

LAURELHURST

L E T T E R

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May 2011

Redesign Underway for 40th Ave. NE

Seattle Children's expansion affects transportation flow around the area and several changes will occur. New stoplights, bus stops, bike and pedestrian crossings will be installed on 40th Ave NE and Sand Point Way NE. The new hospital emergency room and an underground loading dock will be accessed from 40th Ave. NE.

Neighbors and LCC board members attended two public-input meetings sponsored by Children's in April.

Key components of the design:

- New vehicular movements, including the ability to turn left and right from north- and south-bound 40th Ave NE
- Wider lane radius to accommodate turns for buses and smaller trucks (UPS-size) at all corners on 40th Ave NE
- New signalized crosswalk at Sand Point Way NE at the shortest crossing between Children's to the north of 40th Ave NE
- Enhanced sheltered and well-lit bus stops; may include a pull-out to shield buses from traffic
- Pedestrian refuge islands at the crosswalk at 40th Ave NE on Children's side and also at the mid-Sand Point Way NE crossing
- Bicycle crossings at 40th Ave NE and Sand Point Way NE will be more sheltered; access to the Burke-Gilman trail is under design at the Hartmann Building site
- Traffic signals from Penny Dr., 40th Ave NE, and NE 45th St. will be coordinated to allow for maximum flow of traffic

Timing for the improvements is not clear, but the traffic signal must be functioning before the certificate of occupancy is issued when the building is completed. ■

SR 520 Replacement: "Concrete Clunker"

On April 28, the Puget Sound Regional Council endorsed the SR 520 replacement alternative nicknamed the "concrete clunker" – a 27-foot-high viaduct design that doubles the width of the current bridge and offers no reduced travel times for Seattle transit riders or other vehicles.

Communities adjacent to the bridge have invested thousands of hours in constructive meetings with government officials and WSDOT bridge designers. Prior to the PSRC meeting, six other adjacent neighborhoods and LCC trustee **Colleen McAleer**, wrote to City Councilmembers Rasmussen, Harrell, and Burgess as well as Mayor McGinn asking them to object and vote "no" on the current design until the flaws and EIS process are thoroughly addressed for Seattle citizens.

Mayor McGinn was the lone advocate for Seattle and voted "no" on the design citing the lack of transportation analyses on its streets. In addition, he requested that the vote logically should take place after the environmental impact studies were completed as required by Federal and State laws.

Below are the key points of objection to this "preferred alternative":

- The funding package is incomplete and will not even fund six lanes from Medina to I-5. The state's current plan is to build 6 lanes from the east side to near the 520 high rise and will stop short approaching Seattle, and then to run out of money. This simply moves a traffic jam: the six lanes will merge back into four lanes near the western high rise. This will be the case for at least 10 years at best with tolls and future bonds.
- The design does not address the most urgent safety problems. The worst problems come from the hollow columns that support the bridge along the west side segment; these will not be built in the next 10 years.
- The design takes away a lane from I-5, starting at the ship canal bridge. This is a regional and city policy issue that deserves public debate. Creating a new bottleneck on I-5 would have significant economic consequences.
- The bridge access increases traffic congestion. The state's "preferred alternative" will definitely carry more vehicles. Yet at Montlake, there will be only one 520 exit/entrance, shared by Madison Park, Broadmoor, and Montlake with Laurelhurst and the University of Washington instead of today's two exit/entrances. The plan dumps more vehicles onto I-5, yet adds only one ramp, so the backups of people waiting on I-5 to get onto 520 are increased rather than reduced. As vehicles avoiding these interchanges crowd onto local streets, they will produce untenable congestion in the already-full neighborhood streets. A trip using 520 will take longer, rather than be quicker, because of the congestion on both I-5 and Seattle streets. WSDOT has not studied these impacts.
- The "preferred alternative" destroys the environment. Almost all of the expansion of 520 is taken from parks, protected open space, and water used for recreation. Union Bay and Portage Bay provide unique habitats that will never recover.
- This design harms our health and will reduce the livability and the tax base of Seattle. Recent literature is clear that the health of persons living near highways is harmed, with increased incidence of cardiac, lung, and cancer problems. Seven years of construction will take place in the middle of densely settled neighborhoods. Reduction of recreational open space will detract from the livability of these communities.

Laurelhurst will have an information meeting and fundraiser to help with legal advice and join other neighborhoods Wed., May 25, 7 p.m. at the Laurelhurst Community Center. A comprehensive slide show will be presented. Details will follow. ■

Wine Shops Support Cork Recycling Project

Gordon McIntosh, owner of University Wines, at 5436 Sand Point Way, says of LCC's wine cork recycling project, "The boxes are filling up fast. It's a great project." McIntosh bought the company – a local business active in the community for 38 years – last year from La Cantina founder Michael Dobson (who you can still find around the store) so both could "slow down" and share the workload. Each year Dobson and McIntosh, travel to France in search of wines from small wineries in the Burgundy, Bordeaux, Champagne, Rhone, and Chablis regions. Because they buy directly from the wine makers and import the wine themselves, McIntosh says they are able to save their customers about 30 percent on high-quality French wines. McIntosh believes his is the only store in the state to buy directly from these small producers in France, and, as a result, his customers can get a "...really good wine without paying a lot." Prices start at \$8. Free wine tastings are every Saturday from noon to 6 p.m.

Janet Sauser, sommelier/manager of Laurelhurst Wine Merchants, 3711 NE 45th Street, is enthusiastic about LCC's cork recycling project, too. She says, "It's a great idea. We're happy to participate. Everyone always wonders what to do with the wine corks." Owner Richard Chapman opened the store in December 2010. Sauser invites the community to weekly wine tastings, Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. "Every week it's something different." The store's stock includes a broad selection of wines from France and Italy with 30 percent of the offerings from Washington State. The store sponsors six Laurelhurst Wine Clubs to help customers choose wines by providing guidance based on the expertise of the store staff and the specific tastes and budgets of the customer. In addition to helping customers "expand (their) horizon," store staff offer club members a 10 percent discount on Wine Club purchases. They also stock wine-friendly cheese from Strom Peterson of The Resident Cheese-monger and Fremont-based Theo Chocolate. ■

Special thanks to LCC trustee Kay Kelly for interviewing these business owners and

Women's Shelter Benefits from Generous Spirits

Laurelhurst neighbor **Huda Giddens** discovered a perfect use for a surplus of unused items. "I've been collecting those little hotel lotion/shampoo/conditioner bottles and boxed soaps from every hotel I've been in. In the process of traveling, I've collected a fair amount. I recently delivered four boxes of cosmetics, sealed toothbrushes, facecloths, combs, etc. to Elizabeth Gregory House."

Not so far from Laurelhurst, at NE 16th St. and 50th Ave. NE, is the University Lutheran Church Elizabeth Gregory House, a homeless women's shelter. Michelle, the Day Center Supervisor was "immensely grateful for my stash of cosmetics," reports Giddens. When she asked what else they needed, Michelle said: "What we need most are sanitary napkins and kitchen garbage bags. We can't keep up with the demand."

Giddens has been inspired to start a regular delivery of neighborhood donations to the Gregory House on the last day of each month. She hopes that Laurelhurst newsletter readers will reach into their hearts and stash of travel products and drop off much needed items at her house. She's optimistic, too, that Costco shoppers might occasionally pick up an extra box of garbage bags or sanitary pads to contribute to the shelter.

Giddens thinks this simple gesture from those of us who are more fortunate to those who are less so is an important human connection.

Please place your donations in the dark green, covered bin near her mail box at the front of the house. Huda Giddens, 206-527-1291, 4338 N.E. 44th St. (just off the 43rd Ave. NE Boulevard). ■

Interested in contributing your enthusiasm and talents to a great neighborhood? Get involved with LCC! Learn about trustee responsibilities at www.laurelhurstcc.com/LCC/Trustees.html or contact Emily Dexter at 526-2927 or edexter4@comcast.net. ■

Head Out to a Work Party for Spring Clean

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m. to noon **Waterway No. 1** work party. Meet Arthur Lee Jacobson, noted plant, tree and weed expert, who will direct this work party. Help pull ivy and dig out weeds and have fun in the process. Bring your gloves and garden tools. If possible, please bring rubber boots for wading into the lake to pick up debris in the water and to chop down the invasive floating yellow flag irises.

Kids are welcome. Refreshments provided. There will be a drawing for those participating in the work party to receive an autographed copy of Arthur Lee Jacobson's well-regarded *Trees of Seattle* book. www.arthurleej.com. Betsy Mullen is organizing volunteers from University Presbyterian Church to help with this clean up event.

Contact Jeannie Hale at jeannieh@serv.net or 206-525-5135 or Emily Dexter at edexter4@comcast.net or 206-526-2927.

Friends of Yesler Swamp is hosting a work party on Sunday, May 22, from 10 a.m. until noon. Bring your gloves and garden tools. They will clean up trash, cut blackberry and ivy, and spruce up the temporary trail with wood chips. Contact Jean Colley at yeslerswamptrail@gmail.com. ■

CALENDAR

May 14 (Sat.) 10 a.m. to noon
SUN Park Weed and Sweep
47th Ave NE and NE 47th St.

May 21 (Sat.) 10 a.m. to noon
Waterway No. 1 Work Party

May 22 (Sun.) 10 a.m. to noon
Yesler Swamp Work Party

May 25 (Wed.) 7 p.m.
Fundraiser and Informational Meeting on the SR520 Replacement
Laurelhurst Community Center

June 13 (Mon.) 7 p.m.
LCC Board of Trustees Meeting
Wu Hsing Tao School of Acupuncture, Talaris campus

May 27 (Fri.)
Deadline for Laurelhurst Newsletter Copy and Ads

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FOR SALE: Antique Oak Desk. Craftsman style, family heirloom. Owner downsizing. \$400 obo. Solid oak; approx. 100 years old. Call Cleo, 206-985-8006.

FOR SALE: 6 unit commercial building. Laurelhurst. Totally updated. High traffic count. 3430-3436 NE 45th St. \$1,395,000. serebrin@comcast.net; Alan, 206-280-3820; Pat, 206-595-1522.

GYMBOREE: Double your fun at Gymboree this summer! Classes in Play&Learn, Art and Music are 2 for 1 (\$69/mo) in June, July and August. Two siblings can each take a class, or 1 child can take 2 classes for the price of 1. Gymboree at Magnuson Park is for children with adults – infant through 5 years. Ages 3-5 year olds can also join us for "drop off" summer camp on Tu/Thur mornings for \$499 for all summer (9 weeks). Visit our website at www.gymboree-reclasses.com, or call 522-2045 to schedule a free trial class anytime.

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TENNIS CLINICS: Jake Moe Tennis Clinics are back for the 20th year at Laurelhurst Courts. \$75.00 for 4 days of great lessons. Start May 16. Ages 7th grade to 77 years old. jakejakemoe@gmail.com

WORK NEEDED: Have truck, need work. Hauling, yard work, odd jobs. Local references available. 523-6729.

Save the Date

5th Annual Laurelhurst Elementary Playground Renovation Golf Tournament: Broadmoor Golf Club, Monday, October 3, 2011. Register online at <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/laurelhurst/playground/golf/registration.html>, or contact Kevin Engman (kengman85@hotmail.com or 206-890-6513) or Rick Myers (rick@myerspartners.com or 206-412-6256).

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Aircraft Noise Hotline	433-5393
Animal Control	386-7387
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Children's Construction Hotline	987-7744


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