

The Portland Tribune

Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation erases debt in five years

By Jim Redden

September 28, 2017

Portland is only city in the nation to own steam locomotives, and now they have a debt free permanent home

Not so long ago, the fate of Portland's three historic steam locomotives was unclear. Although two were used in the popular Holiday Express excursions, they were housed in a crumbling building in Union Pacific's busy Brooklyn Yard that was slated for demolition.

But last Wednesday, the board of the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation burned their city mortgage to celebrate the fifth anniversary of their permanent center, located adjacent to the transit center at the east end of the Tilikum Crossing at 2250 S.E. Water Ave.

To build the center, the foundation raised \$5 million and borrowed another \$1 million from the city. It now houses the locomotives, which are restored, maintained and operated by volunteers.

"ORHF at 5 is debt-free, with money in the bank, and 300 employees who work for nothing," ORHF Executive Director Greg Fitzgerald said at the beginning of the evening event.

Joining the foundation board and other rail enthusiasts were Commissioner Nick Fish, who was in charge of Portland Parks & Recreation when the loan was approved, and Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who is in charge of the bureau now.

The foundation presented Fish with a plaque as thanks for his help. The commissioner then spoke briefly about the foundation's strong partnership with the city and praised the many volunteers who open the center to the public and provide tours to local school groups.

The ceremony is another milestone in a unique and unlikely story. Portland is the only city in the country to own steam locomotives, two of them running and the third being restored. Donated to the city in 1958, they had been stored outside near Oaks Park for decades and were deteriorating. Nonprofit organizations were formed to help volunteers restore the locomotives, and Union Pacific allowed them to be stored in its aging wooden roundhouse in Southeast Portland. But with renovations scheduled to begin at the rail yard in 2012, a new home for the locomotives had to be found.

Everything fell into place when plans took shape for TriMet's Orange Line from Milwaukie to cross into downtown Portland over a new bridge near the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Land with a rail access was purchased and a building large enough to house all three locomotives — and more — was designed. With the deadline rapidly approaching, the foundation still needed \$1 million to pull it all together. The City Council approved the loan on July 27, 2011, and the Oregon Rail Heritage Center opened on Sept. 22, 2012.

For more information, visit: www.orhf.org.

City: Water safe, but crypto found again

*By Jim Redden
September 27, 2017*

Portland Water Bureau says water supply is still safe, but advises those with immune problems to take precautions

According to a late Wednesday afternoon press release from the bureau, Cryptosporidium was detected in test results from a sample collected on Sept. 24. This is the first detection since a series from January to March of this year.

Bureau officials say they believe water from the watershed — the primary source of water for Portland and many suburban communities — is still safe to drink.

"At this time, the bureau and public health partners at Multnomah County continue to believe Bull Run water is safe to drink," Portland Water Bureau Administrator Michael Stuhr said in the release. "We will continue to monitor for Cryptosporidium, protect the watershed, notify the public, and work with our health partners to make the best decisions for public health."

According to the release, as always, the bureau recommends that people with severely weakened immune systems seek specific advice from their health care providers about drinking water.

Since the earlier detections, the City Council has approved the construction of a filtration plant that could cost up to \$500 million that would remove the microorganism and other contaminants from the Bull Run water. It cannot be complete for another 10 years or so, however.

The bureau has monitored for crypto — as the microorganism is commonly called — under conditions of a variance for its treatment issued by the Oregon Health Authority. As a result of the detections earlier this year, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) informed the Portland Water Bureau that the variance from treating for crypto would be revoked no later than Nov. 22, 2017.

"We continually monitor for human illness caused by Cryptosporidium but since past detections of Cryptosporidium oocysts in Bull Run water have not been associated with an increase in human disease, I do not expect it to be different this time," Multnomah County Health Officer Dr. Paul Lewis said in the release.

Sampling results are posted at www.portlandoregon.gov/water/cryptoresults.

Customers with questions regarding water quality can call the Water Line at 503-823-7525.

Sources Say: Merkley confirms presidential aspirations

*By Jim Redden
September 28, 2017*

Plus, new candidates eye Saltzman's coveted seat and Fish funded park where foe announces candidacy

Although Democratic U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley has not yet told Oregon voters he won't be running for re-election in 2020, the influential Politico website reports that he is seriously considering running for president then.

"Almost no one knows who he is, but there may be a spot for Jeff Merkley on the left flank of the 2020 Democratic primary — and he wouldn't rule out running even if Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are running," Politico said in a Sept. 19 online story headlined, "Meet the leader of the vast left-wing conspiracy."

The Oregon Constitution prohibits candidates from running for two lucrative offices at the same time — including vice president, if that's his strategy.

According to the story written by Edward-Isaac Dovey about Merkley's activities in one early primary election state, "He's already beaten Warren to Iowa, and he spent more time in Des Moines this month than Sanders has since last year's caucuses."

Dovey admits Merkley needs more national exposure, however, writing, "Merkley could use some buzz outside the Beltway — though inside Washington, he is very much a player, having quietly brought together leading groups on the left for what's become a regular series of pragmatic, action-focused meetings."

You can read the Politico article at tinyurl.com/ybv79l9n.

New candidates eye Saltzman's coveted seat

More candidates have either declared or expressed interest in running for Commissioner Dan Saltzman's seat since he announced he would not seek re-election.

Those who have formally announced now include NAACP of Portland President Jo Ann Hardesty, Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith, and Downtown Neighborhood Association President Felicia Williams. Expressing interest are Metro Councilor Sam Chase and architect Stuart Emmons, who finished in third place with 14 percent of the vote in the May 2016 primary when he ran against former Commissioner Steve Novick.

Other potential candidates are expected to surface in coming weeks because council seats don't open up very often. Fifteen people ended up filing for mayor in 2016 after incumbent Charlie Hales pulled out of the race.

Fish funded park where foe announces candidacy

Environmental activist Julia DeGraw picked an unlikely place to kick off her uphill campaign against Commissioner Nick Fish on Sept. 16 — the East Portland Community Center, which features a playground built as part of the E-205 Initiative that Fish launched when he oversaw Portland Parks & Recreation.

News coverage at the time said Fish announced the initiative to increase parks east of I-205 on May 6, 2011, before a group of about 30 neighborhood and parks activists. They were reportedly so happy to hear the news that "they applauded and marked the event with a toast of sparkling apple cider."

Fish spoke at the groundbreaking for the playground at East Holladay Park the next year. It was the department's biggest project that summer.

The Portland Mercury

Hall Monitor: Dibs!

By Dirk VanderHart

September 27, 2017

YOU MIGHT have heard: Moneyed institutional investors have come to suckle at the teat of Portland's rental market, and chaos—in the form of mass evictions and drastic rent increases—has ensued.

But those investors might soon have new competition, teat-wise: the very tenants whose rents they're looking to raise.

For months, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office has been quietly working up a policy that's likely to cause intense debate over how the city wrangles its housing crisis.

Under a proposal the commissioner hopes to introduce in coming months, the city would require owners selling their rental properties to give tenants and the Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) 90 days' notice and the first chance to buy at market rate. Only if both pass up the deal would those institutional investors (and anyone else) be able to grab the property.

“The tenants get the first 60 days to determine whether they want to make this a home-ownership opportunity,” says Jamey Duhamel, Eudaly's policy director. “The last 30 days go to the city.”

It's the latest shit-stirring proposal from the office that brought Portland landlords mandatory renter relocation payments. Eudaly's folks have earned a reputation in City Hall as pugilists, happy to slug it out for their ideas.

But the “right of first refusal” proposal being hammered out behind closed doors isn't unique. It would be similar to policies in Chicago, Boston, Washington, DC, and elsewhere.

The goals, as laid out by Duhamel, are twofold. By giving tenants (living in either single-family homes or apartment buildings) the prerogative to purchase property, the city might increase homeownership. Duhamel concedes that such arrangements are unlikely until local housing nonprofits figure out how to work with tenant groups on financing.

More likely, she contends, is that the policy would give the city a jump on spending the \$258.4 million affordable housing bond approved by voters last year.

The bond promised to create or preserve 1,300 affordable units in the city, and purchases are slated to begin in October. Eudaly's people believe that giving the PHB an opportunity to buy up apartment buildings at market rate—without having to chase them on the open market—will help officials meet their goals.

“Without that kind of mechanism, they're really just racing against the clock,” Duhamel says.

This isn't going to go down easy. In the fight to force landlords to pay relocation fees, Eudaly and her staff had built council support before a fraught February hearing. There appears to be no such support base for this latest plan.

Mayor Ted Wheeler's office says it hasn't been fully briefed. PHB Director Kurt Creager, who can speak at length about similar policies elsewhere, tells me he's got no position “other than pointing out the need to manage expectations and the need to move quickly.” Others in City Hall express doubts about the idea.

Eudaly's people get that. And they don't care.

“There’s going to be a tremendous amount of skepticism,” Duhamel tells me. “How it plays out politically is secondary to our concerns.”

Portland Once Again Finds a Parasite in its Water Supply

By Dirk Vanderhart

September 27, 2017

Heavy rains returned to Portland last week. Now cryptosporidium has, too.

The Portland Water Bureau announced this afternoon that it detected crypto—a parasitic microorganism that in some forms can lead to serious health problems in humans—in a water sample taken from the Bull Run watershed on September 24.

"At this time, the bureau and public health partners at Multnomah County continue to believe Bull Run water is safe to drink," PWB Administrator Mike Stuhr said in a news release.

The detection of crypto relatively shortly after last week's heavy rains bolsters the theory that this year's obscenely wet winter is what led to 19 detections of crypto in the water supply from January to March. Those detections came rapid-fire after years of mostly crypto-free results, and led officials to surmise that downpours were washing animal waste into the water supply.

The crypto detections also put Portland out of compliance with a deal they'd struck with federal regulators in 2012 that allowed the city not to treat for the parasite. And that, in turn, led Portland officials to green light a massive filtration plant that will cost as much as \$500 million, under current estimates.

As we wrote in May, that filtration plant is far, far more than Portland would need to battle cryptosporidium (a UV plant that deactivates the threat would cost something like \$105 million). But officials approved the filtration plant anyway, basically under the theory that there's no sign that crypto is an actual problem for Portland's water, but that the federal government would force the city to act anyway.

That being the case, the City Council decided to pull out all the stops on a facility that could battle all manner of potential threats. That would include turbidity that could be caused by forest fires in the Bull Run watershed, a possibility that became all the more real when the recent Eagle Creek fire breached the watershed's boundaries.

Activists who frequently battle the city on water regulation have argued the filtration plant is unnecessary, and say the city should continue to press for an exemption to treatment.

Hit the jump for the PWB's full release:

The Portland Water Bureau received results today from a sample collected on Sept. 24 that was positive for Cryptosporidium, a potentially disease-causing microorganism. The detection was from a sample collected from the Bull Run Watershed intake as part of ongoing monitoring for Cryptosporidium. One Cryptosporidium oocyst was detected in this 10-liter sample. This is the first detection since a series of detections spanning from January to March of this year.

The Portland Water Bureau has monitored for Cryptosporidium under conditions of a variance for the treatment of Cryptosporidium issued by its regulators at the Oregon Health Authority. As a result of the detections earlier this year, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) informed the Portland Water Bureau that the variance from treating for Cryptosporidium would be revoked no later than Nov. 22, 2017. On Aug. 2, City Council directed the bureau to construct a water

filtration plant to meet the *Cryptosporidium* treatment requirements. The Portland Water Bureau will submit a schedule for construction of a filtration plant and ongoing measures to continue to protect public health to OHA by Oct. 11.

"At this time, the bureau and public health partners at Multnomah County continue to believe Bull Run water is safe to drink," said Portland Water Bureau Administrator Michael Stuhr. "We will continue to monitor for *Cryptosporidium*, protect the watershed, notify the public, and work with our health partners to make the best decisions for public health."

As always, the bureau recommends that people with severely weakened immune systems seek specific advice from their health care providers about drinking water. There is no need for the general public to take additional precautions.

"We continually monitor for human illness caused by *Cryptosporidium* but since past detections of *Cryptosporidium* oocysts in Bull Run water have not been associated with an increase in human disease, I do not expect it to be different this time," said Multnomah County Health Officer Dr. Paul Lewis.

The bureau will continue to sample the Bull Run for *Cryptosporidium*; gather information about these detections; and notify its regulators, health officials, and the public of any additional detections.

Elevators at the Justice Center Were Screwed Up For Weeks

*By Doug Brown
September 27, 2017*

For more than two weeks this month, the jail at the Multnomah County Justice Center was nearly inaccessible to defense attorneys looking to meet with clients, psychologists trying to evaluate the mental competency of the newly arrested, and family and friends hoping to visit locked-up loved ones.

The visitors' elevator at the jail broke down around September 6, and two others went down a week later—each due to unrelated pipe bursts. There are no publicly accessible stairs to the Multnomah County Detention Center, one of the county's two jails, which sits on floors four through eight of the massive downtown building.

"It was the perfect storm," says Multnomah County Facilities Manager Mark Gustafson, who oversees maintenance of the Justice Center. "We had three floods in the matter of two weeks—floods that were totally unassociated with each other. I look like the bad guy here as the facility manager, which I've been for 29 years. It really has been bad luck."

Sergeant Cathy Gorton, president of Multnomah County Corrections Deputy Association, says she was escorting two attorneys out following jail visits when she heard what sounded like a waterfall. It was the first and most detrimental of the three incidents. A pipe burst on the 16th floor, sending water down the shaft to the detention center's lone public elevator and flooding a property room in the basement, 18 floors below.

"Electronics and water don't mix very well," Gustafson says, "and when the equipment got wet it just stopped working."

From the September 6 deluge until the elevator was finally operable again last Friday, numerous urgent jail functions were put on hold—potentially keeping defendants locked up longer than necessary.

“In-person visits to the detention center are either impossible or extremely onerous to do,” one public defender told the Mercury, an account backed up by other attorneys, psychologists, and the county’s chief criminal judge. Some attorneys have been able to use the staff elevators, escorted by corrections deputies, but it’s been difficult and inconvenient, they say.

“We were already really, really limited to when we can call and visit clients,” the public defender said, requesting not to be named for fear of perception among colleagues. “When you’re dealing with misdemeanor clients, a lot of the people who are in jail are only still in jail because you haven’t gotten them to court yet. If you can’t get ahold of them to figure out if they want to take a plea, or if they have an argument about how we can get them released, they just sit there until we figure that out.”

Forensic psychologists—doctors who help determine if a defendant is mentally fit to stand trial or if they should go to a mental health facility—have also been kept away.

“For the first week or so, none of us could go in to see anybody,” one psychologist told the Mercury last week, asking not to be named for fear of burning bridges with jail staff. “Finally, we figured out we could see people on the third floor, but those rooms are usually booked, or there’s a long wait to see somebody.”

Even when they could meet with defendants, the psychologist explained they couldn’t actually have in-contact visits. The defendants and psychologists instead had to communicate through a window via phone, thwarting the ability to do necessary testing.

“If you’re trying to figure out if a person has intellectual disabilities, low intellectual function, low IQ, you can’t do that kind of testing if you’re separated by glass,” the psychologist said. Those tests require subjects to physically touch materials and use a pencil and paper, which cannot be done in “no-contact” rooms. “It’s a problem. It slowed down our ability to quickly evaluate defendants who have mental health problems and, because of that, it slows down the court process, impacting people with mental health problems to a greater extent than it impacts defendants who do not have mental health problems.”

Edward Jones, the chief criminal judge in Multnomah County, met with Sheriff Mike Reese and Gustafson last Thursday, a day before the elevator was finally fixed.

“Jail elevators are not off-the-shelf problems, parts can be hard to find,” Jones told the Mercury in an email. “It has created problems for lawyers trying to meet with their clients (some things can’t be done on the phone) and for psychologists and other experts who need to sit down with a defendant.... Bottom line: some things will be slower, and people will have to work harder, but we will get the cases resolved.”

The detentions center’s issues go beyond the one elevator. Two staff-only elevators went down after separate water leaks from faulty pipes on the 13th floor last week, Gustafson said. One of them trapped two corrections deputies and an inmate inside until Portland Fire & Rescue could spring them free.

Are three elevator-closing floods indicative of a larger complication at the Justice Center? “The problem is that it’s a 37-year-old high-rise building,” Gustafson said. “The whole issue with elevators is electronics, just like computers. We did an upgrade in 2007—so here we are 10 years later, and they’re obsolete.”

As of Friday, all elevators in the building are working. When the next faulty pipe bursts is anyone’s guess.

“In regards to elevators,” says the forensic psychologist, “all I can say is they really have their ups and downs.”

The Portland Business Journal

5 things to know, including what \$1M could get you in the age of Trump

*By Andy Giegerich
September 28, 2017*

If you find yourself in the PBJ offices today, you'll see a couple of beaming faces. Baseball will occasionally do that to you. Sometimes, it hits you when you least expect it.

With a Twin-kle in our eye, (ouch) we invite you to Cub on in (bigger ouch) and check out today's Five Things to Know.

Shoe 'nuff

The story of the week — month? year? — locally continues to be the college basketball bribery scandal that ensnared a top Adidas executive.

The PBJ's Clare Duffy is on it: Here, she presents three of the big questions remaining as more details emerge.

Legal matters

If you enjoy delving into environmental law matters, check out the decision issued this week regarding the city of Portland's dispute with Monsanto.

Essentially, it looks like the city can continue pursuing its case relating to PCBs, although it will only be able to pursue one of the four claims (that claim being "nuisance") it had sought in the longstanding matter. However, a federal judge also ruled that three of the four city arguments against

Here's the case itself. The blog Law360 has a good analysis here.

The Port of Portland is also suing Monsanto over PCBs.

Rooms to grow

Hotelier Gordon Sondland — his Provenance Hotels group includes, locally, the Heathman, Hotel Lucia, Hotel deLuxe, the Sentinel and the new Dossier — could be in line for an ambassadorship within the Trump administration.

The Oregonian has details here. A neighbor of Sondland told the publication she was interviewed by the State Department, which regularly gathers background on prospective and current workers.

It came to light in April that Sondland had quietly donated \$1 million for Trump's inauguration festivities. Many corporate entities regularly contribute money to inaugural programs regardless of the incoming president's political affiliation.

A little more than a year ago, Sondland and Bashar Wali, president of Provenance, had initially been listed among the hosts of a fundraiser for Trump. That changed after Trump feuded with

Gold Star parents Khizr and Ghazala Khan. Sondland and Wali eventually told the Oregonian they wouldn't support Trump for president.

Southern Oregon report

The Oregonian landed another compelling story today: It looks like Douglas County, "a local government so broke it closed all its public libraries earlier this year," spent federal funds on a "pro-timber" video.

Plus, "It gave \$71,000 to Wildlife Services, a federal animal trapping agency, for work that included killing bears and porcupines on public and private timber land," writes the O's Rob Davis. "The animals eat the inner bark of Douglas fir, damaging timber crops."

County Chairman Chris Boice told Davis the grants — \$250,000 went toward the videos — were for educational purposes.

Kiss me off the bus

TriMet officials said yesterday ridership numbers have dropped significantly since 2009.

As KOIN, via the Portland Tribune, reports, the figures indicate a 9 percent decline in bus ridership since 2009. The reason? Gentrification, which has changed the demographics in various service areas, resulting in, yes, fewer riders. Not to mention the rise of ride-sharing services.

The news might surprise anyone who's had to wedge themselves onto any bus that picks up riders between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. Then again, the biggest drops have come on the weekends and during off-peak hours, when ridership has dropped by some 40 percent

Portland formally joins Monsanto PCB lawsuit

The city of Portland has joined a case that charges Monsanto favored "profits over ecological and human health."

Portland becomes the eighth American city to file against Monsanto. The case relates to PCBs, of which Monsanto "was the sole U.S. manufacturer," according to a release touting the case.

The city began exploring whether to join the suit earlier this year. Two-thirds of those responding to a PBJ poll on the issue said Portland was justified in taking legal action.

"Portland's elected officials are committed to holding Monsanto accountable for its apparent decision to favor profits over ecological and human health," said Tracy Reeve, Portland's city attorney, in a release. "Monsanto profited from selling PCBs for decades and needs to take responsibility for cleaning up after the mess it created."

Portland joins the California cities of San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, San Diego and Long Beach, along with Seattle and Spokane, in filing the case. The city filed the matter in U.S. District Court.

The city "has spent and will continue to spend significant public funds as a result of PCB contamination in the Willamette River and Columbia Slough," wrote Baron & Budd, a law firm contributing to the cities' case.

From the release:

Monsanto was the sole U.S. manufacturer of PCBs, which are harmful to fish, birds and other animals. They are known carcinogens and present other health risks to humans, including damage to immune, reproductive, nervous and endocrine systems. Monsanto manufactured over

1 billion pounds of PCBs between the 1930s and the 1970s, when Congress banned PCBs because they are so dangerous. Monsanto's own documents show that Monsanto continued to sell PCBs long after it knew of the dangers they presented to human health and the natural environment.

Monsanto's Scott Partridge responded to the filing by noting that it could delay efforts to clean the Portland harbor.

"This self-serving claim was instigated by trial lawyers in search of a windfall who aggressively shopped their services to Portland government officials," said Partridge, the company's vice president of global strategy. "By joining this speculative legal scrum, city officials have signed on to an open ended commitment of Portland taxpayer resources that will drag on for years and, in the end, may only serve to uncover the fact that the city itself is responsible for discharging the PCBs.

Partridge said there's no evidence Monsanto sent any PCBs into Portland waterways.

"The contrived legal theory is grossly out of step with governing authorities, has been rejected by other courts around the country and should ultimately be rejected by the Portland court," he said. "Monsanto takes seriously its own environmental responsibilities and believes that those who spilled, released or allowed PCBs into the harbor should be held accountable for cleaning it up."

In the meantime, the St. Louis Business Journal reports that Bayer has upped its offer to buy Creve Coeur, Mo.-based Monsanto.

The Skanner

A New Vision for Albina

By Christen McCurdy

September 27, 2017

A group of volunteers has put together an ambitious new plan for Northeast Portland – one they envision as livable, equitable and taking full advantage of Willamette River access.

Group members Rukaiyah Adams, chief investment officer at Meyer Memorial Trust and Michael Alexander, the retired CEO of the Urban League and a former member of Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield's management team, unveiled drawings last week that were the result of two years of discussion and visioning by a group involving community members, developers and leaders in the business community.

The plan – which for now is called the Albina Vision – includes mixed-use buildings and dense housing that can accommodate multiple income levels, as well as easy access to amenities. Adams noted that when she commissioned the drawings, she guided illustrators to portray residents of many races, and to include cultural signifiers that show the envisioned neighborhood is not just for affluent White people.

The 20-person group – which includes Moda Health executive vice president Steve Wynne, former city commissioner and Moda public policy executive Jim Francesconi and developers John Carroll and Tom Cody, as well as retired Parks director Zari Santner — was convened two years ago by officials at Moda and the Portland Trail Blazers to investigate a possible future for the area. The region includes undeveloped property owned by the Blazers —more specifically, by Vulcan, a business development venture owned by Blazers owner Paul Allen.

Adams said the group was convened at the behest of then-Mayor Charlie Hales and that the guiding concept has been twofold: to push back against the “primacy of the car” in urban design, and to buck a longstanding trend of displacing Black communities to neighborhoods with lower property values and fewer amenities.

The plan incorporates an area situated on the north by the Broadway Bridge and the Blanchard school site, on the south by the Steel Bridge, on the west by the river, on the east by the Lloyd district.

Adams took inspiration from the city of Berlin, Germany, the Presidio in San Francisco and Battery Park City in New York, and sought to incorporate arts in the design as well as taking advantage of access to the river. It includes a new street grid that would build over the Interstate-5. (Adams and Alexander said they are “agnostic” on the proposed plan to widen the freeway.)

“This is a vision that will hopefully guide the development over decades,” Alexander said.

The project is ambitious from a design perspective, and details on the “how” are murky. But organizers also want its execution to be guided by a different set of principles than have guided Portland’s urban development in the past.

“It’s the ability to talk and to think without being constrained by, ‘How do we make the most money?’” Alexander said.

‘This is our home’

“Time doesn’t stop. We’ll continue to see change. We can either direct the change or witness it,” Alexander said. “It goes without saying there have been a number of times in the past, particularly in Northeast Portland, when the community has seen change foisted upon it, and has not felt very positively engaged, respected or treated.”

The construction of the Veterans’ Memorial Coliseum and Moda Center (originally known as the Rose Garden) is a case in point. The Veterans Memorial Coliseum opened in 1960 and was part of a series of “urban renewal” projects for which hundreds of homes, many occupied by Black families, were razed.

Or as Adams puts it, “We destroyed the homes of Black veterans to put up a monument to White veterans.”

Adams’ vision for the project includes a public memorial to the Great Migration, the historical term for the movement of African Americans from rural, Southern communities to urban communities in the North and on the West coast. That includes Portland, whose Black population grew tenfold during World War II.

Adams’ family came to Portland shortly before World War II, and she’s engaged with the project out of a sense of obligation to that history.

“Our story is a story of itinerancy. We were brought on boats, and the motion of the sea cast us upon the eastern shore of the United States. We moved northward, and east and westward voluntarily, on foot, by car, escaping violence. Then we arrive in the city (of Portland) and a flood displaces us from our original neighborhood here. Urban development pushes us north and east,” she said. “This is the first time that African Americans have been able to stop, turn around and say, ‘We’re not going anywhere. This is our home. It belongs to us.’”

What’s next?

One of the distinctions between this vision and a more traditional development master plan is that stakeholders envision a different governance structure. No official organization has been

formed, but stakeholders are mulling the creation of a nonprofit with guiding principles that can carry development into the future.

“We want the city to come to the table as a landowner, not as a regulatory authority,” Adams said. She said Hales deliberately convened the group outside of the “sausagemaker” of what was then called the Portland Development Commission, which had been accused of generating inequity in the past.

Right now, Vulcan leases the property under the Rose Quarter, but owns the river front land, and is in the process of conversations with the city to renegotiate the lease. That means next steps are “murky,” Adams said. But murky, she added, is okay.

The Albina Vision group is not the only group to cast an eye towards developing the Rose Quarter in recent years. Last fall, The Oregonian reported that a group of developers had “quietly pitched” a plan to redevelop Memorial Coliseum, which is on the National Historic Registry and is in need of repairs. Mayor Ted Wheeler has sold the I-5 redevelopment plan as an economic boon for communities of color, though no advocacy groups representing communities of color have taken positions on the subject and few citizens of color have commented.

In 2012 Portland architect and urban designer Michael McCulloch created a plan for the Portland Development Commission (now called Prosper Portland) called the Rose Quarter District Plan. The advisory group included personnel from Nike and the Trail Blazers, and included a plan to put a large running track inside the Coliseum. That plan languished, he said, because Nike never pulled the trigger.

“There’s been plan after plan after plan for this,” McCulloch said. “The problem is, architects can dream up all kinds of cool stuff and they can draw all kinds of cool stuff. That’s not a problem. Getting the political and economic forces to align, that’s the problem.” One major problem he foresees is moving the railroad, which takes up a lot of waterfront property in Northeast Portland.

But, McCulloch said, one big change can set off a chain reaction.

John Russell, who developed PacWest Center and 200 Market and has served on numerous design commissions and chaired the political committee of the Oregon Business Association, has spoken with Adams and Alexander about the Albina vision and is also skeptical, given the complexity of what the stakeholder group has in mind.

But he noted that Paul Allen’s involvement in the project is an encouraging indicator. Allen was instrumental in the redevelopment of South Lake Union in Seattle, an area Russell describes as a “jewel” which was previously duntrodden.

“Allen has some experience that gives me some optimism that his development company, Vulcan, is willing and has the knowledge to do some dramatic things,” Russell said.

Alexander and Adams acknowledge the current version of their plan is light on specifics. But they’re also in it for the long haul – for the Portland of a few generations from now.

“We’re impressing our cultural values on our economy. We’re saying that our commonwealth here is really, really important,” Adams said. We don’t want to just drive individual wealth through a development plan where people will name buildings after their English children’s names. We’re not trying to drive individual wealth, although there will be tons of contracting opportunities and tons of wealth-building in this, what we’re really saying is we want to build community up here. We want to be intentional about that.”

Police Bureau Seeks Volunteers for Training Advisory Council

*Police Bureau
September 27, 2017*

The Portland Police Bureau is seeking volunteers to serve on its Training Advisory Council; there currently are eight vacant positions. This council was established in 2012 by the Portland City Council to advise the Chief of Police on training standards, practices, and outcomes by examining training content, delivery, tactics, policy, tools, equipment and facilities.

The Training Advisory Council meets a minimum of six times a year. Meetings are at the Portland Police Bureau Training Complex at 14912 NE Airport Way on the second Wednesday of every other month starting in January. Members are occasionally expected to commit additional flexible hours outside of regular meetings. The term of service is two years.

Selected applicants will be required to undergo a standard criminal background check and will participate in a series of orientation activities that will prepare them to be an effective member of the council. Selected members will also need to provide a brief public biography.

The application deadline is October 20, 2017.

The application can be downloaded at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/656174>.