



Grant Park

Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

Summer 2024

This Newsletter Is in Jeopardy: Your Support Urgently Needed!

As a fellow member of the Grant Park community, I am reaching out with an important and urgent request. Our neighborhood has always been a wonderful place to live, filled with a strong sense of community, safety, and shared values. However, to maintain and enhance our beloved neighborhood, the Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) needs your support.

GPNA is currently undergoing a significant transition. We are moving from our previous coalition, which included 9 neighborhood associations, to a new coalition that encompasses nearly 30 associations. While we fully support the new government structure's emphasis on equity, this change will significantly impact our funding. The new distribution model prioritizes underserved areas, which, while essential, means we need to secure additional funding to maintain our current initiatives.

Over the past year, GPNA has been dedicated to organizing community events, addressing local concerns, and improving our shared spaces. We've hosted clean-up events, coordinated with the City for a successful dumpster day, and held public meetings to address land use issues. Our efforts are driven by a passion for making Grant Park a better place for everyone.

However, our current financial situation is challenging. Despite our best efforts to raise funds through advertising fees and other means, we are facing a significant shortfall. Last year, we ended with a net negative income of \$1500, and this year, we project a shortfall of around \$1000. To continue our work and support new initiatives, we urgently need your help.

One of the first casualties of budget cuts would be our ability to produce our quarterly newsletters, a vital source of information and connection for our community. We are reaching out to you, our neighbors, to ask for donations to help bridge this gap. Your contribution, no matter the size, will make a meaningful difference. It will enable us to continue organizing community events, addressing local issues, and ensuring that Grant Park remains a wonderful place to live.

Donating is easy. You can visit our website at paypal.me/GPNAPdx to make a secure online donation, mail a check to P.O. Box 13102 Portland, OR 97213, or you can bring your donation to our next community meeting.

Thank you so much for considering this request. Your generosity will help us continue to foster a strong, vibrant, and engaged Grant Park community.

Kara Caselas
GPNA Treasurer/Secretary

An Apartment Building on Any Lot?

By Ramona Perrault

Now that we have your attention... in the Spring 2024 newsletter, we shared information about the city's Housing Production Strategy (HPS) and the history behind this state requirement. As previously described, the City of Portland must

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- September 10, 2024
- November 12, 2024

LOCATION:

We are now holding hybrid meetings. The in-person meeting location is Grant Park Church. To obtain the agenda and the Zoom meeting link, go to the meetings page on our website, grantpark-na.org.

MEETINGS:

GPNA holds elections at the Annual Meeting in March. Necessary special or emergency meetings may be scheduled at any time. Meetings are open to the public. ALL adults living, working, or attending high school within its boundaries are members of Grant Park Neighborhood Association. If you need special accommodation, please contact a Board member.

GPNA

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

President:

Molly Hamill

Vice President:

Ramona Perrault

Secretary:

Kara Caselas

Treasurer:

Kara Caselas

Land Use Chair:

Neon Brooks

Newsletter Editor:

Stacey Tipp

At Large:

*Mary Artz, Linda Burch,
Jill De Rosa, Tom Fawell,
Laurene Mullen, Bikram Vaidya,
Miro Wesener, Jake Wicks*

Contact the Board at:

general@grantpark-na.org

Land Use Update - Your Feedback and Advocacy are Needed!

By Neon Brooks

Grant Bowl Lighting Update

Through the Grant Bowl Community Coalition (GBCC), Grant High School parents and student athletes have been advocating to Portland Public Schools (PPS) to install lighting at the Grant Bowl as soon as possible to facilitate later practices and games. While initial PPS estimates put the cost of lighting at 2.5 million dollars, a memo presented at the PPS Facilities and Operations board meeting on May 31st put the price at \$830,000, with a timeline of approximately 12 months from project approval to the end of construction. **At the May 31st meeting, PPS agreed to move the Grant Bowl Lighting process to the design and permitting phase**, with the GBCC agreeing to fundraise to cover the costs of the project.

GPNA has been tracking this process and doing our own outreach to Commissioner Rubio's office and the Portland Bureau of Development Services (BDS) to understand the public input process for any lighting proposal. At this point we expect the proposal will require Type III Land Use Review (<https://tinyurl.com/type3landuse>), which includes opportunities for public comment and requires that the project show mitigation of neighborhood impacts. Mitigation measures can include restrictions on hours of use and noise, stipulations regarding garbage cans and cleanup, and safety improvements.

The GPNA board has taken a position *in support of lighting for the bowl with appropriate mitigation of impacts on the immediate neighbors*. Accordingly, we are actively working to ensure a mutually agreeable set of mitigation measures is in place as early as possible in this proposal process.

We are currently seeking neighbor input into the mitigation measures you would (or would not) like to see for the lighting at the bowl. Please email me your feedback (gplanduse@gmail.com). Feedback will be collated and shared with interested neighbors, as well as with relevant stakeholders. **Additionally, GPNA and**

GBCC have agreed to hold a public meeting *prior to the submission of the land use application* to allow all stakeholders to have a voice in the process from the outset. Sign up for our mailing list at <http://grantpark-na.org> to ensure you are notified of any future meetings on this topic.

Traffic Safety on US Grant Place and Knott Street

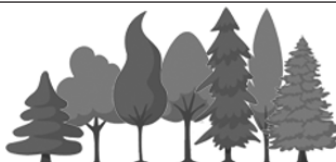
Through the advocacy of concerned neighbors, GPNA has been in discussions with PBOT about improving safety on US Grant Place. We have asked PBOT to investigate the possibility of crosswalks at the 35th Ave and 36th Ave intersections, and to implement the option which would have the greatest positive impact on pedestrian safety. We have also requested that PBOT consider removing low-lying vegetation at the traffic circles at these intersections to improve visibility. We expect a response from PBOT soon.

PBOT also reached out to GPNA regarding restriping of the centerlines on Knott Street between Martin Luther King Boulevard and 42nd Avenue. A neighbor notified them that the street had not been striped in some time, and PBOT determined it had been on a list to not restripe, but they could not determine why. The city plans to restripe the street west of 33rd where it is categorized as a collector street, and is also considering striping the street east of 33rd Avenue. The GPNA land use committee informed PBOT that our primary concern on Knott Street is pedestrian safety. Without clear evidence that restriping will improve safety, we worry that restriping will make drivers feel more comfortable traveling at unsafe speeds on Knott, reducing safety for people trying to walk across. While PBOT appears inclined to restripe the street despite our concerns, they appear to be receptive to adding additional crosswalks or removing parking at intersections. GPNA would like to work to address this, but as volunteers our bandwidth is limited. **If you are interested in helping**

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Contributing to this Newsletter

For information on letters to the editor and how to submit an article to this newsletter, as well as newsletter advertising and advertising rates, please go to the newsletters page on our website:
www.grantpark-na.org



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Your information will be kept confidential and never shared.

Teen Rediscovered Local History

By Stacey Tipp

Think you know the history of your neighborhood and its surrounding communities in NE Portland? Have you heard of the ghost street that runs right through the sports field behind Beverly Cleary School? Did you know there's a giant concrete milk bottle (once the largest in the world) hidden and wrapped away inside the Director's Mortgage building on the corner of NE Sandy and NE 37th Avenue?

One young man who's becoming an expert on the past lives of our old buildings and sharing what he finds on social media, is Lem Rosenzweig. Recently I got to talk to Lem and his dad, Jed, interviewing them under the watchful eye of their chihuahua, Squirrel.

Lem, age 13, is just finishing up 7th grade at Beverly Cleary School. Not quite a Portland native, Lem was born in Seattle, and has lived with his family in Grant Park since 2013. Lem's interest in the history of local buildings was actually sparked by a Grant Park Neighborhood Association newsletter article from Spring 2019 on the closing of the old QFC store on NE 33rd Avenue.

If you head to Lem's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@lemspdxadventures), you can watch Lem's short movies on the hidden history of Portland's Hollywood Theatre, NE Portland's buried (ghost) street, and a tour of the old Steigerwald Milk Bottle Building (with the giant hidden milk bottle!). The projects are all driven by Lem's interests, and he is shown onscreen and narrates

the films. But the projects are a definite collaboration between Lem and his dad, which is a good thing as there are a lot of different skills involved in making these movies, including historical research, script writing, drone/camerawork, and negotiating building access.



Lem on top of the Hollywood Theater

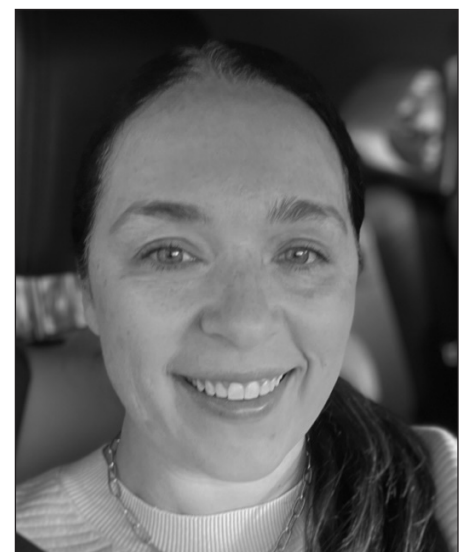
When I asked Lem what he thought he might like to do for a career when he grows up (historian, architect, film maker, and writer all came to mind), he said he's not sure. But he would like to live in New York, which he loves because of all the interesting buildings. Lem's next project is on our local favorite landmark, the old Gordon's Fireplace Shop! Maybe one day Lem will be able to report a happy ending for this eyesore. Who knows?

Neighborhood Association Board Changes

By Stacey Tipp

There have been some changes lately to the composition of the Grant Park Neighborhood Association board. Molly Hamill has taken over as president of the association from Stacey Tipp, who remains on the board as newsletter editor. At-large board member Remington Evert recently resigned from the board, and we are thankful for his service and will miss his energy and great sense of humor.

But the board also recently gained a new at-large member, Miro Wesener. Miro and her family have lived in Grant Park for the last two years. She is originally from California. She moved to the Portland area 20 years ago from Australia where she met her husband while she was doing marine research. She has two girls, one who attends Grant High School and one who attends Alliance High School at Meek. She enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, or local activities with them. She loves living in the neighborhood and all its proximity to things has to offer. She is very active in the local area, sitting on several boards and councils.



Miro Wesener

Land Use Update, continued

GPNA advocate for pedestrian safety improvements on Knott Street, please reach out to gplanduse@gmail.com.

One simple step neighbors can take to improve pedestrian safety on our streets is to report violations of parking visibility areas. On US Grant Place, for example, parking is prohibited 30 feet from any intersection, but this restriction is frequently violated. **PBOT recommends regularly reporting illegally parked vehicles to Parking Enforcement at 503-823-5195.** Parking enforcement relies on reports to alert them to specific issues. When calling, they request location information and vehicle make and model, color, and license plate (if known).

Planned AT&T Cell Towers

Following concerns voiced by neighbors about negative impacts of a planned AT&T project that would build two radio frequency cell towers on Knott Street at 33rd Ave and 35th Place, the GPNA board voted at the May 14th GPNA Board meeting to send a letter to AT&T (cc'ing relevant city government officials) asking them to explore alternative locations for these towers. The GPNA board believes that the proposed location of these towers would concentrate

impacts on a small number of residents, and suggests that AT&T explore locating the towers in Grant Park, closer to the prior location of the tower (in the Grant High School smokestack), or perhaps near the newly proposed stadium lighting.

And Ending with a Win - Drainage Improvements at 33rd and Thompson!

After years of contending with a puddle that made the sidewalk nearly impassable at 33rd and Thompson, the city has implemented a beautiful and comprehensive drainage solution. GPNA is thankful for the neighbors who have repeatedly brought this issue up to the city for years, especially to Matt Morrissey, who brought the issue to the attention of GPNA so we could advocate for solutions as well. Every time we brought this up to the city we seemed to run into a dead end, until one day we saw PBOT trucks at the intersection. When we reached out to our contacts at PBOT, we were told, "It appears that based on the community reports, PBOT's Maintenance Operations group is replacing the sidewalk at a higher elevation to aid with drainage." We wish this solution could have come much sooner, but it is a good reminder that consistently reporting these kinds of issues can make a difference.



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An Apartment Building on Any Lot?, continued

provide the State a strategy to encourage the development of over 120,000 housing units by 2045.

It is important for neighbors to know that advocates are working hard to shape the HPS according to their vision for the city, including NE Portland. For example, there is a very active group called Portland Neighbors Welcome (PNW) that GPNA believes will have a significant impact on the final HPS. PNW's vision is on their webpage, <https://portlandneighborswelcome.org/>:

Our vision is simple: it should be legal for any residential lot from roughly 12th to 60th, Fremont to Powell, to contribute to a thriving, mixed-income,

mixed-use fabric of urban neighborhoods by allowing street-scale apartment buildings.

Whether you agree with this vision or not, it impacts YOU and the GPNA community. GPNA has not taken a position on the HPS or the PNW proposal. Please take some time to educate yourself and share your thoughts with the city. GPNA is always interested to hear from you, too. Learn more on the city's webpage, <https://www.portland.gov/bps/planning/housing-production/about#toc-about-the-hps>, and stay informed about opportunities to provide input. GPNA will remain engaged and encourages you to attend our meetings.



Grant Park Church

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Be a Part of Our Community

**Attend an upcoming
Grant Park Neighborhood
Association meeting:**

- September 10, 2024
- November 12, 2024

LOCATION:

We are now holding hybrid meetings.

The in-person meeting location is Grant Park Church. To obtain the agenda and the Zoom meeting link, go to the meetings page on our website, grantpark-na.org.

Update on Gordon's

By Ramona Perrault

GPNA continues to meet with city staff about the deteriorating state of the old Gordon's building on NE 33rd and NE Broadway, and it appears our efforts are paying off.

The City has been fining the landowner regularly, and there is currently a \$28,000 civil penalty and lien against the property. As of this writing, the Portland City Council is considering an ordinance on June 5 supporting foreclosure on the property and directing the City Treasurer to begin foreclosure proceedings. This is a very important step in removing the absent and uninterested landowner and putting the fate of this property into the hands of the City.

We will provide an update on our website once the City Council has voted.



Manning the Hollywood Farmer's Market community booth on June 1, GPNA members encouraged neighbors to press the city to foreclose on Gordon's



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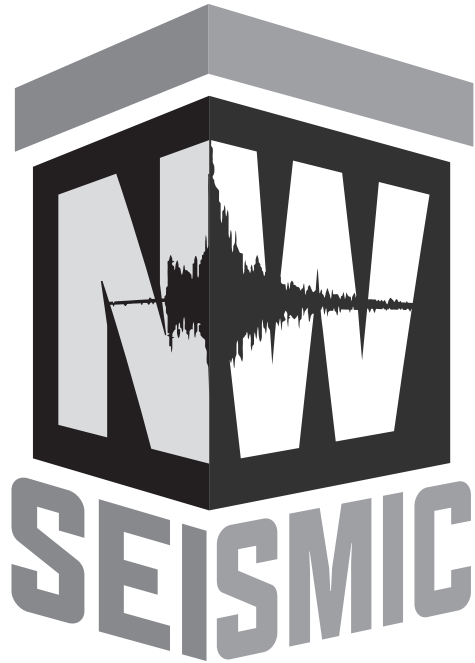
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New Pastor at Grant Park Church

Grant Park neighbors,

My name is Ari Grubner (29, he/him/his) and I am the new pastor at Grant Park Church. Thank you for welcoming me warmly as your new neighbor! I have had the opportunity to meet some of you as I have explored the neighborhood, admired your gardens and creative homemaking, and introduced myself to your pets at the park.

I came to Portland by way of North Carolina, though I spent most of my life living outside of Chicago. After finishing my Masters in Divinity from Wake Forest University, a program centering justice, compassion, and reconciliation, I made the move coast-to-coast here to Portland. As a solo-traveler, it was a pretty light move! I am beginning to settle in.

What is the deal with the new pastor in the neighborhood?

Friends describe me as someone who is thoughtful and sometimes funny. I love animals and I adore birds in particular. I am always on the search for a good story located in an odd place. I enjoy all kinds of games and especially enjoy ones I am good at. When it comes to soccer, and the English Premier League specifically, I could go on for days about my love for the game! Treating people well and being oriented around people is important to me. I find myself coming alive when getting to support people tangibly in their lives – spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, socially, at home and in their family, and the other places we find ourselves needing genuine support. I believe kindness is real and I had some for breakfast this morning.



Ari Grubner

As a queer, openly gay pastor, I wholeheartedly believe folks when they describe their experiences with church as “complicated.” That is how I describe my experience, at least. As a pastor, I would rather be excluded because of who I include than be included because of who I exclude. I have high hopes for local church communities to be recognizably safe and sacred spaces for anybody looking for such a thing.

As the pastor at Grant Park Church, I am committed to not losing sight of Grant Park at the foundation of this neighborhood Church. I hope to be a good neighbor to you, beyond the walls of the church building, and not just on Sunday mornings. I find your neighborhood to be quite wonderful and I hope to contribute genuinely to what makes Grant Park as wonderful as it is.

I look forward to getting to meet you if we have not met yet! You will likely find me “out in the wild” at nearby coffee shops in the morning, local watering holes in the evening, at the park listening for birds on weekends, or taking walks around 34th and Knott. Please always feel free to say hello!

Peace and goodness to you and to yours,
Pastor Ari Grubner

HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER!

