

Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association

Zoom Meeting Minutes, February 15, 2023

Facilitator: Dave Petrozzi

Secretary: Nadine Fiedler

Board members present: Nadine Fiedler, John Laursen, Paul Leistner, Brian Mitchell, Dave Petrozzi, Jim Pierce, Bing Wong

Other attendees: Nancy Chapin, Rob Galanakis, Sen Hirano, Lisa Kirby, Nikki Mandel, Nancy Norby, Laura Orr, Steven Wax, Katelyn Weakley

After introductions, the January minutes were approved unanimously. Bing Wong presented the treasurer's report. MTNA's bank balance is now \$6052.26, which increased due to a \$500 grant from SEUL for communications. Stephanie Stewart and Julie Scherr were reimbursed for expenses. Bing filed the Oregon Department of Justice annual CT-12 form, which costs \$20, and he is pursuing a fiscal scholarship account from SEUL. Ongoing expenses include Zoom monthly fees.

Neighbor Announcements, Concerns, and Questions

Laura Orr wanted to know what is happening with the Eagles property on 50th & Hawthorne and the building at 4511 SE Hawthorne. Nancy Chapin responded that the Eagles property was handed over to the N. Portland Eagles, and they are looking at it for potential development. Paul Leistner said that the 4511 SE Hawthorne property will be demolished and developed. He also reported that the Dairy Queen site on Division has received permits and can now develop the property.

Bing Wong let the group know about a jazz performance about Mt. Tabor Park, called "Views of an Urban Volcano," which will be performed September 1 in the park amphitheater; see <https://montavillajazz.org/views-of-an-urban-volcano/> for more info.

Rob Galanakis expressed concerns about unsafe traffic, especially on 60th St. around Madison. Signs there have slowed down traffic, and he would like to know how to get more traffic calming features in the area. He would like limited turn signs on 55th & Belmont; John Laursen thinks that stop signs would be better. MTNA will connect Rob with past speakers on the topic and neighbors such as Debra Monzon who have worked on traffic calming in their areas.

Neighborhood Cleanup

Paul Leistner met with Ross Heiner, the chair of the N. Tabor NA board, and others to discuss a joint cleanup. They found a new place for the event, the parking lot of the Unity Church at Stark and 47th, and have set the date of the cleanup for Saturday, April 22. N. Tabor NA is eligible for the Metro Refresh program, which gives a subsidy, and will take the lead and do the application. Paul has recovered 43 of 47 cleanup signs. He clarified that we can no longer use the cleanup as a fundraiser, but can ask for donations with no required fee.

Laura Orr asked if we can roll in a shredding component to the cleanup. She will investigate the possibility. Paul mentioned that anyone can join the planning committee.

Bing Wong asked if we can include hazardous waste, but Paul said we would not be doing so. John Laursen moved that MTNA officially sanction the cleanup in collaboration with the N. Tabor NA. Jim Pierce seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Future Guest Speakers and Protocol for Invitations

Nadine Fiedler wanted to know how we invite speakers; she does not want to be the one doing so even though she is monitoring email. John Laursen said that Midge Pierce has done good work in the past inviting speakers, and Dave Petrozzi suggested we ask Midge officially to be the MTNA speaker coordinator. Jim Pierce thought she would agree and will ask her. Nadine asked if we offer a time certain to speakers, and John suggested 7:40, and that we make sure we have brief bios and info on their topic.

Nikki Mandel thought we should invite a speaker on the topic of the industrial hub on the NW side of Hwy. 30 across from the St. Johns Bridge, because the area is subject to a massive meltdown in case of an earthquake. Dave said we would be open to a speaker on the topic. Nadine suggested a speaker from City Council, especially in light of the city charter reorganization. Paul Leistner said that Dan Ryan's staffer TJ is getting up to speed on Civic Life, and that we should consider him or Dan Ryan for the future, perhaps in conjunction with other NAs. Laura Orr would rather hear from the city charter transition team. Paul said that there is talk of moving NA boundaries, but the charter does not require that change. John Laursen would like MTNA to pursue the idea of Dan Ryan or TJ speaking, especially since Ryan is also responsible for the parks bureau. Ryan was unaware of the reservoir situation, and John suggests that we connect with him and bring him up to speed.

Communications Outreach

Dave Petrozzi said that MTNA has addressed some pressing communications needs, with Nadine Fiedler checking email and the technical help we have received from Rob Galanakis. Stephanie Stewart is updating the website. Dave would like us to keep track of MTNA past speakers and people who have done good works in the neighborhood.

Paul Leistner presented a flow chart of all MTNA's communications tools so we can understand how they all work. He thinks we're making good progress. He would like MTNA to be in touch with community partners such as faith groups and schools to get word out to their audiences. Rob has been working with Stephanie and thinks we're going in a good direction. He's checking to see if there are community channels for volunteer organizations that are better and kinder than NextDoor.

Katelyn Weakley asked if there will be another neighborhood meet-up. Paul said he will reach out to Midge Pierce and Julie Scherr to see if we can get it going, with a similar focus on new residents. Bing Wong asked if there's a way to identify new residents. Paul responded that the Caplener realty group has info on new homeowners, but renters are harder to identify. Bing mentioned that some apartment buildings have bulletin boards we might be able to use.

Reservoirs Update

John Laursen gave a short history of the investigation of the voids under the reservoirs. A committee is working with the Water Bureau on this issue. John received a disheartening email from Goldann Salazar that said that the mayor has put a freeze on all new budget items, so there is no possibility of funding for repairs on Reservoir 6 in the next year. This is despite the fact that seven years ago, the City Council passed a resolution that was binding by law to keep the reservoirs filled. With a new City Council and mayor, no one remembers the passion that went into this resolution. John will meet with Steven Wax to develop a strategy to address the situation. Until the testing is complete, we won't have an estimate for the cost of repairs, and it's not clear what our legal strategy would be—is the binding resolution enforceable?

Rob Galanakis recalls that it is cheaper to keep the reservoirs filled, and asked what the stakes are in leaving them empty. John said that the city doesn't understand the stakes; the longer the reservoirs are empty, the more they will deteriorate. People come up with ideas for "what to do with the reservoirs," but the difficulty is that they are on the National Register of Historic Places. It's hard to bring the issue before the city right now because there are many important and competing funding priorities such as infrastructure deterioration, homelessness, and charter reform.

Steven Wax noted that the binding resolution said that the reservoirs are part of the city water system and must be kept as part of it. This is an aesthetic and open space issue but also an issue of the reservoirs staying in the water system. The present disconnect is reversible.

Bing Wong added that money for the reservoirs comes out of both the Water Bureau funds and the city's general funds.

SE Uplift Update

Nancy Chapin reported on the current situation at SEUL: she thinks it's now in a good place. Past incidents led to difficulties, but now there is a new executive director. The rules have changed so that NAs can choose their own representative to SEUL, but SEUL can still reject that person or remove them from the board. She thinks we need to move on and be supportive of SEUL. She thinks we should appoint a new MTNA representative to SEUL, and would also like our representation to S2C2, the new Sustainable SE Community Coalition (s2c2pdx.org).

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park

Bing Wong reported that the next Weed Warrior work party is on September 25, 9 a.m. to noon. FMTP closed the visitor center during the city workers' strike, and the gates and restrooms were closed and water turned off to the drinking fountains. Mo Kline is the new coordinator. The tree map is undergoing a major update led by Lisa Wilcke. The next FMTP board meeting is on February 21, with an in-person membership meeting on March 14. Board members will be elected, two open and one up for re-election, and an award will be determined for Friend of the Year.