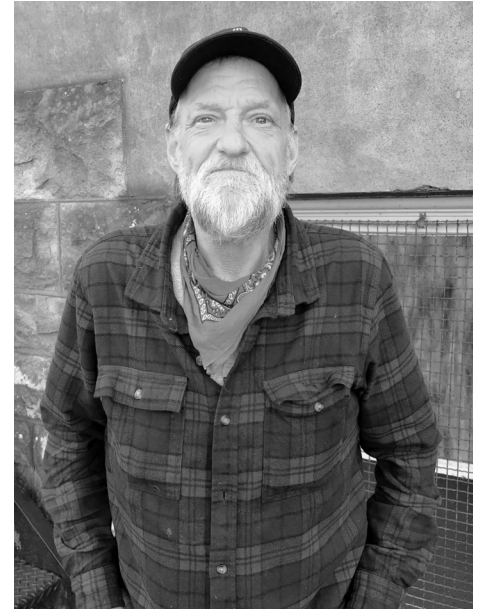
Getting to Know Your Neighbors

By Hannah Wallace, SNA Member At Large

Q&A with Mark Usher

I first met Mark Usher in December. A group of us in the Community Safety & Livability Committee were doing outreach with the Street Roots Ambassador Program, and we were going around Sunnyside Park from tent to tent to see what folks needed. Usher was approachable and friendly. We engaged in some banter and, knowing Usher, I'm sure he cracked a joke. In the meantime, I've discovered that Usher is a

jack of all trades—he's been a plumber, a lumberman and has worked at the meat counter at Fred Meyer. He likes to keep the area around his tent clean and tries to get other campers to keep their areas tidy, too.



When did you settle in Sunnyside?

Mark: Last April.

Why did you choose Sunnyside over another part of the city?

Mark: I seen the gathered people—the homeless area—and so I blended in. Tried to! I first went to Laurelhurst and then we got swept. We were forced to move down here.

What led you to become homeless? (If you don't mind talking about it.)

Mark: I had transferred from the Newberg Fred Meyer store to the Clackamas store because my buddy Adrian was running the meat market there. But before I started, he went to selling insurance, because he could make more money. I had a heck of a time getting on back there in any departments.

So because you didn't have a job you weren't able to pay your rent.

Mark: Right, exactly.

You went up to Sandy yesterday to visit your daughter. How did that go?

Mark: I knocked a couple trees down for the doctor I work for, at his house on Mount Hood. (He also has a place on Burnside.) He was afraid they were gonna drop on his house. While I was up on the mountain, I seen my daughter. Then, I dropped by to ask him, I was like, "When you want me

to do them?” and he said, “Right now’s a good time!” I said, “Oh no!” I said to him, “I’m not gonna buck ‘em and limb ‘em, I’m just gonna drop them.” He can go out there anytime with a chainsaw and do the rest. I had to catch my bus back to Portland.

I don’t know all this lingo. Can you explain?

Mark: I used to work for Brandon Logging in Sandy—I ran the landing. That’s when log trucks park and they load the logs on the truck. You “limb it,” which means you cut the limbs off. Then you “buck it”—cut it into sections.

You do other work for this doctor, right? You’ve mentioned he also has a place on Burnside.

Mark: He has properties all over the place and I go in and put new fixtures in: sinks, toilets and stuff like that. He rents them out. Sometimes we’ll remodel the whole thing—we’ll do everything from the hardwood floors to painting. He was my neighbor up on the mountain for about ten years. He helps me out a lot. I can go charge my phone at his place. I house sit for him when he takes off for Texas or Indiana to visit his kids.

What do you like most about Sunnyside?

Mark: It’s quiet down here. Probably having the church here helps keep it quiet. And it seems like the people are nicer here! (Laughs.)

What’s one thing you would change about Sunnyside, if you could?

Mark: They got an outhouse right there. That’s nice of them. But they don’t put enough of them. For 15 people, that’s good. But for 30 people—one outhouse gets trashed. That would be an improvement. And keep up the good work on the Neighborhood Association!

Can you explain to housed neighbors what it’s like to be houseless?

Mark: The uncertainty on where do you go? Anywhere you go, they don’t want you there, which I can see. If you have a nice home at Laurelhurst, you don’t want to be up in the morning looking at your window to see that. But we don’t camp across from their houses now. But still, it’s a burden. People come down there and go, “Look at that. It’s messy!” I don’t know what could make people change their minds on having people camping across from them.

How long have you been on the list waiting for affordable housing?

Mark: Over a year. I don’t mind them giving whatever comes available to women and children first. We just need a place to go where we know our stuff will be there when we’re back from work, you know?

An appeal to Sunnyside Neighborhood Association to endorse a police accountability letter to City Council

By Hannah Wallace, SNA Member At Large

At the March SNA meeting, Johanna Brenner from the Portland Metro People’s Coalition and Sarah Kowaleski, Coalition Organizer at Jobs with Justice talked with the Board about the importance of civilian oversight and other accountability measures as an element of the Portland Police Association’s labor contract. The next round of labor contract negotiations will begin in 2021. All workers have the right to just cause employment contracts and other protections. Yet over the past decade, the City has negotiated contracts with the Portland Police Association that fundamentally insulate Portland police officers from being held accountable.

Johanna and Sarah shared a letter written by a network of 54 faith, social and racial justice organizations, trade unions, and human rights groups that identifies the parts of the police contract they believe must be changed. The organizations that signed this letter are working to reimagine public safety in the community. This includes the recently implemented Portland Street Response program, expanding the role of unarmed officers in the duties of police core patrol, and other innovative alternatives.

The key requests of the letter include:

- An independent civilian agency with the ability to compel officers to testify in investigations, and to recommend and impose discipline.
- An independent civilian agency with explicit jurisdiction in deadly force cases. Currently, only the police may investigate these cases.

- Zero tolerance for the expression of racist sentiments or racially-biased actions by officers.

- Informing the public when officers are disciplined. The discipline records of public school teachers are public, but the current police association contract explicitly keeps disciplinary actions private.

The SNA will vote on whether to sign this letter at our April 8th meeting. Read the whole letter here: www.uniteoregon.org/policing

Resolve

By Pat Kiser, SNA Member At Large

People everywhere

so much need.

Overwhelmed

your heart can bleed.

Show your strength

lend a hand.

We’re here for you

our fellow man.

I help you today

you help me tomorrow.

Let’s end misery

let’s end sorrow.

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.



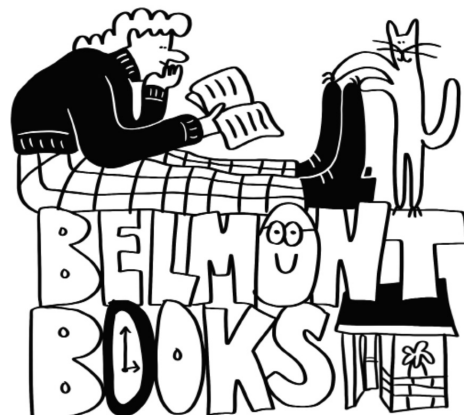
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Open to All

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

