

The Oregonian

Portland Building Redo On Time, On Budget, City Says

By Gordon Friedman

September 11, 2018

Reconstruction of the Portland Building is going swimmingly, city officials said Tuesday at a work session for the mayor and commissioners.

"We are ahead of time and on budget," said Tom Rinehart, the city's chief administrative officer.

The top-to-bottom renovation of the downtown city office building adorned with the famous statue "Portlandia" should be complete by 2020, said project manager Kristin Wells. The renovation will cost \$195 million at most.

The Portland City Council voted in 2015 for a total renovation of the iconic, if controversial, office building where more than 1,000 city employees usually work. At the time, the building was only 33 years old yet in desperate need of repair.

City employees have since moved to leased office spaces to make way for construction crews, and a yellow tower crane rises up through the center of the 15-story building. Once updated, the Portland Building is expected to be in city service for another 50 to 100 years.

The fact that the massive renovation remains on budget is notable, given the white-hot competition in the construction market. Portland Public Schools has said its voter-approved effort to remake four schools, starting with Madison High and Kellogg Middle School next year, is about \$100 million over budget already.

Old Town Building Selected as Portland's Latest Housing Bond Acquisition

By Elliot Njus

September 11, 2018

Portland's housing bureau will buy, tear down and replace an Old Town apartment building to house low-income renters.

The Westwind apartment building, at 333 N.W. Sixth Ave., would be the fifth acquisition funded by the housing bond the city's voters approved in 2016. The site will cost \$3 million, and construction will bring the project cost to about \$20 million.

In addition to housing bond funds, the project will also draw from the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Area, and Multnomah County has dedicated \$4 million from the sale of the county's Wapato Jail toward the project.

The purchase will go to the Portland City Council for approval this fall.

The Westwind, built in 1903, has long served low-income tenants under private ownership through its below-market rents, even as the property's condition has languished. It's currently owned by a trust controlled by Pennie Narver of Newberg.

Housing Bureau director Shannon Callahan said the building would need renovations in the short interim to bring it up to the city's safety and livability standards, but the 40 to 50 people currently living in the building would likely be able to remain while the work is underway.

Although the building eventually would be torn down, Portland housing officials said its replacement would preserve the low-barrier housing it has provided for single residents and couples. It would also offer on-site mental health and addiction services, part of an effort to help recently homeless residents stay housed.

The city hopes to find alternate housing for Westwind residents during the replacement project.

The city previously paid \$47 million in housing bond funds to buy The Ellington, a 263-unit apartment complex near Northeast 66th Avenue and Halsey. That complex, built in the 1940s, also needed millions of dollars in repairs.

It later announced the acquisition of two plots of land to build new affordable housing projects. It paid \$3.7 million for the site of a former strip club at Southeast 30th Avenue and Powell Boulevard with plans to build 200 to 300 units. And it paid \$500,000 for a 19,000-square-foot lot at 5827 N.E. Prescott St. with plans to build 50 units there. The cost of construction for those two projects hasn't been finalized.

And in June, the city announced it would pay \$14.3 million from the housing bond for a newly constructed 51-unit building at 10506 E. Burnside St.

As of July, the city was in talks over at least three other sites, which haven't been identified for fear of upsetting sale negotiations.

When it went before voters, Portland officials said the housing bond would pay for 1,300 new affordable units by 2023. The Westwind project brings the count to 630, but many of those units have yet to be built.

Mayor Selects Members for New Police Oversight Committee

*By Maxine Bernstein
September 11, 2018*

Mayor Ted Wheeler Tuesday identified the 13 people he selected to serve on the new Committee on Community-Engaged Policing, set up to meet the terms of a city settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice.

More than 100 people applied for the volunteer seats. A selection advisory team made recommendations to the mayor. Wheeler, a federal civil rights attorney and members of Wheeler's staff interviewed applicants.

The mayor said he hopes the committee will "better engage the community" in helping develop policies on racial justice, constitutional policing and mental health issues.

"I am completely confident in the abilities, perspectives and experiences of every single ... appointee to take on this challenging and meaningful work," Wheeler said in a statement. "This is about more than the settlement agreement: The (committee) represents a unique and important opportunity to improve the community's relationship with the Portland Police Bureau."

The committee will hold a retreat and its members will receive training before holding its first meeting in November, the mayor said.

Those selected are:

- Yolanda Clay, who is on the leadership development program of the REACH affordable housing community.
- Lakayna Drury, a high school social studies teacher at Rosemary Anderson High School who directed a group called "Word is Bond," which started to address the shootings of unarmed black men by police by drawing local leaders and police together.
- LaKeesha Dumas, a community health care worker and peer support specialist who works for Multnomah County's mental health and addiction services division.
- Robert Dye, senior general manager of Lloyd Center.
- Sharon Gary-Smith, a retired former executive of the McKenzie River Gathering Foundation and served as director of special projects for Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare for nearly two years. She also was a director of self-help programs for the National Black Women's Health Project.
- Aden Hassan, a dialysis technician at Fresenius Medical Care North America.
- Andrew Kalloch, a former ACLU attorney in New York and a former deputy policy director for the New York City controller who now does public policy work for Airbnb.
- Michelle Lang, associate director of campus ministries for Warner Pacific College.
- Patrick Nolen, a former community organizer for Sisters of the Road; also was on the board of directors for Empowerment Initiatives.
- Sam Sachs, a former Portland park ranger and former Portland human rights commissioner who chaired the group's community police and relations committee; now hosts a monthly "Breaking Bread" dinner for community members and police and founded a group called the "No Hate Zone."
- Zachary Thornhill, a Multnomah County social worker who serves as a pre-commitment investigator. He previously worked as a behavioral health therapist for Legacy Health.
- Two high-school aged youths, Kalongji Williams and Sebastian Chevalier.

The Portland Tribune

Home Builder Fights PBOT's Duplex Driveway Policy

*By Jim Redden
September 12, 2018*

Local family wants separate driveway for each unit, but Portland Bureau of Transportation says only one is allowed.

In a classic David versus Goliath fight, a small, family-owned home-building business is challenging a year-old driveway policy adopted by the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

Valhalla Custom Homes has asked the state Land Conservation and Development Commission to prohibit PBOT from enforcing the policy, which requires that new duplexes be served by only one driveway instead of two.

Mari Ives, general counsel for Valhalla Custom Homes, argues PBOT did not have the legal authority to adopt the policy, in large part because it imposes design requirements on duplexes in addition to those set forth in city building codes.

"We cannot do any work now because all our money is tied up in two properties where we intended to build duplexes with two driveways each, which is what the other codes allow and what people want," Ives says. She is also the wife and mother of the company's co-owners, her husband Gary and their sons Chris and Jonathan.

"My husband is 65 and I'm 64 and we're using our retirement savings to support the company now. I know what we're doing sounds stubborn, but I feel we have an obligation to do it, especially in today's political climate where some government officials believe they are above the law," Ives says.

The City Attorney's Office declined to comment on the challenge, saying the city does not comment on pending litigation.

The Portland Tribune first reported on the dispute between Valhalla and PBOT on May 15. At that time, Ives said the company intended to ask the LCDC to prohibit PBOT from enforcing the policy, but had not yet done so. Since then, the City Attorney's Office sent Valhalla a lengthy letter that Ives says actually supports much of the company's position. After much of that, Gregory Hathaway, an attorney hired by Valhalla, sent the state land use planning agency the request for a hearing by certified mail on Aug. 22.

Under state land use planning laws, the LCDC must decide whether a hearing on the request is justified within 45 days of receiving the letter. If it decides to hold a hearing, the issue must be resolved within 120 days of receiving the letter.

Ives says she is confident the company will win if LCDC grants the hearing.

"If they don't, we'll sell the properties and do business in Clackamas County or somewhere else where the rules are clear," Ives says. "We'll have to work longer than we planned to earn back the retirement money we're spending."

The policy was adopted by PBOT's Development Review Division on May 31, 2017. Until then, builders could choose where to locate the driveways and garages. There could either be two driveways and garages on the outside edges of the structures, or one funnel-shaped driveway leading to two garages in the center.

PBOT says the policy is intended to preserve on-street parking by reducing the number of curb cuts from two to one. The city code allowed PBOT to adopt policies to preserve on-street parking. But Ives says state land use planning laws and rules require clear housing construction policies, a mandate the PBOT policy violates.

You can read the previous Portland Tribune story [here](#).

Fallen Heroes Honored at 9/11 Ceremony in Portland

*By Zane Sparling
September 11, 2018*

17th anniversary of the September 11 terror attacks marked, mourned at Portland Firehouse 21.

Never forget.

Those words were proclaimed and silently prayed by the dignitaries and first responders who tramped in from the rain and gathered for a solemn ceremony inside Firehouse 21 on Tuesday, Sept. 11 in Southeast Portland.

City officials and the public marked and mourned the 17th-anniversary of the terror attacks that changed the nation — and the world — in 2001. Almost 3,000 people died, and twice as many were injured during four separate attacks in New York City, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Tamara Eidler, a firefighter in Portland for the last eight years, carried a gleaming axe as other members of the honor guard proceeded forward and saluted the flag. A bagpiper carried the tune.

"I just feel honored being part of it," she said of the ceremony, which paid special attention to the 343 firefighters and 60 police officers who were killed after two hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center almost two decades ago.

More than two-thirds of the fallen firefighters were inside the South Tower — many storming up flights of stairs while others worked in a temporary command post set up in the building's lobby.

"That leadership and that bravery continues to this day," said Mayor Ted Wheeler.

Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the city's fire department, praised the heroism of the first responders.

"It is our day of infamy," Saltzman said. "On this day, too, we are all New Yorkers."

Commissioner Nick Fish, who was born and raised in the Big Apple, noted that he lost friends and acquaintances on that dreadful day. His brother was living in an apartment building "in the shadow of the World Trade Center" and had to evacuate for more than a year.

"This was as defining a moment for me as it was for everyone in our generation," Fish said.

Someday, a memorial to 36 local firefighters who died in the line of duty and 37 who succumbed to service-related illnesses will stand just north of Firehouse 21, 5 S.E. Madison St., near the Hawthorne Bridge and the Eastbank Esplanade.

The David Campbell Memorial Association continues to raise funds for the project.

"We gather here to honor and remember those who exchanged their lives for the safety of others," said Terry Shanley, the board president of the association.

Willamette Week

Portland Officials Pledged to Reform Their Policy of Towing Recovered Cars. Nothing Happened for Eight Months.

*By Katie Shepherd
September 12, 2018*

That reform is moving slower than a Chevy Nova—and the police say they have no timeline for action.

Last Christmas, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler pledged to pursue changes to a Portland Police Bureau policy that requires the towing of cars recovered after they've been stolen.

That reform is moving slower than a Chevy Nova—and the police say they have no timeline for action.

The policy, first reported by WW in December, costs the victims of crimes hundreds of dollars, because they have to pay to get their recovered vehicles out of tow lots ("Held for Ransom," WW, Dec. 20, 2017). Those victims tend to be working-class people, because the most commonly stolen cars are older economy models like Honda Civics.

More than eight months after vowing to reform its policy, the bureau still hasn't changed its directive on recovering stolen vehicles. Here's how slowly the cops are moving.

Dec. 20, 2017

After questions from WW, Mayor Ted Wheeler pledges to discuss changing Portland Police Bureau policy to have stolen cars towed, relieving some of the expense for low-income Portlanders.

Dec. 21, 2017

The bureau announces it will seek public feedback on its stolen vehicle directive, starting the process of changing the city's policy to tow recovered cars.

Jan. 1, 2018

Portland racks up more motor vehicle thefts in 2017 than the city has seen in 20 years.

Feb. 7, 2018

The public feedback period ends, and the City Auditor's Office advises the Police Bureau that ending its policy to tow recovered vehicles could cost the city \$600,000 in surcharges paid by theft victims when they reclaim their cars.

Sept. 12, 2018

The Police Bureau and the mayor have no timeline for when the policy change will be completed. Meanwhile, 3,851 people reported their vehicles stolen in Portland between January and July. Police recovered 91 percent of those stolen cars—and under the agency's current policy, officers still call a tow truck if the owner can't show up within 30 minutes.

“I Hear Restrooms In the Remodeled Portland Building May Be ‘All-Gender.’ What Problem Is This Solving?”

By Marty Smith
September 12, 2018

There is an exasperatingly persistent belief among people of a certain age—even ones who consider themselves progressive—that the entire gender-identity revolution of the past 20 years is somehow just an amazingly elaborate plot to sneak into the girls’ locker room.

I hear restrooms in the remodeled Portland Building may be "all-gender." I'm fine with trans women in the ladies room, but I don't want male colleagues there. What problem is this solving? Was the trans community included in this "solution"? —Pee Shy

There is an exasperatingly persistent belief among people of a certain age—even ones who consider themselves progressive—that the entire gender-identity revolution of the past 20 years is somehow just an amazingly elaborate plot to sneak into the girls' locker room.

I recently had someone on a Reed College alumni message board—not usually a hotbed of socially conservative thought—try to convince me trans activists were out of control by drawing my attention to a statement on the Stonewall website: "If you think trans women aren't real women, you're transphobic."

I suspect some of my readers might be inclined, like my unwoke classmate, to protest this assertion. But before you embarrass yourself, compare a similar statement: "If you think gay men aren't real men, you're homophobic." If that's not self-evident enough for you, try: "If you think black people aren't real people, you're racist."

I contacted the city's Office of Management and Finance, which is overseeing the Portland Building remodel. In a terse reply, officials said the trans community had indeed been consulted (I winced a bit to see the words "trans community" in scare quotes) and that the restrooms were being constructed so they could be gendered later in whatever configuration deemed necessary.

This suggests the deeming has not been finalized, Shy, so you might consider a strongly worded letter. Or, I suppose, you could take your case directly to the media.

It sure seems as though the city is ducking an opportunity to take a stand. Rather than simply acknowledging trans women are women, it is sidestepping the whole controversy by abandoning gendered restrooms altogether.

This strikes me as a bit cowardly, like a public park in the Jim Crow South hoping to split the difference by just not having a swimming pool. Seriously, Portland, this is not a fence that needs straddling. Take the plunge; the water's fine.

The Portland Mercury

Two Fun Updates to City Transportation Rules!

By Alex Zielinski
September 11, 2018

"Readers will like this!" according to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly. Eudaly has been in charge of Portland's Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) for exactly one week, which means she's been

swimming through meetings to get oriented with a department that boasts an annual budget of around \$550 million and nearly 1,000 employees. But the slog of getting up to speed comes with some gems: Like two small PBOT updates she promises Mercury readers will definitely like.

First, PBOT's getting rid of leaf collection fees! That means you'll no longer be stuck with a bill for not cleaning up leaves that fall in front of your property (if you own property, lol). According to Eudaly, that was one of the biggest complaints she's heard from people about PBOT policies—and it has been for a while. Remember when leaf fees became a central debate of Portland's 2011 mayoral race? The fees, which range from \$15 to 65, were meant to offset the city cost of clearing soggy leaves out of clogged storm drains. But, as it turns out, it's more costly for city employees to check that people who opt out of the fees are actually sweeping up leaves on their own. Back to square one—with less fees!

Surprise number two: PBOT's installing a bike corral at Portland City Hall! A single on-street parking spot outside of city hall will be replaced with a row of bike racks (called a corral) for between 12 and 24 bikes. The street will be adorned with a stencil of a bicycle gear with heart in the middle and the critical mass logo. Eudaly says its a tribute to the bike activists who turned Portland into the bike-friendly city it is today. Portland currently has 149 bike corrals spread across the city, but only a few lonely poles to lock your bike up to outside city hall. Suck it, cars!

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Portland to Develop Old Town Site as Housing Effort Builds

*By Andy Giegerich
September 12, 2018*

Portland's Housing Bureau and Multnomah County are looking to convert an Old Town apartment building into a site that serves those hoping to exit homelessness.

The Westwind Apartments, at Northwest Sixth Avenue and Flanders Street, currently serve "extremely-low income and vulnerable tenants." The conversion to a new housing form, with support services, would be backed by the city's Housing Bond and Multnomah County, which will pour \$4 million into the effort.

The Oregonian put the project cost at \$20 million. The Housing Bond seeks to add 1,300 units of affordable housing by 2023. The Westwind purchase puts the effort at 630 units.

The Housing Bond, passed in 2016, promised 1,300 units of affordable housing by 2023. The Westwind will mark the fifth Bond project to move forward to date, totaling more than 630 units of permanently affordable housing planned or purchased under the Bond so far.

The City Council must still approve the purchase.