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Neighborhood Association

## Rezoning Plan Moves Forward

By Eldo Varghese, GPNA Land Use Chair & Stacey Tipp, Newsletter Editor

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the City Council unanimously approved a resolution to expedite zoning changes to Portland’s Inner Eastside. The Inner Eastside covers the area from roughly 12<sup>th</sup> to 60<sup>th</sup> Ave. from NE Fremont to SE Powell and includes all of the Grant Park neighborhood. The resolution requires the city administrator to create a report within 90 days that shows how the City could speed up the rezoning process, with a new zoning map ready by June 2027.

According to the City website, “the primary intent of the Inner Eastside Zoning Project is to change zoning to allow for a greater diversity of housing to be built in Portland’s Inner Eastside. This will help make this desirable area more accessible to people with a broad range of incomes ... expanding the areas where multi-dwelling housing and mixed-use development can be built will allow more people to live in the area.”

Under the proposal, the details of which are still being refined, virtually every residential lot in our neighborhood would be upzoned to allow the construction of residential multi-dwelling housing units. The plan envisages a gradual densification of the neighborhood. The edges of our neighborhood, around major corridors like Broadway, will permit larger mixed-use commercial/ apartment buildings. The inner core of the neighborhood will upzone to allow smaller-scale apartment buildings.

The Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) has reported on the rezoning since we were first apprised of the proposal. But the issue did not really break through with neighbors until the April 15<sup>th</sup> resolution was passed and reported more widely in the news. Concerned neighbors, many of whom were learning about the proposal for the first time, and troubled about the lack of outreach, asked that the GPNA devote time to discussing the issue at our May 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting. The GPNA meeting included guest Heidi Hart, a member of the group Portland Neighbors Welcome (<https://portlandneighborswelcome.org/>), that has been championing this rezoning plan from its inception.

Concerned Grant Park neighbors have now set up a website, [savenepdx.com](http://savenepdx.com), for residents who want to learn more about the rezoning plan, receive plan updates, and make their voices heard, whether they oppose it, support it, or want changes made to the plan details. Please note that GPNA is not affiliated with, nor have we verified the information available on either of these websites.

The GPNA board has not taken a formal position in support of or in opposition to the rezoning plan. GPNA encourages our neighbors to attend our meetings to voice your opinions on matters of importance to you, help us better represent our neighborhood’s interests with the City, and to address livability, land use, and transportation issues within our boundaries.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- September 8, 2026
- November 10, 2026
- January 12, 2027
- March 9, 2027

### LOCATION:

Meetings start at 7:00 pm and end at or before 9:00 pm. 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](http://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. If you need special accommodation, please contact a Board member.

### GPNA

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD:

##### President:

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##### Vice President:

*Miro Wesener*

##### Secretary:

*Ari Grubner*

##### Treasurer:

*David Richardson*

##### Land Use Chair:

*Eldo Varghese*

##### Newsletter Editor:

*Stacey Tipp*

##### At Large:

*Jill De Rosa, Steve Haines,  
Daniel Hoyer*

##### Contact the Board at:

[general@grantpark-na.org](mailto:general@grantpark-na.org)

## Grant Park Community Approves Change in GPNA Non-Profit Status

By David Richardson, GPNA Treasurer

The City of Portland continues to wrestle with a significant budget deficit, and it is expected that this will result in additional cuts in city funding to neighborhood associations. In anticipation of this event, our neighborhood association found a terrific community partner in COOPER Design Build, whose annual sponsorship has offset the City's budget cuts for the past two years. We've also benefitted from the financial support from many generous neighbors when we've needed funds to help continue our work.

In anticipation of further cuts, our neighborhood association has proactively worked to research and set up a new 501c3 tax-exempt entity. This new status will enable GPNA to offset the potential elimination of all city funding with a streamlined, simplified method for receiving tax deductible donations from individuals and corporations.

I am pleased to report that at the March 10, 2026, Annual Meeting, our neighbors supported these efforts and voted to approve the transfer of assets to the newly established 501c3 entity (Grant Park Neighbors Association), and the dissolution of the current 501c4 entity (Grant Park Neighborhood Association). Additionally, our neighbors voted to authorize the opening of new bank accounts at OnPoint Community Credit Union, with some of our excess cash placed into a non-profit savings account that currently yields an attractive rate of interest.

Over the next several weeks and months, we will be working to establish new e-mail, website, and social media

accounts for the new 501c3 entity, as well as registering it with local agencies such as NECN (Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods). We'll also be completing and filing documents to dissolve the 501c4 entity.

Our neighborhood association has now joined several other neighborhood associations in making the move to establish 501c3 status. These include the Boise, Concordia, Laurelhurst, Montavilla, Piedmont, Richmond, Rose City Park, and Woodlawn neighborhood associations.

### Tax deductible donation opportunities

More than 90% of American taxpayers use the standard deduction instead of itemizing their deductions. This means that there has been no federal tax benefit when making charitable donations to qualifying 501c3 non-profit organizations.

However, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) signed into law last year creates a special permanent deduction for charitable donations by tax filers who use the standard deduction. Starting in tax year 2026, donations up to \$1,000 per single filer (up to \$2,000 for joint filers) will be deductible on federal tax returns. To qualify for the charitable deduction, contributions must be made to a 501c3 organization. This provides Grant Park residents with a wonderful financial incentive to support your favorite charity, your favorite faith-based organization, and/or your favorite neighborhood organization (Hint: GPNA).

## Neighborhood Plant Sale a Great Success!

By Stacey Tipp, Editor

On May 2, we held a neighborhood plant sale in Grant Park Church's parking lot. There were shrubs, trees, and flower baskets for purchase, all from Vivero Nursery on Sauvie Island. The sale was in part a fundraiser for the Grant Park Neighborhood Association, with twenty percent of sale proceeds, a grand total of \$361, going to GPNA!

We would like to thank Dean Fagan, the owner/manager of Vivero Nursery, for his hard work, generosity, and community spirit. Kudos also to amazing neighbor Lisa Horowitz who worked all day at the sale, Josh Glover, the president of our sponsor COOPER Design Build who joined us at the sale, and of course Grant Park Church for hosting.



Customers browse the selections at the plant sale.

## 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: [grantpark-na.org/newsletters](http://grantpark-na.org/newsletters)

# Why Historic Homes Require Extra Care During a Remodel



Historic homes offer a level of charm, craftsmanship, and architectural character that simply can't be replicated in newer construction. That's why remodeling a historic home requires far more care and planning than a typical renovation. Older homes often come with hidden challenges behind the walls, including outdated electrical systems, aging plumbing, structural shifts, or hazardous materials that must be handled carefully and responsibly.

When planning a remodel, it's important that your designer and contractor understand the intricacies of historic homes and know how to blend the legacy of your home with the modern updates you need.

Ready to explore a home remodel?

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## Board Changes

There have been several recent changes to the composition of the GPNA board. First off, our amazing board president, Molly Hamill, resigned at our May 12 meeting. Molly joined the board in the spring of 2023, becoming president in the summer of 2024. Molly has done a great job steering the association, especially during the difficult transition to our new neighborhood coalition. She has also led and been a long-term member of the Grant Park Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET). GPNA Board Student Member Tess Ipsen will be leaving the board to attend the University of Colorado Boulder after graduation, where she plans to study neuroscience while participating in the Honors College. She is excited to continue pursuing her academic interests and challenging herself in a rigorous college environment. In addition to her studies, Tess plans to stay active on campus by playing club soccer and getting involved in the university community. Also leaving us is at-large board member Jake Wicks, who joined the board in the summer of 2023 and served as a member of the Grant Park NET and the GPNA Land Use Committee. We would like to thank Molly, Tess, and Jake for all their hard work for our community. They will be much missed.

## New GPNA At-Large Board Member Profile



Steve Haines and his wife Debra have lived in the Grant Park neighborhood since 1991. A Portland native Steve began his career in 1987 working for the Xerox Corporation in New York City as a sales representative. Since retiring from Xerox in 2012 Steve and Debra have traveled extensively, Steve returned to piano lessons, cycles when weather permits and remains an avid reader. In 2017, Steve became a certified Portland Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) member and joined the Grant Park NET Team. He volunteers in a variety of roles as needed to support community preparedness. For the past ten years, Steve has also served as a volunteer counselor with the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance (SHIBA) program, helping

Multnomah County residents navigate Medicare alternatives during annual open enrollment and throughout the year. Steve also assists Debra deliver the Grant Park Newsletter. Steve and Debra feel fortunate to live in such a beautiful neighborhood that fosters a strong sense of community.

## What Makes for a Great Volunteer Experience?

By Stacey Tipp, Editor

These days, there are so many ways folks can volunteer their time. So many needs, so many good causes, and so little time for many of us busy with jobs and families. How do you decide where to volunteer your time and your talents, and to direct your hard-earned dollars? Some things to consider: is the project addressing an important need and having a meaningful impact? Is the project efficiently run and does it work for your schedule and capabilities? Last, and most important in many ways for those of us involved in neighborhood work, does the project foster resiliency in our neighborhoods and city?

If you want an example of a good cause that answers all these questions affirmatively, look no further than the Portland Food Project (PFP), a 100% volunteer-run non-profit. Here's how it works: a neighbor signs up with the PFP to be a route coordinator. They then recruit their friends and neighbors who live close by to be food donors (donors can also be assigned to route coordinators by the PFP). Then, every other month, on the second Saturday of the month, the route coordinator goes and picks up non-perishable food items from their donor neighbors'

front porches and delivers them by car to a central location where the food is distributed to 16 local partner food pantries. If grocery shopping is difficult for a donor, monetary donations offer a practical alternative.

So, here's a project that addresses hunger, a great and sadly worsening problem in our community. Statistics from 2023 show 11.5% of people and 16% of children in Multnomah County struggle with food insecurity. In terms of impact, in 2025, the PFP had collected enough food to equal 112,461 meals! The PFP runs like clockwork and only requires your active participation as a route coordinator or donor six times a year. Last, by tying neighbors together in a route, the project fosters neighborhood connections and a sense of shared purpose that makes communities stronger.

If you want to learn more about the PFP, go to [www.portlandfoodproject.org](http://www.portlandfoodproject.org). Or, for a more personal introduction, head to the Hollywood Farmers Market on Saturday, June 20, where the PFP will be recruiting new donors and neighborhood coordinators.

## Be a Part of Our Community

Attend an upcoming Grant Park Neighborhood Association meeting:

- September 8, 2026
- November 10, 2026
- January 12, 2027
- March 9, 2027

**LOCATION:** Meetings start at 7:00 pm and end at or before 9:00 pm. 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](http://grantpark-na.org).

## Craftsmanship For Your Home



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## Knott Street Traffic Calming Project Update

By Susan Weedall

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) plans to install 15 speed cushions on NE Knott Street, between NE 21<sup>st</sup> and NE 34<sup>th</sup> Avenues, by the end of July. (As of our June 1 press deadline, work had not yet begun.) Speed cushions work like speed bumps, but with three-wheel cut-outs that allow emergency vehicles to pass through without slowing down.

Three to six months after installation, PBOT will conduct a crosswalk location analysis to assess how the traffic calming measures affect intersection speeds and to confirm that any crosswalk placement meets engineering requirements. PBOT is aware of our neighborhood’s 2025

survey results identifying community preferences for crosswalk locations.

Currently, only one crosswalk has been approved for this stretch, following the standard guideline of one crosswalk per 800 feet. Once the speed cushions are in place, the Grant Park Neighborhood Land Use Committee will continue working with PBOT to advocate for the community’s preferred crosswalk location — and to push for additional crosswalks along this busy corridor.

Questions? Contact the Land Use Committee at [gp.landuse@gmail.com](mailto:gp.landuse@gmail.com).

## The Grant Bowl Lights: A Student Perspective

By Tess Ipsen, Outgoing Grant Park Neighborhood Association Board Student Member

The fight to get lights in the Grant Bowl has been a struggle for Grant students and staff long before I ever stepped inside the building. Now, as I approach the end of my high school career, seeing those light poles planted around my school’s field holds a deeper meaning than just lighting up our campus.

Although I have missed four years of late-night soccer matches and track meets at my own school, it is impossible for me to look at these lights without recognizing the great efforts of the Grant community. These lights are a sign of over ten years of resilience, protest, and community building. The movement that was created around the construction of the Grant lights is a unique and powerful example of what can happen when a community sets its goals towards something they believe in.

For me personally, the lights also represent possibility. Growing up as an athlete at Grant, I spent years traveling

to school fields, envious of their lit-up stadium while our own bowl sat in the dark, unused. It felt as though our Grant athletes were missing out on an experience that brought school spirit to life. Now, future students will have the chance to create those memories at their own school. They will be able to play in front of their families, classmates, and neighbors on the same field they practice on every day.

These lights change the way I view the Grant community. I watched countless people show up for something that had little effect on their own lives just for the sake of benefiting the young athletes at their local high school. Although I missed out on the full lit-up experience of my home field, I feel proud knowing that future generations of Grant athletes will get to enjoy a complete high school sport experience.

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## Grant Park Neighbor Takes to the Airwaves to Help You Get Prepared!

By Debra Haines, Grant Park Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) Member

One of the many amazing Grant Park neighbors, Charlie Ramsey, has created the Cascadia Ready Radio podcast on Spotify and You Tube.

Charlie spent more than ten years in the United States Coast Guard, where he worked in search and rescue and major disaster operations. Since leaving the Coast Guard, he has remained deeply involved in community preparedness through volunteer networks, resilience efforts, and as a certified NET member.

If you're looking for calm, practical guidance on emergency preparedness, the kind that fits into real life without fear, hype, or gear obsession his podcast is well worth a listen. Preparedness doesn't have to be overwhelming. It doesn't have to be expensive. And it certainly doesn't have to be scary. It just needs to be practical.

Charlie believes in readiness, neighbors helping neighbors, and keeping things simple. In these short, bite-size episodes, you'll find clear, practical guidance to help you and your community be better prepared.



## Weekly Pop-up Neighborhood Drug Paraphernalia Give-Away Skirts City Officials, Businesses, and Neighbors

By Antonia Lawler and Demaris Martinez, Concerned Neighbors

More often than not, community members are shocked to discover that in the neighborhood there is an unregulated, weekly pop-up give-away that includes drug paraphernalia. Every Sunday at 2:30 pm, Portland Peoples Outreach Project (PPOP) pulls up in a van down the block east of Hollywood's Trader Joe's. They set up on a sidewalk located behind an approximately 120-unit apartment building whose tenants have been asking them to relocate since 2022. With what could be defined as "misguided compassion," the out-of-state organization is there to hand out care items for a total of 45 minutes. PPOP does not consider themselves a traditional "syringe exchange," where used syringes are traded in for an equal number of fresh ones. Instead, they give away as many needles as requested with no trade-in required. In addition to the sterile syringes (intended to reduce the transmission of disease) their list of drug-related items include pipes, drug-cookers, and tourniquets. According to PPOP's website "Drug use in Portland is not going away anytime soon." Among the unfortunate scenarios that ensue

are: drug use, drug sales, unpredictable behavior and situations, used syringes and drug paraphernalia strewn around, and biohazards (human waste) that continue into the rest of the week. Since PPOP is not on site nor is it required to take responsibility for sanitation services or health support for their clientele the remainder of the week, the surrounding businesses and neighbors are left to do most of the cleanup and reporting of distressed people. These reports go to on-call services that aren't available 24/7 and are potentially facing budget cuts. This cycle repeats every Sunday. Hollywood businesses have been especially impacted, having to respond by doing their own morning clean-ups of biohazards and trash and adding extra security (e.g. scissor gates), with some even considering leaving the neighborhood. Community frustrations and concerns are bringing together city officials, businesses and neighbors to find a solution since the lack of regulation of PPOP's locations and incomplete services supports drug use, strands drug users and is hurting the surrounding community.

*Have a Happy Summer!*





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## **A Summer Essay Contest for Incoming 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders**

### **Contest Theme: Why I Love Grant Park**

If you live in or attend school in Grant Park and will be entering fourth or fifth grade in the Fall of 2026, you can enter the contest! In 500 words or less, tell us what you love about our wonderful park and/or neighborhood (examples: you can write about the dog park, the swimming pool, your favorite tree, your best friend, etc.). The winning essay will be published in the Fall 2026 issue of this newsletter.

#### **How to Submit Essays:**

Essays may be handwritten or typed. Please have your parent or guardian either email your essay (in Word or another text-based format) to [gnaessay@gmail.com](mailto:gnaessay@gmail.com) or mail it to P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213.

Parents and guardians: please include your name, your child's name, school, what grade your child is entering in fall 2026, and your contact information (email address and phone number).

#### **Prizes:**

First Prize: \$100 Cash  
Second Prize: \$50 Cash  
Third Prize: \$25 Cash



**Submission Deadline:** Essays must be received by August 1, 2026. We cannot accept late submissions.