

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood News

October 2022

SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SunnysidePortland.org

board@sunnysideportland.org

News from the President

By Chris Waldmann, SNA President

Hi neighbors! Before we get to the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association (SNA) news, I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself as SNA's new president. My name is Chris Waldmann (he/him). I have lived in Sunnyside and Portland for the last 5 years after moving here from Washington D.C. This is my second year serving on the SNA Board. My wife Erika and I chose Sunnyside as our new home because we immediately fell in love with the neighborhood – its walkability, amenities, trees and friendly folk. We live on 31st Avenue right near the former International Hostel, soon to be home to lots of new neighbors in the 62 unit building that is under construction. You'll often see me out walking our cream and tan, cow-marked lab-mix Mojie. Stop us and say hi!

On to the news...

On September 8th, we came together in-person and online for our first general meeting since June. This was the first time we had met at SE Uplift since the beginning of the pandemic and our first attempt to manage a hybrid meeting without the technical wizards at Sunnyside UMC. Despite some scheduling snafus and technical limitations, we were able to have a broad discussion about the charter reform proposal that will be on this year's November ballot. Past issues of the SNA newsletter have information on the proposal. More details are also available at www.portland.gov/omf/charter-review-commission. At the meeting we had two former charter commission members present to us, representing both Yes and No votes.

From the Yes side, Melanie Billings-Yun took us through the proposal and argued that passing the package will:

- Streamline city governance by hiring a professional to be the overall manager of the city bureaus and focusing elected council members' attention on setting policy and responding to constituent needs.
- Make the City Council more responsive by dividing the city into four districts in order to ensure councilors' familiarity with neighborhood issues and increasing accountability.
- Improve representation on the council by having each district elect three council members through a system of proportional ranked-choice-voting. This could enable communities of common interest to come together and make their voice heard more effectively as a bloc.

From the No side, Vadim Mozyrsky, while supporting the changes to take the City Council out of bureau management, argued that the other proposals would:

Upcoming Meetings

Check sunnysideportland.org in advance for location details and agenda.

October Meetings

No SNA General meeting

October 13: 7:00 - 8:00 pm SNA Board

October 20: 6:30 - 7:30 pm SNACC

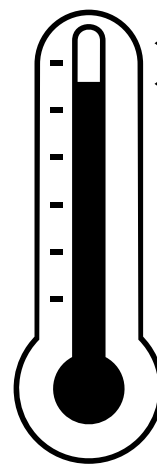
November Meetings

November 10: 7:00 - 8:30 pm SNA General

November 10: 8:30 - 9:00 pm SNA Board

November 17: 6:30 - 7:30 pm SNACC

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- Decrease voters' opportunities to hold council members accountable because proportional ranked-choice-voting would mean that it could take as little as 25% of the vote for a candidate to ensure their election.
- Not do enough to improve local representation because only four districts, in a city as large as Portland, would not ensure enough neighborhood-focused knowledge and responsiveness.
- Confuse voters and present unforeseen consequences with a combination of multi-member districts and ranked-choice-voting that has never been tried in the U.S.

It was a lively debate and attendees asked many good questions. In the end, the members in attendance decided that the SNA would not take an official position on the ballot measure, since no consensus could be found.

From the Board...

As Hannah mentioned in last month's newsletter, the Board has decided to make some changes this year in how Board duties are split up and the schedule for our general meetings. General meetings will now occur every other month, with the next general meeting in November. We hope that this will ensure we always have packed, interesting agendas where the entire community can participate and learn something interesting. The Board will continue to have monthly meetings and everyone is always welcome to join! Seeking to deepen the knowledge and experience of all members of the Board, we are going to have a rotating slate of presiding officers over the course of the next year. While, in order to satisfy the legal niceties I am technically the president for the entire year, every three months we will give a new Board member the opportunity to run meetings, set agendas and be the leading face of the SNA. Our newest member, Cole White, will take over in December, followed by Emily McCadden and Hannah Wallace.

We will have more on what's coming up for the November general meeting in next month's newsletter. Until then, thanks for coming out and engaging to improve Sunnyside and Portland!

What's Your Bandwidth For Emergency Preparedness?

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

Here are some questions to get you moving forward:

- What skills, talents, and/or tools do you have to offer to your family, neighbors, etc. as part of emergency preparedness? How do these communities know about what you have to offer?
- Do you know the skills, talents and tools that your neighbors, housemates, etc. have to offer?
- How much time/money/effort do you have to devote to being prepared?
- What's your next step? And the step after that?

So much has been done citywide, countywide, and statewide towards being prepared and it's easy enough to find articles, lists, and steps to take. Start there. Keep going. It's not easy, but it is doable. We need all of us to do our part.

That's that. Thanks so much for reading this and doing your work. It's much appreciated.

Be prepared, not scared.

Sunnyside Neighborhood Community Cares (SNACC) Committee Updates

*By Emily McCadden, SNACC
Co-Chair, SNA Board Member*

The Sunnyside Neighborhood Association and SNACC Committee (SNACC) recently hosted an art show featuring works by neighbors living outside. The event was a big success and raised \$364 to go toward repairing windows at the Sunnyside Methodist Church, which is the home of the Sunnyside Shower Project. Thank you to all who came out and supported this event! In our September meeting, SNACC continued our work to extend operating hours at the Sunnyside Shower Project (SSP). We hope to open the SSP for four days per week by the end of October and are working with church leaders to fulfill this need, which was identified on the needs assessment completed in the spring. Additionally, we are piloting a facilitated discussion process for reaching consensus in decision making. In our October meeting, we will practice this process by discussing the role of neighborhood associations in taking political stances, specifically focusing on charter reform. If you are interested in attending, next month's SNACC meeting will be Thursday October 20th from 6:30p.m. Please check the SNA website or email emmccadden@gmail.com in the coming weeks for the meeting location, agenda items, and other information about SNACC work.

Sunnyside Neighborhood Getting to Know Your Neighbors

*By Nathan Howard,
SNA member at large*

Q&A with Rico Loverde, chef and owner of Monster Smash Burgers

Monster Smash Burgers food cart on Southeast Stark, is serving up some great pub fare including—of course—an excellent smash burger made from grass-

fed beef on a brioche bun made by Dos Hermanos bakery. (For the uninitiated, a smash burger is minced beef and salt, smashed flat over a searingly hot ungreased grill until you get a thin, crispy patty that's both juicy and caramelized.) We asked Rico about his culinary experience and what it's like for him living in Sunnyside and serving his neighbors through his new food cart.

When did you start Monster Smash?

Rico: When I got laid off from my previous job at Malekko Heavy Industry during Covid in 2021. Our official opening day was February 6th 2021.

What was the inspiration for opening the cart?

Rico: I had been a chef for about 15 years in the Bay Area. I burnt out, decided on a career change, and went into the music industry which, weirdly, led me into building synthesizers. I moved to Portland about nine years ago to take a job with Malekko building synthesizers and guitar pedals. While at Malekko, I started to miss cooking and at the same time I was feeling the need to do something of my own. When we moved into our Sunnyside house I became friends with Monk who was running Monk's Deli at the time (a beloved cheesesteak cart). He was starting to burn out and as we talked more we began to discuss me buying the cart from him. When Covid hit, it was the final straw for him and I had the time to write a business plan, menu, and concept.

What restaurants have you worked at in the past?

Rico: All the places I've worked at were in the Bay Area or Tahoe. I worked at Kuleto's, The Waterfront, Hotel W, Swiss Lakewood, and many others that are no longer around. My final job was as a chef instructor at the California Culinary Academy in SF where I had been a student early on in my food career.

How do you want your customers to feel? What do you want them to experience?

Rico: We want people to be happy. Belmont Station is a great place to partner with. We wanted to bring good, simple food that worked well with beer but at the same time would work for families. A small, simple menu done right is what I've strived for. I personally hate waiting for food when I'm really hungry, so part of my goal was to cook fast food but with quality



Rico Loverde and his wife Alaina Loverde serve up smash burgers and other great food at their food cart adjacent to Belmont Station at 4500 SE Stark Street.

ingredients. Smash burgers luckily fit that criteria perfectly.

What is the best food?

Rico: Oh that's a hard one and no way I could pick one, especially in Portland where there are so many amazing places to eat. Italian food is always very close to my heart. The first place I ever worked was German so good German food really makes me smile. I love it all, to be honest. As long as it's cooked with care and passion, I'm down.

What's your favorite part of running Monster Smash?

Rico: To be honest, my biggest fear was dealing with the public and that has ultimately been one of the best parts. I have met so many amazing people through the cart and have made some really great friends. It also never gets old hearing people say how much they enjoyed their meal. It's been really cool getting to know people in our neighborhood as we have lived here for a while and most people only knew our dog's name (Maggie).

What's your favorite part of living in Sunnyside?

Rico: It's a great community. It's the first place we have lived where we feel like part of the neighborhood. It's quiet, peaceful, and beautiful. Also, we are perfectly located, in my opinion, next to a ton of great food and bars.

What's your favorite part of running a business in Sunnyside?

Rico: Living next door to my business is pretty nice, to be honest. The support of the neighborhood has been great and I really appreciate how kind everyone has been. I love being able to be a part of the Sunnyside neighborhood.

What was the most challenging part of running a small business?

Rico: While Covid allowed me to do this business, it was also very challenging. The other incredibly hard part has been the weather. The really cold days in the winter and these crazy heat waves we have been having really hurt our business. This summer alone we have had to close over 3 weeks due to the heat. Our cart is usually about 20 - 30 degrees hotter inside than outside so when it's over 95 we have to shut down for the safety of my employees.

What's your favorite type of customer?

Rico: Friendly customers that enjoy their meal! It's really hard work in the cart so when people are friendly it makes all the difference in the world. My crew works their butts off and tips help them a ton. Patience when they are really busy goes a long way. We are humans and we do make mistakes. Sometimes people can be pretty mean and use Yelp as a way of bashing us. Those are the customers I don't like...lol.

Monster Smash Burgers is open Tuesday-Saturday 12-8, Sunday 12-6. Closed Mondays. Also on the menu is a vegan smash burger with Beyond beef; french fries; and a grilled cheese BLT. In winter months, look for the return of a soup and sando combo: tomato bisque and a pesto, genoa salami and melted provolone sandwich which *Oregonian* critic Michael Russell called "a contender for the best grilled cheese in the city right now."

Follow Rico on Instagram at @MonsterSmashPDX

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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. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior.** Many wonderful volunteer Sunnyside residents distribute the Neighborhood News.

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