



Nadaka Nature Park future uncertain; community members call for dedicated recreation funding

Pining for a parks district

By: Christopher Keizur
Gresham Outlook

Nadaka Nature Park won't have much of a reason to celebrate the new year.

The beautiful green space in the heart of the Wilkes East Neighborhood will be empty after losing its fiscal agent — transforming what was once thought of as the model for future parks in Gresham into just another open area. Despite the work that has been poured into the park, residents will have less of a reason to visit than ever before.

"It almost makes me cry to walk through here and know all those kids won't be coming here to be educated," said Lee Dayfield. "This park was their backyard, playground and forest."

There is no better person to talk to about Nadaka Nature Park than Dayfield. She spearheaded the charge to transform her dream park into a reality. She overcame red tape and bureaucracy, founding Friends of Nadaka to help secure grants and other funding.



PMG PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER KEIZUR - Lee Dayfield said a parks district funding is the best option for maintaining Nadaka Nature Park

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council, a Portland-based organization, had supported the Gresham park since its inception. But with some changes to the board and executive director, the group has decided to focus on other projects.

The backing for Nadaka will end when the money runs dry, which is estimated to happen in January 2020. That means no more activities — from community cleanups to educational gatherings for local schoolchildren — that made the park so special.

"They were so strong and supportive of us for seven years," Dayfield said. "People will notice a big difference."

See **NADAKA** Page 3

Albertina Kerr Workforce and Inclusive Housing Project Update, February 2020



Albertina Kerr Workforce and Inclusive Housing. East entrance, Gresham campus. Architects Image

Albertina Kerr continues to move forward and make progress on its Workforce and Inclusive Housing Project to be located on the Gresham campus at [722 NE 162 Ave-nue](#). The project will include 150 units, from studios to 3 bedrooms.

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Wilkes East Land-use Update

By Greg Hartung, Land-use Chair

Hello members of our Wilkes East Neighborhood Association. We are continuing to see many projects around our neighborhood. I would like to provide you with recent updates since our Fall newsletter.

- Project 2190345.00 named [MAJ 181st Phase 2](#), construction of 2400 sf speculative drive through and 4600 SF 2-tenant retail building. No tenants have been identified yet. That one has just been submitted for design review; once that is complete, the developers MACKENZIE will submit for building permit. Construction will likely not start until late summer. NOTE: Phase 1 of the project is a 7-Eleven with fueling station and is currently under construction. It is expected to open this spring or summer.

- Waterside Apartments at [16533 NE Halsey St](#), Gresham, Or. 97230, I spoke with Chet Antonsen of SGS Development. The 64-unit, 2-building complex is reaching the final phases of construction. Building 1 (32 units) is expected to have Certificate of Occupancy by February 15th, 2020 followed by Building 2 (32 units) by March 31st. Rentals for Building 1 is expected to open as soon as February 20th. Amenities include indoor elevators, granite countertops, fireplaces, covered parking and play area. The wetlands on the north side of the property have been preserved with a fence along the north side of the complex. Special mentions to the Moose Lodge for renting space during construction as well as the City of Gresham for their cooperation.

See **LAND-USE** Page 4

Since the November Wilkes East Neighborhood meeting where a presentation was made, significant progress has been made:

- Site due diligence was completed in December 2019 (Geotech, surveying, arborist report).

See **KERR** Page 2

Download this newsletter with active links at: wilkeseastna.org/newsletter.htm

Mark Your Calendar! Wilkes East Neighborhood

Spring Meeting March 9th • 7PM

Albertina Kerr Campus, Training Bldg
722 NE 162nd Ave

Wilkes East Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Published three times a year. Over 1500 copies distributed throughout Wilkes East.

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association (WENA) is a non-profit organization in Gresham, Oregon. Deadline for submission is the 10th of the month prior to publication. WENA reserves all rights, and all copy may be edited for clarity and length. Download a PDF of this newsletter online at: wilkeseastna.org/newsletter.htm.

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BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 6:30PM. See wilkeseastna.org for details.

CONTACT US

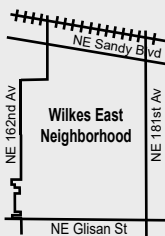
Email: info@wilkeseastna.org,
Postal Mail: 17104 NE Oregon, Portland OR 97230

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Get involved. Let us know how you'd like to help. Email info@wilkeseastna.org for details.

SPECIAL THANKS

- The newsletter is funded in part through a generous grant from the [City of Gresham](http://www.cityofgresham.org).
- Printing by [Print Results Inc.](http://www.printresults.com) 503-287-9566
- Meeting: [Albertina Kerr](http://www.albertinakerr.org), 722 NE 162nd Av, Training Bldg (center north on campus)



Dear Neighbors • a message from your WENA President

Good news. We have two (2) new board members! Sara Jacobson from Cypress Park & Demitrios Zourvos from Capri Terrace. Sara is a stay at home mom with a darling little girl. They bought their home about three (3) years ago. Demitrios is a certified health care provider (MHSC) & at one-time catered for parties. He has a busy practice in Milwaukie. He bought his home a couple of years ago. They bring a refreshing approach to the board as well as new eyes & ideas for solving neighborhood issues. Please take time to introduce yourselves to them.

Please check out Greg Hartung's column regarding current Land-use issues.

Dates for your Calendar

- Passport Day, Sat March 14, 9AM-2PM, Gresham City Hall, 1333 NW Eastman Pkwy. Apply for a Passport Card (Valid in US, Canada, Mexico, Caribbean and Bermuda) or a Passport Book (Valid Internationally). Visit: greshamoregon.gov/passports/ for complete details.
- Gresham's 2nd Annual Lilac Run (5k, 10k, half marathon), Sat April 25th 9AM-12PM. Register early. See Gresham website <https://greshamoregon.gov/The-Gresham-Lilac-Run/>.

- Gresham's Earth Day 2020 Recycling Event, Sat Apr 25th 9AM-2PM at Gresham City Hall 1333 NW Eastman Pkwy (fluorescent lights, paper shredding, plastics, small appliances & electronics styroform). Volunteers needed. For complete details visit <https://greshamoregon.gov/Earth-Day>.

Our March 9th public meeting will include the annual request for neighbors to serve on any of WENA committees. Volunteer today.

Speakers will include: Gresham Police's [Neighborhood Enforcement Team](http://www.greshampolice.org/neighborhood-enforcement-team) (NET) on neighborhood issues; [CVIP](http://www.greshampolice.org/cvip) the volunteer citizens group working with the police; [Glisan Commuters Initiative](http://www.greshampolice.org/gli) on the recent Glisan St lane reductions.

Again & always, we ask for articles for the WENA newsletter. All it takes is 300-500 words. Send your material "print ready" to rglundbom@aol.com. Include "[wena]" in the subject line.

Your time & energy in making Wilkes East a better community is very much appreciated. Thank You!

Hope to see you at our March 9th meeting!

Your Neighbor,

Kristen Freiermuth

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- A Design Review Consult was completed with the City of Gresham Community Design Review Committee in December 2019
- 100% Schematic Design was completed in early January 2020. Submittals were completed for land use review in early January 2020
- Albertina Kerr hit the \$1 million private fundraising mark in December 2020 and only needs \$200,000 more in private donations to hit the total goal of \$1.2 million in private donations.

One significant change since the November meeting is that we have decided to pursue making the building "net zero" from an energy use standpoint, which means we will be adding enhancements to make the entire building more energy efficient and producing energy via solar panels to provide enough energy to operate the entire building year-round.

- The current timeline for the project is:
- Complete 100% schematic design. January-2020 - Done
- Submit for land use. January-2020 - Done
- Complete 50% design development. February-2020
- Land use public hearing. March-2020
- Complete 100% design development. April-2020

- Update hard cost & proforma. May-2020
- and use approval. May-2020
- Submit for building permit. May-2020
- Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP). July-2020
- Permit Issued. August-2020
- Construction Start. August-2020
- Construction Complete. September-2021

We continue to be excited about this project and what it will mean for direct care workers at Albertina Kerr and others who care for some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

About Albertina Kerr
For more than 100 years, Albertina Kerr has been caring for Oregon's most vulnerable citizens. Over the decades, our services have evolved to meet the community's needs. While these needs have changed, the values of our expert caregivers remain constant: compassion, commitment, collaboration, and advocacy.

Today, Kerr empowers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), mental health challenges, and other social barriers to lead self-determined lives and reach their full potential. We provide comprehensive crisis and preventative mental health care for children and teens, as well as a full range of services for children and adults with IDD. Learn more at www.albertinakerr.org ■

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NADAKA (Page 1)



PMG FILE PHOTO: A parks district in Gresham would fund cleanups, support natural spaces and provide programs and events throughout the city.

Nadaka Nature Park community gardens

That difference is inspiring Dayfield and a group of Gresham community members to push city leadership to investigate forming a parks district — an idea rearing its head again after lying mostly dormant for the past decade.

"You would have a continuous flow of money for nothing but parks," Dayfield said. "The possibilities of what our parks could be like are unimaginable."

A parks district has the power to construct, reconstruct, alter, enlarge, operate and maintain lakes, parks, recreation grounds and buildings; acquire necessary lands; and to call necessary elections after being formed.

On Tuesday, Oct. 8, the Gresham Neighborhood Association Coalition held a meeting to dive into the idea of a parks and recreation district. The group voted to advocate Gresham City Council initiate a feasibility study, which would eventually lead to a vote.

A petition also is circulating throughout the community in support of a parks district, with the goal to have a bond measure put before voters in the 2020 election.

"We care about parks. We need to do a feasibility study," Dayfield said. "A parks district could have paid for Nadaka."



PMG FILE PHOTO: Before it was developed, Nadaka Park was an empty lot in the Rockwood Neighborhood.

Funding parks

In 2010, the city of Gresham, recognizing a need for sustainable parks funding, convened a Green Ribbon Task Force to research and make recommendations for how to support local parks. They also contracted with The Trust

for Public Land (TPL) to explore various options.

In 2010, the parks district would have called for a \$0.25 property tax levy to generate roughly \$2.1 million a year — though a decade ago Gresham was looking at forming one alongside the cities of Fairview, Wood Village and Troutdale. That would have represented a range of \$31 to \$53 annually for the average home in East Multnomah County.

The task force found that a Gresham parks district could theoretically levy property taxes to generate a maximum of \$57.6 million and issue a maximum of \$288 million in general obligation bonds for parks.

The final recommendation by TPL a decade ago was for Gresham — because of a perceived lack of support — not to proceed in a ballot measure for parks funding. But the study did find the concept of a parks and recreation district garnered more enthusiasm than other options.

"I am not sold a (parks district) is feasible or passable," said Gresham Mayor Shane Bemis during a city council meeting on

Oct. 8. "But we have a changing demographic in the city who may have changing values."

"The community is in a different frame of mind in terms of parks than it has been in a long time," he added.

It doesn't take much imagination to envision a Gresham parks district, as the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (THPRD) west of downtown Portland is a celebrated local example. Approved by voters in 1955, it is now the largest special parks district in Oregon, spanning 50 square miles and serving 250,000 residents in the Beaverton and Washington County area.

THPRD, as the district is locally known, provides year-round recreational opportunities for all ages, including diverse classes, 95 park sites with recreational amenities, 70 miles of trails, eight swim centers, six recreation centers and 1,500 acres of natural areas.

"It is amazing to visit and see everything they have," said Dayfield, who was also part of the Green Ribbon Task Force. "It's overwhelming."

A black mark against a successful parks district vote is a general aversion by Gresham residents toward public finance/spending measures, including the failure of the Community Center vote in 2016.

The proposed \$48 million bond would have created a 63,500-square-foot facility with recreation, swimming facilities, classrooms and a senior center. The cost would have been about \$70 per year for a resident with an assessed property value of \$200,000, or \$5.83 a month.

The proposal ultimately failed, with 56% voting no.

"I am disappointed that the community center measure didn't pass," Bemis said at the time. "But I am glad that we asked the question."

Now Gresham residents like Dayfield want to be asked another question.

"This city needs a parks district," she said.



PMG FILE PHOTO: Lee Dayfield likes to visit with people who come to Nadaka, like East Portland residents Heather and John Miles

Nadaka's needs

Nadaka Nature Park, 17615 N.E. Glisan St., is a 10-acre property acquired from the Camp Fire Columbia organization in 1995.

It was bought thanks to Gresham voters passing an open-spaces bond measure in 1990.

In spring 2015, Nadaka opened, featuring wooden play structures, a community garden, restroom, picnic shelter, walking loop and public art.

"All of this is because of the hard work of community members," Dayfield said.

What made the park special was the bevy of activities happening within the space, thanks to funding from the Columbia Slough Council and grants. There were cleanups, partnerships with schools, bird walks and workshops on native plants and pollinators. Nadaka hosted an annual free community festival that celebrated Rockwood's diversity, and employed a group of "Park Ambassadors" who served as the face of Nadaka — educating visitors and ensuring the park stayed safe and clean.

See **NADAKA** (Page 4)

Did you know? Gresham has 26 parks and 8.39 miles of trails.

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"We knew raising funds this way was not sustainable," Dayfield said. "We hoped the city of Gresham would fill in the gaps, but I don't see that happening."

The city will continue to mow the grass, pick up trash and tend to the public restrooms — a task previously completed by volunteers like Dayfield — but everything else will be gone. The future of Nadaka is an empty park.

"We need to look at how we sustain (these parks) with maintenance and programming," said Councilor Eddy Morales, who voiced interest in a parks district along with Council President Jerry Hinton and Councilor Mario Palmero.

So far Friends of Nadaka, the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations and Beyond Black CDC have all publicly spoke in support of a feasibility study for a parks district.

"For some of our families who are struggling financially, a trip to a park is the only viable thing available," said John Bildsoe, vice president of the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations.

Leading the charge

While Gresham City Council hasn't formally requested staff to look into one, councilors are keeping a close eye on the upcoming Metro Parks & Nature Bond Measure (which passed Nov 5, 2019 67% to 33%, according to election results from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties).

"I can't think of a more nonpartisan issue than parks," said Hinton.

How Gresham residents vote on the Metro bond could indicate a willingness for voters to accept a parks district or some other form of financial support for public recreation.

"The sky is the limit for our parks system," Bemis said. "In order for us to achieve a great community there has to be investments."

In the meantime, those who love Nadaka Park are counting the days until the end.

"We were all volunteering here because we love this place," Dayfield said. "Who is going to lead this charge?"

Once upon a time that person would have been Dayfield, who has poured so much of herself into Nadaka. But she has stepped back from her volunteer leadership role, dedicating more time to her family.

Her hopes, meanwhile, are focused on a potential parks district.

"It could save this place," she said.

• For information on how you can help contact [Friends of Nadaka](#), [Wilkes East Neighborhood](#), and [City of Gresham Parks](#).

• This story first appeared in [The Outlook](#). Support community newspapers. Subscribe at <http://savinglocalnews.com> ■



Glisan Street Lane Reduction Frustrates Commuters and Neighbors

Come hear what the [Glisan Commuters Initiative](#) has put together to fight for the return to the old Glisan street. They will be sharing bullet points of what the concerns are, and what their committee has been doing to fight the lane reductions. Share your ideas. Join the discussion at WENA's March 9th meeting! ■

Did You Know? Plugged-in cell phone chargers and other wall transformers consume electricity even when not in use.

LAND-USE (Page 1)

• Pre-app 19-26000310 PAM Chalet Homes, property at [845 NE 181st Avenue](#), Gresham, Or. 97230 appears to be closed as it was determined it was not feasible to extend [NE 179nd Ave](#) to the south property line due to right of way restrictions.

• Notice of public hearing, file number HLA 19-26000290 Type III Review for proposed alteration of the [Zimmerman House Historic Landmark](#) by removing the Buttery Building. On Oct 23, 2019, a final condition of approval was issued, for which the applicant shall provide documentation whether the building is considered an archeological site and if so, provide an archeological inventory report. Materials of historic value, including building materials that can be used to rebuild the buttery shall be cataloged and made part of the Zimmerman House collection. The building's footings, if salvageable, shall remain. The buttery was in disrepair for many years and finally collapsed in 2016.

• PZ20-26000001 Albertina Kerr Centers Property Addresses: [930 NE 162nd](#) and 722-876 NE 162nd Ave Portland. Proposal to build 150-unit affordable apartment building. 30 units @ 30% AMI, 102 units @ 60% AMI and 15 units 80% AMI. (AMI-Average Median Income) Proposed: 4 story, 45-foot-tall double loaded corridor building with a mix of unit sizes, total 96,816 sq. ft. This project will include the removal of the Wynne Wyatt School Building.

More information on these land use project can be obtained by calling 503-618-2845 to speak with a submissions coordinator or email ePlanReview@GreshamOregon.gov ■



Hello Neighbors!

My name is Sarah Jacobson and I am honored to join the WENA board!

I grew up in Mississippi and lived in Eastern Oregon for a couple years before moving to Portland to serve as a medic with the National Guard while attending Portland State University. After graduating I worked at the V.A. Medical Center for several years and then worked for a local education non-profit where I coordinated an AmeriCorps national service program.

My husband and I moved to Wilkes East in 2015 where we had the joy of welcoming our daughter Alice in 2018.

As a member of the board I am looking forward to learning more about my neighbors and their goals for our community. ■

Save the Date!
Wilkes East Neighborhood Spring Meeting
Monday, March 9th, 7-9PM

Albertina Kerr • 722 NE 162nd Av
 Training Bldg (center north on campus)

- Gresham Police NET Team Update
- CVIP (Citizen Volunteers in Policing)
- Glisan Commuters Initiative
- Neighborhood news and more

See you there!

Are you signed up?
Nextdoor.com is the social networking service for neighbors to connect with each other. And it's free! Sign-up today!

