

the SUNA Times

Fall 2008



The Official Newsletter of the South University Neighborhood Association

What makes SUNA livable?

By Marilyn Milne, SUNA Chair

Many of us are exploring our neighborhood's livability, spurred on by the inappropriate development allowed along 19th. Your SUNA board of directors is working hard on various aspects of livability, and it will be our main focus at our neighborhood meetings.



One example of our neighborhood's progress on livability issues is the group that mobilized around the proposed 7-story building on 19th and Alder (see adjacent picture). This group did a lot of hard, successful work. Thank you, everyone! Other known development along 19th includes the northwest corner of 19th and Kincaid (5 stories, 9 parking places) and 19th & Harris (adjacent picture).

We know more multi-unit dwellings will be built, and we know that our hidden density – mostly homes converted to student rentals – is adding uncounted people to the neighborhood. The questions I come back to are: How much density is enough? And what makes a neighborhood livable?

With the help of dedicated volunteers in our neighborhood, we are developing a definition of SUNA's density. The result will guide our work in keeping SUNA livable. We've also got a team working on

continued on page 3

Infill Development and Good Neighborhoods – Are they Compatible?

By Al Couper

Oregon's governor once famously remarked, "There are two things Oregonians hate – sprawl and density."

Broadly speaking, sprawl haters favor tight urban growth boundaries in order to prevent urbanization of prime farm and forestland. Their banners read "Grow up, not out."



19th and Alder is planned as a 4-story, 96 bedroom building with 17 parking places.

standards that would allow "infill development" only if it could be proved that the development would do no harm, and would possibly enhance, the existing character of the neighborhood.

A companion project, Opportunity Siting, (OS) is scouring the city for largely undeveloped sites where higher density development could occur without being incompatible. This, it is felt, would take pressure off of established neighborhoods to accommodate the 297,500 people expected to reside in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area by 2025.

continued on page 3

Density haters, on the other hand, are concerned about the damaging impact on established neighborhoods from new development that is too tall, covers too much of the land with pavement and attracts too many cars.

The City of Eugene is conducting two planning efforts that attempt to reconcile these opposing views. The first, the Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS) project is aimed at crafting policies and development code



The house at 19th and Harris will be torn down. Plans call for a 5-story, 56 bedroom building with 23 parking places

Minor Code Amendment Project (MiCAP)

by Carolyn Jacobs

A major victory in the effort to preserve and protect the character and livability of our neighborhood occurred August 11th when the City Council voted overwhelmingly to approve amendments to the city development code which reduce maximum building height and increase required parking provisions in the north end of our neighborhood (bounded by 18th, 20th, Hilyard and Agate). These two amendments also took effect “immediately” (August 13th) which means all new permit applications submitted on that date or any time forward must meet these new guidelines.

While these two amendments were designed specifically for the South University neighborhood, City Council also passed ten other amendments with a goal of preventing the ongoing negative impacts of incompatible infill throughout the city. Many, if not all, however, will have positive effects for our neighborhood as well. For example, maximum building heights will now be calculated by measuring the actual highest point of a roof rather than the midway point (which has been code and of course allows for a building which is in fact higher than what is stated). Density calculations (which determine the number of dwelling units allowed in a given development) will now be done in a way which prevents a builder from rounding up to greater number of units except under much rarer situations.

We would like to acknowledge our deep gratitude to Paul Conte (of the Jefferson Westside neighborhood). He educated us, encouraged us and advocated for us. Without him none of this would have come to pass. Thank you, Paul, so much.

City Council’s action was the culmination of almost two years work for the bulk of the amendments (and eight months for our two). Hundreds of citizens participated citywide including several from our neighborhood. And, to be truthful, we faced some very aggressive opposition (especially to the two amendments proposed for our neighborhood). The positive outcome and the strong support of both the Council and the Mayor however, is exactly what we needed as we continue our effort to revise the code so as to assure neighborhoods are not degraded by thoughtless development.

To put all this in perspective, we should remember that this was really our second victory in recent months - the first being our successful effort to reduce the height of the proposed seven story building at Alder and 19th to four stories. Our neighborhood has much to be proud of, and of course, much more work ahead of us. *Thanks to all who lent their support.*

SUNA Group Conducts Land Use Inventory

By Al Couper

Working in conjunction with the ad hoc neighborhood planning committee, a group of SUNA residents is conducting a detailed inventory of land use and density within the South University neighborhood. Boundaries of the study are 18th to 24th and Patterson to Agate.

Working with maps and aerial photos provided by the City and the Lane Council of Governments, the group is going lot-by-lot to verify the type of structure, the type of use and the number of dwelling units. The City uses “dwelling units per net acre” to allocate density throughout the urban area. Net acreage excludes public land such as streets.

Some of the initial results are “very interesting” according to survey taker Bill Aspegren. “In the area zoned R-4 High-Density Residential between 18th and 19th there are 21.5 acres and 770 dwelling units for an average density of 35.81 units per net acre,” he said. “But if you subtract the 6.34 acres in religious, fraternal and group quarter use,” he added, “the density jumps to 50.79 dwellings per net acre.” That may be significant in that the City’s current residential lands study assumes a density of only 35 dwellings per net acre for areas zoned high-density.

“We are achieving more than that with apartment buildings no more than three stories tall. It makes me wonder why we need a height limit of 120 feet in the R-4 area,” he remarked.

Others working on the inventory are Gary Kreger, Ev and Sally Smith, Nancy McFadden, Mike Westervelt, Carolyn Jacobs and Joyce Couper.



URGENT NOTICE *Concerning MiCAP*
On August 22, 2008 The Homebuilders Association of Lane County (HBA) filed a notice of intent to appeal the two recently passed MiCAP ordinances to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). The City would then have 21 days to submit the record. The petitioners’ and respondents’ briefs would follow in due course.

Meet The SUNA Board

Nan Coppock-Bland

"After more than 30 years in our



bungalow on 22nd and Kincaid, my husband Richard and I are finally getting to know our neighbors. I applaud the SUNA board's efforts to have broad representation.

Recent newsletter topics have piqued my interest in helping out."

Tyan Taubner

My husband and I were thrilled to find a home in this neighborhood a couple of years ago. It is a dream to raise our young daughters here. I love the neighborhood's tree lined streets, lovely gardens and its proximity to parks. I am grateful for its well supported neighborhood school, the fact that we can leave our car at home most days, and the sense of community that exists here. The commitment and efforts of SUNA residents in preserving our neighborhood's livability are impressive and inspiring. I am concerned about traffic safety, welcoming a growing population of university students, while maintaining our neighborhoods integrity, and providing more opportunities for neighbors to connect.

What Makes SUNA Livable? *(continued from page 1)*

the City's Infill Compatibility Study. Read more about all of these projects in this newsletter.

Won't you join us? Sign up for one task or an entire project! Call me at 344-7989, or catch up with me when we watch the swifts fly into Agate Hall's chimney on Sept. 26.

Thank you, in advance, for helping to keep your neighborhood livable for everyone.

Marilyn Milne – SUNA President

SUNA Residents Pursue Land Use Code Changes *By Al Couper*



Residents will be asked what makes South University special and what the threats are from new construction.

Spurred by several recent building permit applications to replace existing structures with new apartment houses, a group of SUNA residents is pursuing a land use-planning project aimed at lessening the impact of new construction on existing residential development.

Patterned after a successful effort by the Jefferson/Westside Neighborhood Association, the project has begun with two initial tasks. The first is to compile lists of essential, defining neighborhood characteristics and of potential threats from new development.

SUNA residents will be asked to comment on the lists and to prioritize them at the next SUNA membership meeting October 7th at 7:00 pm in the Edison School Cafeteria. The lists will also be made available through other means for those unable to attend the meeting.

Characteristics that make South University special, according to the draft list, are such things as: 1) eclectic mix of architectural styles including Bungalow, Craftsman and 20th-century Revival style, 2) proximity to the university, 3) grid-iron

street pattern with good sidewalk system, 4) residents with a commitment to the neighborhood, and more than 35 others. Identified threats from infill development include: 1) Eugene's building height standards that allow structures up to 120 feet tall in high-density areas, 2) removal of significant trees, 3) student behavior problems, 4) parking issues, and many others.

"It is vital to hear from everyone in the neighborhood," according to Carolyn Jacobs, leader of the citizen committee. "Otherwise, we will have far less impact when our recommendations are presented to the city. It is planned that the final lists and recommended code changes from our neighborhood will be integrated into the City's Infill Compatibility Standards project," she stated. See companion story on page 2.

Other committee members include SUNA Chair Marilyn Milne, SUNA Board members Marsha Shankman, Joyce Couper and Mike Westervelt and SUNA residents Lauren Hulse, Bill Aspegren and Al Couper. The committee's second project is a detailed inventory of land use and density within the neighborhood. See companion story on page 2.

Infill Development *(continued from page 1)*

SUNA members have been actively involved, especially in the ICS project. SUNA Board member Carolyn Jacobs and SUNA residents Bill Aspegren and Al Couper are on ICS committees dealing with multi-family and single family development and the impacts of infill.

Several other SUNA members are involved in neighborhood planning, partly as an outgrowth of efforts to deal with a proposed seven-story building at 19th and Alder. Some of the same individuals have been involved in the city's Minor Code Amendment Project (MICAP). Included are Lauren Hulse, Marsha Shankman, Gary Kreger, Mike Russo, (add others). See companion stories on neighborhood planning and MICAP.

The ICS and OS projects have been staffed and underway since early 2007 and are expected to produce policy recommendations by the end of 2008. Much more information is available on the City's website.



South University Neighborhood Association

c/o Neighborhood Services
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This is the official newsletter of the South University Neighborhood Association. Newsletters are produced by neighborhood volunteers and are produced by neighborhood volunteers and are free to residents and businesses of the neighborhood. Space is available for letters to the editor and editorial comments from neighbors. All signed letters will be published as space permits. Editorials express the author's views, not the position of the Neighborhood Association, the City's elected official, or City staff.

See Swifts With SUNA - What bird is the weight of a quarter and likes to sleep in Agate Hall's chimney? It's the Vaux's Swift. During migration each spring and fall, tens of thousands of Vaux's Swifts fill the sky nightly and, at sunset, spiral down together into the unused chimney.



The visit by the swifts is a remarkable sight, which is why SUNA has turned it into a neighborhood event. We'll gather just before sunset, offering binoculars and Lane Audubon Society information about the birds. We'll also give away 10 Prince Puckler ice cream gift certificates!

Plan to join us on Friday, Sept. 26, at 6:30 p.m. on the blacktop north of Agate Hall (formerly Condon School), on Agate between 19th and 17th. Sunset will occur at about 7 p.m. See you and your family there!

Garage Sale For Edison School & SUNA

Please join us on Saturday, September 20th for this year's benefit for Edison and SUNA. This year's sale will be held in the ALLEY between University & Onyx on 21st. **DONATED ITEMS MAY BE DROPPED OFF AT:** Nancy McFadden's (1256 E. 21st) or at Joan Dunbar's (1234 E. 21st) during the week prior to the sale. **PLEASE SIGN UP TO HELP.** We will need people on both Friday the 19th and Saturday the 20th. Contact Nancy at 342-3944 (nkmcfad@efn.org) or Joan at (joan_dunbar@attglobal.net) for any questions. **SEE YOU THERE!**

**SUNA's
Fall Meeting**
*Tuesday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m.,
Edison Cafeteria*

**Neighborhood
Survey Results**

**Civic Stadium &
Picturing SUNA
in the Next 50 Years**

