



Aging Levees Along the Columbia River; Will They Protect Our Region From Devastating Floods

Over 100 years old and no longer meets federal standards

The Columbia is one of the world's largest, most powerful rivers. A system of flood-control infrastructure — hidden in plain sight — protects the Portland region from devastating floods. But the climate is changing and extreme weather threatens vulnerable communities, jobs, and the environment.



Flooding and Climate Change

Major floods are increasing up and down the West Coast, as climate change causes extreme rainstorms and rapid snow melt. It happened here before and it is just a matter of time before it happens again. The 1948 Vanport Flood killed at least 15 people and displaced over 18,000 in less than an hour. There have been no major improvements to many of our levees and pump stations since then and our system no longer meets federal standards.

Fortunately, there are simple, cost-effective solutions:

Expand the levees and floodwalls in the most vulnerable areas

- Build a new levee along the railroad embankment that failed in the Vanport Flood.
- Upgrade levees to meet modern standards of flood protection.
- Rehabilitate and replace drainage infrastructure to reduce pressure on the levees.

Attention Neighbors

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association would like to remind our neighborhood that all neighbors are welcome to attend board meetings, and are strongly encouraged to attend our general meetings held 3 times each year. Our next general meeting will be Monday, November 13th 7pm at the Moose Lodge, 16411 NE Halsey. In order for our

Upgrade pumps and other aging infrastructure

- Increase capacity to remove water by upgrading failing and underperforming pump stations.
- Add backup power generation to reduce risk.
- Ensure safe and functional facilities for flood preparedness

Increase resilience with natural flood protection solutions in open spaces and wetlands

- Slow and store floodwaters
- Reduce pressure on flood control infrastructure
- Support clean water
- Provide habitat for fish and wildlife

The Opportunity

Congress has authorized nearly \$100 million to improve our flood protection system, provided there is a local funding match. Moving forward in a timely manner is important for receiving federal funds.

To raise the local match, three bond scenarios are under consideration ranging from \$175-250 million over 20 years.

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community and neighborhood to thrive, we need participation and input from all individuals living in Wilkes East. Your voices, opinions, and concerns matter. Join us. Plan to attend. ■

Did you know? The king of hearts is the only king without a moustache.

Se Habla Español



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Wilkes East Land-Use Update

*By Greg Hartung,
Board Member, Land-use Co-Chair*

Hello members of our Wilkes East Neighborhood Association.

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association board regularly receives land use plans from the City of Gresham to notify us of land use projects within or proximity to the Wilkes East neighborhood boundaries. We are recapping some of the projects from our previous newsletters.

UPDATE Plan Case [PRE-21-00688](#)

Application 12/09/2021 (Rockwood NA) [Habitat for Humanity](#) development of the 1.41-acre site, comprising two lots, located on the south side of NE Glisan Street, approximately 100 feet east of NE 176th Avenue (17616-17636 NE Glisan) directly south of Nadaka Nature Park. The proposal includes 7 buildings comprising a total of 20-units and 29 parking spaces in a surface parking lot. The elevations and site plan provided show a typical two-story structure with individual ground floor entries and small rear yards.

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Mark Your Calendar!
Wilkes East Neighborhood

Fall 2023 Meeting
November 13th • 7PM

Moose Lodge • 16411 NE Halsey

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: wilkeeastna.org/newsletter.htm.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Chair** **Kris Freiermuth**
chair@wilkeeastna.org
- Vice Chair** **(Vacant)**
vicechair@wilkeeastna.org
- Secretary**..... **Gail Voge**
secretary@wilkeeastna.org
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BOARD MEETINGS

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

CONTACT US

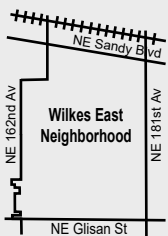
Email: info@wilkeeastna.org,
Postal Mail: 17104 NE Oregon, Portland OR 97230

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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

SPECIAL THANKS

- The newsletter is funded in part through a generous grant from the City of Gresham.
- Printing by Hush Ink / Print Results. 971-279-4960



Dear Neighbors • a message from your WENA President

Hello everyone! I keep hearing comments like “where has the year gone, this year has flown by, is almost fall?” I feel certain you have also heard similar comments. The end of summer and the beginning of fall is part of the cycle of our beautiful Pacific Northwest.

I hope you saw the news on the front page of Gresham’s fall newsletter “Fall for parks all over again”, delivered by mail about two weeks ago. The article is in the far-right column titled “Walking Paths”. The project is not a parks project. The project is being funded by The Department of Transportation. (The monies from Multnomah County are still available for a walking path inside Columbia View Park). There will be an opportunity to take part in oversite meetings between the City of Gresham Transportation Committee, The County Transportation Committee & HB Lee School/Reynolds School District. We have arranged for Wilkes East neighbors to be included in their development process. According to Tina Osterick, Natural Resources Planner, City of Gresham “at present we don’t have any dates, however (WENA) will be on the list to receive the dates, times, and location of these meetings.” We will keep you informed of these dates when available. Let us know if you wish to be included in these meetings or any written materials.

An item of concern was the possible purchase of the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, 1919 NE 181st Ave (adjacent to Elmer’s Restaurant). The purchase would turn the Four Points Hotel into a homeless shelter for families. We have been following this project closely with Elmer’s staff as well as their legal team. We have been proactive by attending Gresham Council meetings and talking with staff at Gresham City Hall. At this time the project has been put aside; however, we need to stay on task. As a footnote we have confirmed with the City of Gresham there are seven facilities serving homelessness

in the Gresham area. Of those seven facilities, four facilities are located in the Wilkes East and Rockwood neighborhoods. Two facilities are located on NE 181st, one on SE Stark, and one at 161st & E Burnside. The first property is the Rockwood Hotel (transitional housing), 2261 NE 181st Ave (formerly Days Inn, behind McDonald’s restaurant. Operated by Rockwood CDC). The second property is Rockwood Bridge Shelter (transitional housing), 121 NE 181st Ave (formerly Super 8 Motel. Operated by All Good NW). The third is the Gresham Women’s Shelter (emergency shelter), 16141 E Burnside St. (former Social Security office, operated by Our Just Future; formerly Human Solutions). The fourth property is the Stark Street Motel (transitional housing), 18323 SE Stark St (formerly Motel 6. Operated by Do Good Multnomah).

Our last Public Meeting of 2023 will take place Monday, November 13th, 7:00 PM at the Moose Lodge, 16411 NE Halsey. Please join us along with your neighbors. Confirmed speakers for the November Public Meeting include: Travis Gullberg, Gresham Police Chief; Steve Fancher, Assistant to Gresham City Manager will bring us up to date concerning “Flood Safe Columbia River” the upgrades needed for the levees; Lucy Harden, update on the We Shine transitional “little houses”; Janet Unruh, on the Rockwood Hotel (transitional housing), 2261 NE 181st Ave (formerly Days Inn, behind McDonald’s restaurant).

November is WENA Election time! Please consider joining the Board in helping to keep our little corner of Gresham safe & protected.

We will continue our monthly Board meetings via ZOOM on the second Monday of each month. Please mark your calendar & join us!

Your Neighbor & Friend,

Kristen Freiermuth

LEVEES (Page 1)

BASELINE FLOOD SAFETY

Covers the most immediate flood risks to our levee system and helps us meet federal standards. Median household cost based on taxable value: \$29/yr*

ENHANCED FLOOD SAFETY

Includes everything in the baseline scenario, and addresses risks that are unique around the airport and vulnerable communities. Median household cost based on taxable value: \$33/yr*

COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD SAFETY

Includes everything in the first two scenarios, with additional investments for long-term resiliency and performance. Median household cost based on taxable value: \$41/yr*

*16-20 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value

For more levee information please visit <https://www.floodsafecolumbia.org/>

ED: Join us November 13th for a detailed Columbia River levee presentation. ■



Thank You For Your Selfless Service!

To the many individuals that pick up litter while walking or jogging in our neighborhood, the Wilkes East Neighborhood Association would like to acknowledge you and extend a very special “Thank you!” for helping keep our neighborhood clean. ■

info@rideconnection.org



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City of Gresham, Climate Action Meeting, “All Things Trees”

By Janet Unruh, Wilkes East neighbor

The third Climate Action meeting was held September 28, 2023 in the City Council chamber. 30-40 people attended in person and pizza was served.

Presenters

- Shannon Martin, Solid Waste and Sustainability Manager
- Johnny Dea, Climate Action Plan Project Manager
- Tina Núñez-Osterink, Natural Resources and Parks Planner
- Mary Phillips, Senior City Planner at City of Gresham, working on tree code
- Sarale Hickson, Urban Planner at City of Gresham, working on updating regulations related to waterways, floodplains, wetlands, and steeply sloped areas
- John Wasiutynski, Director of the Office of Sustainability, Multnomah County
- Dr. Vivek Shandas, renowned climate researcher and professor at Portland State University

Good news – Gresham is getting money for Urban Forestry

The USDA Forest Service’s Urban and Community Forestry Program awarded over \$1 billion to fund urban forestry projects across the U.S. that “support equitable access to trees and the benefits they provide.” “Equitable access” refers to low-income neighborhoods that are deficient in tree canopy. The funding was made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Locally, a coalition led by Friends of Trees, including the City of Gresham, and others applied for funding. The coalition received a \$12 million grant to be used over next five years to work with neighborhoods to plant and care for trees.

The IRA urban forestry projects include:

- Community tree planting (training and engaging volunteers) to plant up to 2,300 street and yard trees and 21,000 native shrubs in neighborhoods and natural areas, specifically in identified equity areas: East Multnomah County, West Eugene, and Springfield
- Robust post-planting care, including watering, mulching, and natural area maintenance
- Opportunities for direct community input and participation
- Community education
- Workforce training

Tina will be meeting with coalition members to find out how much of the funding Gresham will receive.

Green Gresham, Healthy Gresham

Green Gresham, Healthy Gresham (GGHG) will help identify where to plant trees, taking into consideration the demographics behind the lack of trees. Tina and John Wasiutynski began GGHG about six years ago with the goal of planting more trees to make Gresham a lush, greener place for all who live in Gresham. Thanks to grants they have received along the way, they have been able to plant over 500 trees, take an inventory of street trees, maintain tree canopy, and recruit homeowners to plant trees. The IRA grant is much larger than the earlier grants and it will provide much more funding for tree planting and care. And there’s more good news: in addition to the IRA grant, Tina, John, and GGHG expect to receive grant money from FEMA for post-disaster response due to the heat dome event in June 2021. In that event 69 people died in Multnomah County.

See also: Green Gresham, Healthy Gresham! Grant Project Adding Street Trees to West Gresham Neighborhoods, the Wilkes East Neighborhood Newsletter <http://www.wilkeseastna.org/node/3542>

Continue reading at: <http://www.wilkeseastna.org/node/3700#C1> ■

Did you know? The punctuation “?!” is called an interrobang

How We Saved The CCACs

By Janet Unruh, Wilkes East neighbor

Council Citizen Advisory Committees (CCACs) play an important role in decisions that affect Gresham. These committees are made up of resident experts, interested community members, and a staff liaison to City government. According to the City of Gresham’s website, “City Council appoints residents to committees and boards to advise the Council on certain decisions and policy matters. Citizen advisory committee work stems from the City’s Strategic Plan.” The CCACs include the following:

- Charter Review Committee (work completed)
- Community Development and Housing Subcommittee
- Community Enhancement Advisory Committee
- Design Commission
- Finance Committee
- Gresham Redevelopment Commission Advisory Committee
- Historic Resources Subcommittee
- Parks and Recreation Community Advisory Group
- Planning Commission
- Transportation Advisory Subcommittee
- Urban Forestry Subcommittee (UFS)
- Youth Advisory Council

My interest was in the Urban Forestry Subcommittee (UFS) because they are the stewards of the trees in Gresham. And so, it was stunning when in January 2023, City staffers met with all the CCACs including UFS, and asked us all to stop meeting for two to three months while the City restructured.

In the UFS meeting, they delivered that message and gave us no definite timeline for resumption or for interim communication. I felt that they were stonewalling the subcommittee, and when members expressed disbelief and frustration, the staffers responded that the City “heard us” and would be in touch.

One City staffer who spoke to us said, “We need a bit of time to clean, a bit of time to get the proverbial house in order, so we need to clean up the house a little bit. So, what we are wanting [sic] to do is work with the three of you [the remaining UFS committee members] and ask for some time to pause. So, we’re thinking 2 to 3 months.” See the meeting recording: <https://tinyurl.com/sfy3a3cm>, Passcode: D&A=%5t. To hear this part, begin at 07:37 on the timeline. The entire meeting is worth watching in my opinion – it was a very emotional meeting.

Their message came across to me as disingenuous. If we were going to be on hold for an indefinite amount of time, the momentum would be lost and the remaining members might drift away. But because there were projects in process, grant money was coming in, and because UFS members were dedicated to the work, they refused to stop meeting. To read more, see www.greshamtrees.org

A brief history of UFS

For those of you who aren’t familiar with UFS, it began in 1990 as the Tree Preservation Council Advisory Committee. In 2008, the Committee was renamed the Urban Forestry Subcommittee and was made up of City staff, tree professionals, and volunteers. UFS has written publications (for example, The Urban Forestry Management Plan at <https://greshamoregon.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=1375>), worked with neighborhood groups, and planted many trees through the years in cooperation with Friends of Trees and during Arbor Month.

Continue reading at: <http://www.wilkeseastna.org/node/3699#C1> ■



Start a **Neighborhood Watch** in your area.

Visit greshamoregon.gov/Neighborhood-Ready

LAND USE (Page 1)



Habitat for Humanity new housing, 17616 NE Glisan. Architectural drawing

UPDATE: Design Review DR-023-00425 was submitted online to the City of Gresham on 7/14/2023. The Planning division sent notice of incomplete land use application on 8/4/2023 asking for more information.

Plan Case DR-21-00616 Applied 11/05/2021 (Wilkes East NA) Phase 1 construction of approximately 26,000 square foot pre-engineered metal building for Pape Machinery's new Ditch Witch facility located at 17217 NE Sandy Blvd. This is on the 11-acre property adjacent to the historic Zimmerman House. Due to site constraints all regulated trees are proposed to be removed. The Gresham Wetland report indicates there are no wetlands on this property. Phase 2 will include a second Pape Machinery facility.



Cedar Tree Apartments, 643 NE 162nd Ave. Land clearing underway

Permit Number: BLDMF-22-02262 (Wilkes East NA) Cedar Tree Apartments multi-family project located at 643 NE 162nd Ave, Gresham Or 97230. This project will have 4 new apartment buildings. 3 of the buildings will have 4 living units. 1 of the buildings will have 3 living units. Land clearing is underway. The property is currently fenced. Watch for street side improvements and road construction in front of this site.

For these and other public records, you can visit this web link: <https://greshamor-energovweb.tylerhost.net>

You do not need to create or register an account with online services to access project files.

To search for project files and public records:

- Click on the search icon.
- In the screen that loads, type in the Plan case number in the search field and click on the search button.
- The page will reload with the results of the search, including highlighted direct links to cases.
- Click on the highlighted link for the Plan case.
- In the page that loads, click on the Attachments tab to view project files.

You can also view detailed instructions on how to search for public records at the link below:

<https://greshamoregon.gov/workarea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=13448>

If you have any questions about accessing the files online or any projects, contact PlanningTech@GreshamOregon.gov ■



**Wilkes East Neighborhood Association
Annual Election of Officers**

**Monday November 13th 7pm
Moose Lodge • 16411 NE Halsey**

Join your neighborhood Board. All positions up for election!

To join the Board, simply show up and **nominate yourself!**
Get involved. Make a difference!



**Freeze the Grease,
Save a Bundle**

Pour leftover gravy, pan drippings and sauces into a can, freeze it, and toss the can into the trash.

Peace, Joy & Happiness

**Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving,
Joyous Holidays, and
a New Year filled with success.**

This holiday season take the time to give thanks for all that's good in your own life -- and to give to others who may not share the same good fortune.

Have a safe and happy Holiday Season

Did you know? The plastic tip on shoelaces are called aglets

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

