

Willamette Week

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WILLAMETTE WEEK

March 26th, 2013 By AARON MESH | News | Posted In: Housing, Business, City Hall

Developers Pull Out of Grove Hotel Deal

City has already spent \$3.7 million on the Chinatown building



The *Grove Hotel* in Old Town - Home Forward

The **Grove Hotel**, a project that **Portland Development Commission** officials **pitched as pivotal to redeveloping Old Town-Chinatown**, is on life support after the **private developers refused to secure collateral for \$900,000 in public loans**.

David Gold, the lead partner in the plan to turn the Grove from a crumbling halfway house into a **trendy, Asian-themed youth hostel**, told the PDC in January that none of

the investors was willing to provide additional collateral, in emails obtained by *WW* in a records request.

"Honestly, **I am not sure what it will take** to get the Grove project back on track," Gold wrote a PDC project manager on Jan. 18. "I am hesitant to say that the parties are moving on to other projects and aren't interested, but realistically, we are a little worn down by the process. To be so close [...] and not execute is beyond frustrating."

The renovation agreement, struck in 2010, was **heavily leveraged with public money**. **The PDC has already spent \$3.7 million** to buy and renovate the Grove Hotel, located at 421 W Burnside next to the Chinatown gate. The PDC agreed to sell it to Gold and his partners for \$555,000, a loss of \$3.15 million, while giving them a **\$2.64 million loan**.

The city and the investors—including Ace Hotel owner Alex Calderwood and Wieden+Kennedy advertising executive John Jay—were supposed to close on the deal in January.

But emails show that on Jan. 7, the PDC asked the private investors for \$900,000 worth of additional collateral, apparently because **an appraiser had reduced the project's assessed value** by \$890,000. (The appraiser cited declining market rent estimates and fewer

proposed hostel bed nights.)

That was a deal-breaker, Gold wrote on Jan. 8.

"None of my partners are willing to pledge additional collateral to the project," he wrote. "If this team, with PDC's support, cannot bring this transformational project to fruition, I question whether other entrepreneurs will even propose private ventures."

Gold had been threatening to pull out of the deal for months, saying **he and fellow investors couldn't get a restaurant tenant unless the city evicted homeless camp Right 2 Dream Too**, which sits across Northwest 4th Avenue from the Grove. The city has been fining the camp each month.

An email from November shows that Gold and his partners were courting several **ground-floor tenants**, including **Portland Bike Tours**, international-supply store **Cargo**, the Korean taco chain **Koi Fusion**, and a Portland location of New York's acclaimed Taiwanese restaurant **Baohaus**.

Gold now tells WW the project is "not currently financially viable."

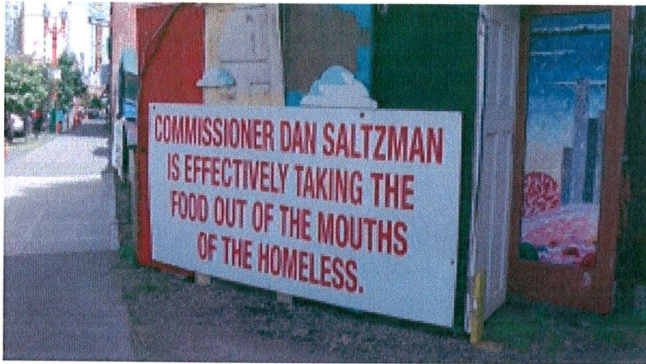
PDC spokesman Shawn Uhlman remains optimistic about the Grove project. The proposed deal doesn't expire until June 30, and conversations with developers are ongoing.

"It is not dead," Uhlman says. "Everyone's still working hard to make something happen. It is certainly a challenging project."


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June 5th, 2013 By ANN-DERRICK GAILLOT | News | Posted In: City Hall, Housing, Activism

Homeless Camp Right 2 Dream Too Removes Anti-Saltzman Sign



Right 2 Dream Too

Here's one immediate effect of new city bureau assignments: Chinatown homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too** has called off its very public feud with Commissioner **Dan Saltzman**.

Mayor Charlie Hales announced on Monday that Amanda Fritz will be taking over Bureau of Development Services from Saltzman.

A sign at the homeless camp at Northwest 4th Avenue and Burnside Street reading **"COMMISSIONER DAN SALTZMAN IS EFFECTIVELY TAKING THE FOOD OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF THE HOMELESS"** was **taken down** on Tuesday, and replaced with a hand-painted sign displaying the camp's name.

Michael Wright, Right 2 Dream Too's landlord, first put up the **sign** in May 2012 after beginning to receive **daily citations and fines** for being an illegal recreational campground. In April, *The Portland Mercury* reported the camp's unpaid fines had **topped \$17,000**.

The sign shaming Saltzman followed another sign, **"Stop Randy Leonard's Hit Squad,"** after the former city commissioner's code-enforcement team **condemned Wright's building on the site**—Cindy's Adult Bookstore.

Right 2 Dream Too President Ibrahim Mubarak says the camp harbored a grudge toward Saltzman—who now oversees the Housing bureau.

"Was it personal?" Mubarak asks. **"Well, of course.** Fining us when we're doing the work the city should be doing, when we're trying to take people off the streets. But it served a purpose. It was getting the message out that we're getting fined and we don't have that money."

Mubarak says the sign was taken down because of bureau reassignments, but also to allow for

a new fence to be put up and painted.

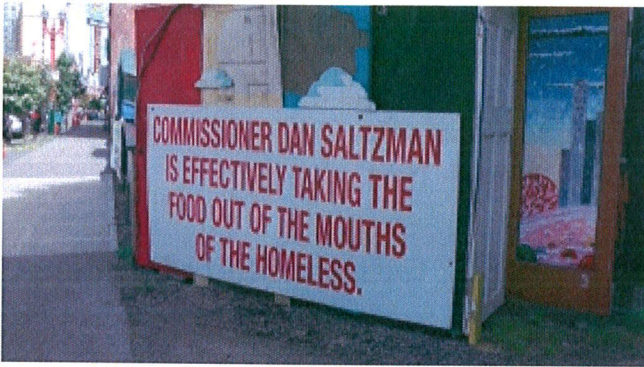
He says the camp has no plans yet to put up a new sign calling out Fritz.


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August 27th, 2013 By Aaron Mesh | News | Posted In: Activism, City Hall, Housing

City Negotiating Deal to Move Right 2 Dream Too Under Broadway Bridge

UPDATE: Lawyer says talks have "fallen apart."



Right 2 Dream Too

UPDATE, 7:25 pm: Mark Kramer, the attorney for Right 2 Dream Too, tells WW talks between the homeless camp, property owner Michael Wright and the city have **broken down**.

"The breakthrough I thought we had achieved in **negotiations** has apparently fallen apart," Kramer says. "Looks like we're back to square

one. There is no agreement. **There is no breakthrough.**"

Wright says city officials called Kramer tonight to say the deal was off.

"He says he gets a call," Wright says, "and the city tells him, 'No deal.' I don't have a clue why. Nothing was added to the pot for them to have to swallow."

ORIGINAL POST: Portland Mayor **Charlie Hales** and City Commissioner **Amanda Fritz** have offered to move Chinatown homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too** to a city-owned property under the Broadway Bridge, WW has learned.

Michael Wright, who owns the empty lot at Northwest 4th Avenue and Burnside Street where Right 2 Dream Too currently sits, says Hales and Fritz have indicated that they would place the camp on a property owned by the Portland Development Commission, under the west ramp of the Broadway Bridge.

He says the city discussed waiving nearly \$25,000 in fines for an unpermitted campsite, in exchange for him dropping his lawsuit against the city.

But Wright says the city's offer hinges on one condition: that **Wright signs an agreement promising to never place another homeless camp on his property.**

"If I were not to sign," Wright tells WW, "my understanding is [Right 2 Dream Too] would not have an offer from the city to go to the Broadway Bridge. I didn't particularly feel like signing that I would never help the homeless again."

Fritz tells WW discussing the negotiations could jeopardize the deal.

"I have agreed with R2D2 not to talk on the record until we have an agreement," Fritz says. "It is unfortunate that Mr. Wright has not abided by that agreement."

Right to Dream Too has been operating next to the iconic Chinatown gate since 2011, sheltering 80 to 100 homeless people in tents each night.

Wright allowed the homeless camp to lease the site for \$1 a year after former Commissioner Randy Leonard forced the closure of his business, Cindy's Adult Bookstore.

He says he **wants a promise he'll be allowed to use the lot for some kind of business**, like food carts.

"I told Mr. Hales if I could establish some kind of cash flow and pay my property taxes, and if I could find a place for the homeless, then I would consider it," Wright says.

But he agreed to talk to WW after seeing city emails suggesting he wouldn't be granted permits for food carts on the lot.

"I think we might be at a loggerheads," Wright says, "and it might help to shine a little light on it."

Wright also confirms what several sources have told WW: Hales and Fritz are in a hurry to move the camp partly because the **Portland Lee Family Association**—a major property owner in Old Town/Chinatown—is hosting the **National Lee Family Convention** this weekend, Aug. 30-31.

The sight of a homeless camp next to the Chinatown gate is a PR debacle the city wants to avert.

UPDATE, 12:02 pm: Wright tells WW that Fritz has agreed to **change the wording on the deal so it doesn't prohibit him from hosting another homeless camp**.

"That will not be a dealbreaker," Wright says, "and the deal will probably move forward."

UPDATE, 3:45 pm: Mark Kramer, attorney for Right 2 Dream Too, says his clients are

close to a deal, but the camp likely won't move under the Broadway Bridge for several weeks.

"It seems like **we've reached a breakthrough**," says Kramer. "I would say we're about 90 percent there."

Kramer confirms the terms of the deal *WW* reported earlier today: The city will lease Right 2 Dream Too the PDC property beneath the Lovejoy on-ramp, and drop all outstanding fines. The camp and Michael Wright, who owns the property at Northwest 4th Avenue and Burnside Street, will drop its lawsuit against the city.

Wright will not have any restrictions on how he uses the property. (The deal now leaves open the possibility of **Right 2 Dream 3**.)

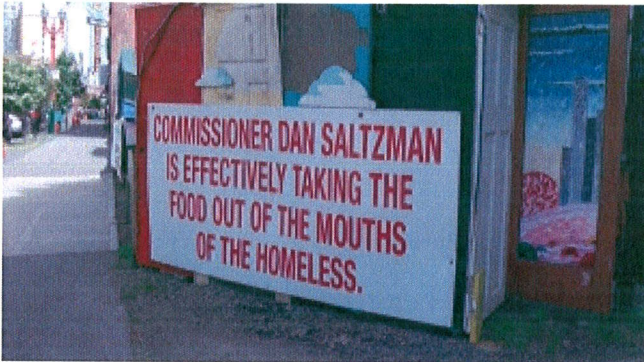
Kramer says the deal will take at least a week to finish, however.

"If the movement toward a tentative agreement is formalized," he says, "Right 2 Dream Too would move shortly, **probably within 30 days**."

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August 28th, 2013 By AARON MESH | News | Posted In: City Hall, Activism, Housing

Pearl District Neighborhood Association Doesn't Want Homeless Camp Under Broadway Bridge



Right 2 Dream Too

The **Pearl District Neighborhood Association** has sent a letter to City Commissioner **Amanda Fritz**, objecting to her plan to relocate homeless camp Right 2 Dream Too under the **Broadway Bridge**.

WW reported Tuesday that the camp's lawyer, Mark Kramer, said the city told him last night that **a deal to move the camp had crumbled**.

The agreement would move Right 2 Dream Too from Old Town/Chinatown to underneath a bridge ramp blocks from Pearl District condo towers.

The Oregonian **first reported** the letter from neighborhood association president Patricia Gardner. The letter **dated today**, says **the camp would violate city fire codes, zoning codes and public health codes**.

"The City should not enable unsafe and unhealthy living environments for any person by ignoring the codes of the state," Gardner writes. "The city should also not trade one legally problematic site for another."

Garner also takes Fritz to task for violating a principle the commissioner holds dear: **public process**.

"We have been told that a public process was specifically avoided on this issue as there would clearly be opposition to the plan," the letter says. "That is not how this city is supposed to work. It may have been the de-facto manner of business for previous administrations **but it was wrong then and it is wrong now**."

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August 28th, 2013 WW Editorial Staff | Murmurs

Murmurs: Forget it, Fritz—it's Chinatown.



FRITZ - IMAGE: leahnash.com

- The long-running battle whether Portland Mayor **Charlie Hales** was a **legally registered Oregon voter** when he filed for office in 2011 took an odd turn this week. On Aug. 26, a Marion County **judge dismissed** Portland activist Seth Woolley's case against Secretary of State Kate Brown and Multnomah County Elections Director Tim Scott. Woolley claims Brown and Scott failed to properly investigate Hales' qualifications, but he didn't appear at an Aug. 12 court hearing. Woolley says he had jury duty that day and **plans to refile** his lawsuit. "I'm not just going to let it go away," Woolley says.
- City Commissioner **Amanda Fritz** is working out a deal to dislodge Old Town

homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too**. Property owner Michael Wright says Fritz has offered to lease the camp a city-owned property under the west end of the **Broadway Bridge** and waive nearly \$25,000 in fines, in exchange for Wright and the camp dropping a lawsuit against the city. "I told [the city] if I could establish some kind of cash flow and pay my property taxes, and if I could find a place for the homeless, then I would consider it," Wright says. Right 2 Dream Too has been operating next to the iconic Chinatown gate since 2011, sheltering 80 to 100 homeless people in tents each night. Fritz and Mayor Charlie Hales have declined to comment until a deal is finalized, but sources including Wright say the city has been eager to move the camp because the **Portland Lee Family Association**—a property owner in Old Town/Chinatown—is hosting the National Lee Family Convention this weekend.

- Gov. **John Kitzhaber** says he **hasn't decided** whether to seek an unprecedented fourth term, but he's already gathering big checks. Kitzhaber has picked up \$25,000 from the International Brotherhood of **Electrical Workers**; \$5,000 each from teriyaki-sauce king Junki Yoshida, Schnitzer Steel chairman John Carter, energy entrepreneur Brett Wilcox and trial lawyer Bill Barton; and \$2,500 each from developers John Carroll and John Russell and New Seasons Market co-founder Stan Amy. Rep. **Dennis Richardson** (R-Central Point) has declared he's running for governor, and Oregon GOP Chairman **Allen Alley** is considering a run.
- When environmental groups sued the state of Oregon under the federal Endangered Species Act in January 2012, they wanted the state to harvest less timber from a federally protected habitat for **marbled murrelets**. Those agencies got a nasty surprise this month when they learned the State Land Board is instead exploring **selling off 2,714 acres of the Elliott State Forest** to private owners. The state says the land isn't financially sustainable without the timber sales it was conducting before a court-ordered injunction. "This comes across as a temper tantrum kind of response," says Bob Sallinger, spokesman for the **Audubon Society of Portland**, one of the groups that filed the lawsuit.

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August 28th, 2013 By AARON MESH | News | Posted In: City Hall, Activism, Housing

Pearl District Neighborhood Association Doesn't Want Homeless Camp Under Broadway Bridge



Right 2 Dream Too

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August 29th, 2013 By SARA SNEATH | News | Posted In: Activism, Housing, City Hall

VIDEO: Here's What It's Like Inside Right 2 Dream Too



Right 2 Dream Too - Sara Sneath

Homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too** has returned to the headlines this week with revelations City Commissioner Amanda Fritz is trying to broker a deal to **move the camp beneath the Broadway Bridge**.

Talks between the city, the camp and property owner Michael Wright have grown rocky, and the Pearl District Neighborhood Association has sent an appalled letter asking Fritz to scrap the plan. *The Portland Mercury* **offers an analysis**

today that notes the deal's fate will likely hinge on what financial compensation the city is willing to give Wright for his property.

Right 2 Dream Too emerged two years ago **after the city forced Wright into razing Cindy's Adult Bookstore**, his business on Northwest 4th Avenue and Burnside Street. Though it started along with the chaotic **Occupy Portland** camps, Right 2 Dream Too has **remained a fixture** of the Portland landscape, hosting about 60 campers per night.

The deal to move the camp under the Broadway Bridge is no sure thing, but **Pearl District residents interested in what they could expect should watch this video**.

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September 6th, 2013 By AARON MESH | News | Posted In: City Hall, Housing, Activism

City Reaches Deal to Move Right 2 Dream Too



Right 2 Dream Too - Sara Sneath

The City of Portland has reached a deal to move homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too** from Old Town to a property under the Broadway Bridge, says the camp's lawyer.

WW reported last week that City Commissioner **Amanda Fritz** was **trying to broker a deal** with the camp and Old Town property owner **Michael Wright** to lease a Portland Development Commission property under the bridge.

"We have reached an agreement," Mark Kramer, the attorney for Right 2 Dream Too and Wright, told WW this evening.

Kramer says the camp and Wright **agreed around 7 pm** to the most recent terms presented to them by the city. "The last part was Michael Wright saying yes," Kramer says, "and he said yes."

Fritz **sent out a tweet** saying the City Attorney's Office "has not yet confirmed to me that we have a settlement with Right to Dream Too. **We'll know Monday.**"

She tells WW she hasn't heard if the deal is final.

Negotiations had **bogged down last week** over Wright's demand for complete freedom over how to use the empty lot at Northwest 4th Avenue and Burnside Street where the camp now sits. The Pearl District Neighborhood Association wrote Fritz to **complain about locating the camp nearby.**

Kramer says Wright has agreed not to place another homeless camp on his lot—with the hope the **PDC will buy it from him.**

"He can't use it for camping," Kramer says. "And hopefully PDC will buy it."

The deal's terms include the city dropping nearly \$25,000 in outstanding fines for illegal camping in return for Wright and the camp dropping its lawsuit against the city. Kramer says both sides agreed to leave open the question of whether the camp should have been legal.

"That's a fight for another day," he says.

Earlier today, Pearl District Neighborhood Association president **Patricia Gardner** said the neighborhood association had not met with Right 2 Dream Too organizers.

"We have only had correspondence with City Council on the subject," Gardner wrote WW. "It has been a fairly one sided dialogue with council. Not actually a conversation at all."

UPDATE, 9:30 pm: Michael Wright confirms he agreed to the city's most recent terms.

In 2011, Wright began allowing the homeless camp to lease the site for \$1 a year after former Commissioner Randy Leonard forced the closure of his business, Cindy's Adult Bookstore.

"I don't know how I'm feeling yet," he says. "Really, my position hasn't improved a heck of a lot. It's been many, many years of trying to do something on that property, and it's been difficult."

Wright offered the site to homeless campers as a way to defy city officials who fined him for setting up food carts. He now says his motivation has changed some.

"I don't think that I started this quest with any burning desire to help homeless people," Wright says. "But I kinda once in a while ended up **feeling pretty good about what happened down there.**

"Babies were born there," Wright continues. "Couples lived together. There was really some good there. I don't know—maybe I'm becoming a homeless advocate."


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September 13th, 2013 By AARON MESH | News | Posted In: City Hall, Cops and Courts, Housing

Pearl District Neighborhood Association and Homer Williams May Sue City Over Homeless Camp Move



Right 2 Dream Too - Sara Sneath

The **Pearl District Neighborhood Association** voted last night to release **\$10,000 in funds for legal action** against the City of Portland over City Commissioner **Amanda Fritz's plan to move** homeless camp **Right 2 Dream Too** beneath the Broadway Bridge.

Neighborhood Association president **Patricia Gardner** tells *WW* the group is weighing whether to sue the city or challenge it at the

state's land-use board.

She says pledged co-litigants include **Williams & Dame**, the Pearl and South Waterfront development firm run by **Homer Williams** and **Dike Dame**, as well as **design company Ziba** and condo developer **Hoyt Street Properties**.

"We are definitely investigating that option," Gardner says of a lawsuit. "At this point, we don't see any other options on the **table**."

KGW **first reported** the possibility of legal action this morning.

WW **broke the news Sept. 6** that Fritz had negotiated a deal to move Right 2 Dream Too from Old Town to a **Portland Development Commission-owned property** beneath the Broadway Bridge's west on-ramp.

The neighborhood association had previously **sent Fritz a letter** saying that hosting the camp on city property would violate city zoning code, fire code and public health code.

Gardner says the objection from property owners and developers isn't about the homeless camp—but about a secretive deal with **no public process**.

"Fundamentally," she says, "this is not how the city of Portland is supposed to work."

Fritz spoke with the neighborhood association last week—a conversation that did not assuage its objections.

"What conversations?" Gardner says. "The only conversation we had with Amanda was when she said she was sorry the media had found out about it because she hadn't planned to talk to us about it yet."

Fritz, who is traveling, could not immediately be reached for comment.

The coalition of neighbors and developers has retained the land-use law firm **Radler White Parks & Alexander**, which sent a warning letter reported by *The Portland Mercury* to the City Attorney on Sept. 9.

Gardner says the neighborhood association has saved \$10,000 over the last four years in a "rainy-day fund." She says it may start fundraising more money soon.

"The goal is not to go to court," she says. "You only go to court when your partner stops working with you—or never starts, in this case."

WW news intern Emily Schiola contributed to this report.

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September 18th, 2013 EMILY SCHIOLA | Housing

Unhappy Campers

A stickler for City Hall process, Amanda Fritz takes a new tack with Right 2 Dream Too.



UNDER THE BRIDGE: The proposed new home for the Right 2 Dream Too camp, located off Northwest Lovejoy Street under the Broadway Bridge next to Union Station, will have room for up to 100 people. - IMAGE: WW Staff

City Commissioner Amanda Fritz has always demanded that City Hall follow its own rules. She often railed against ex-Commissioner Randy Leonard's backroom maneuvers and held up the City Council over the tiniest of procedural details.

But now in her second term, Portland is seeing a new, different approach in her decision to move the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp from an Old Town block to city property under the Broadway Bridge.

The move may violate city code that prohibits camping on city property, provides no long-term plans for the estimated 100 people who will camp under the west end of the bridge, and flouts the city's strategy to combat homelessness.

Fritz says she cut the deal to settle a lawsuit against the city brought by the Old Town landowner. Confidentiality was needed to reach the settlement, she adds.

"I don't appreciate public involvement when it really doesn't matter," Fritz says. "People have been angry and say, 'Even if we don't want it, you're still going to do it.' Yeah, that's true."

But her decision promises only to create a new homeless camp on city property (Dignity Village still operates on city land in Northeast Portland), inviting a new lawsuit.

As reported on [wweek.com](#), the Pearl District Neighborhood Association plans to sue the city, citing code that prohibits using city property for camping.

Land-use lawyer Christe White sent Fritz and Mayor Charlie Hales a letter dated Aug. 28 describing the objections of the neighborhood association; [Williams & Dame](#), the development firm run by Homer Williams and Dike Dame; design company [Ziba](#); and condo developer [Hoyt Street Properties](#).

"It's just unconscionable," White says. "It is a direct hit on the regulatory structure that every other property owner has been forced to go through by the very city who is exempting itself."

Fritz says she doesn't yet know what the city needs to do to make the camp legal.

"We will be announcing everything every step of the way," she says. "It was very unfortunate the owner decided to go to the press before the settlement was finished because that raised a lot of questions I don't yet have answers to."

The settlement waives \$25,000 in city fines levied against Michael Wright for the current Right 2 Dream Too camp on his property at Northwest 4th Avenue and West Burnside Street, the former site of Cindy's, an adult bookstore.

Fritz acknowledges her strategy deviates from the city's long-term plan to address homelessness. (She also concedes she did not engage Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the city's Housing Bureau, in the discussions about Right 2 Dream Too.)

And she says it's not yet clear what will happen to the camp when a one-year stay granted by the city runs out.

"We have all been very clear that we want most funds to go toward permanent housing," Fritz says. "Everyone on the council is committed to that. There are a finite amount of resources."

Steve Rudman, executive director of [Home Forward](#), Portland's housing authority, says Fritz's

deal with Right 2 Dream Too is a temporary fix.

“I’m not suggesting it’s the right answer, but you can probably think of worse options,” Rudman says. “We’ll see what happens next. That’s the fundamental problem: There’s really no end game until we figure out how to help people.”

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Sep 13, 2013, 2:39pm PDT

Pearl neighbors may sue over homeless camp



[Suzanne Stevens](#)

Web editor- Portland Business Journal

[Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Google+](#)

Pearl District neighbors upset about a proposal to move a homeless camp to city-owned property under the Broadway Bridge are exploring a possible lawsuit.

[As first reported by KGW](#), the Pearl District Neighborhood Association voted Thursday night to tap the \$10,000 in its rainy-day fund for a possible lawsuit against the city.

[On Sept. 6, Willamette Week reported](#) that City Commissioner Amanda Fritz had negotiated a deal to move the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp from Old Town to city property under the Broadway Bridge.

Pearl District Neighborhood Association President Patricia Gardner [told the paper Friday](#) that Pearl District developers Williams & Dame, co-owned by Homer Williams, and Hoyt Street Properties, along with Ziba design, had signed on as possible co-litigants.

Calls to Williams & Dame and Hoyt Street Properties were not immediately returned.

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Upcoming Event

Oct 11

[HR Summit and the Healthiest Employers of Oregon Awards Luncheon](#)

Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Place: Hilton Hotel

[See all events](#)

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Real Estate Daily

Sep 27, 2013, 11:37am PDT

Ziba's Sohrab Vossoughi: Why the homeless, Pearl District don't mix



[Wendy Culverwell](#)

Real Estate Daily editor- Portland Business Journal

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[Sohrab Vossoughi](#) invested \$20 million to construct a high-tech office for his 110-person — and growing — design firm, Ziba.

The city of Portland wooed him to Station Place, near Union Station and the Pearl District, with incentives, parking and infrastructure. The striking result is an 75,475-square-foot office at 1044 N.W. Ninth Ave.

This week, he [joined a chorus of Pearl District investors](#) expressing shock that the city would ignore its own design and development procedures to relocate the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp to an unused parking lot under the Broadway Bridge — immediately beyond Ziba's deck.

The coalition said it will press at least two legal challenges if the city moves forward with the plan. It will fight through the state Land Use Board of Appeals and by suing in circuit court.

Vossoughi is sympathetic to homelessness and even told reporters his company is eager to help find creative solutions to the problem — creative solutions after all are its bread and butter.

In an interview Thursday, he acknowledged that if Right 2 Dream Too moves next door, it would hurt his business.

Portland Business Journal: Ziba doesn't occupy the entire building. How much space is available for lease and are you concerned the camp could hurt leasing efforts?

Vossoughi: The excess space is fully leased to [Jama Software at street level](#) and

to [ScanlanKemperBard Cos. on the third floor](#). But Jama is growing and its lease expires in a couple of years. I wonder if we'll be able to lease the street level space if safety and security become more of an issue than they are now.

PBJ: Are there safety and security issues now?

Vossoughi: Yes. We have vandalism and garbage problems. Some employees, including women, are concerned about what is happening on the street. We already have problems on the street as it is. To be clear, Right 2 Dream Too appears to be an orderly and well-run camp, but we worry about attracting even more people when we're trying to create a destination here.

PBJ: How important is your office to marketing your business?

Vossoughi: Customers want to tour the facilities. It's very important, especially to international visitors. This building is a magnet that attracts business and clients. It could hurt business.

PBJ: How important is the office environment to recruiting employees and could that be harmed by a change in the neighborhood?

Vossoughi: The building is a huge part of attracting talent. I'm sure [a homeless camp] would hurt that.

Wendy Culverwell covers real estate, retail and hospitality.

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Real Estate Daily

Sep 26, 2013, 10:58am PDT Updated: Sep 27, 2013, 12:15am PDT

Pearl investors, angry over homeless camp plan, resist NIMBY label



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Developers and businesses who plowed hundreds of millions of dollars into creating the Pearl District want two things as the Portland City Council considers moving the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp to a parking lot near Union Station.

First, a coalition that includes Hoyt Street Realty, Williams & Dame Development Co. and Ziba Design wants the city to halt the plan to move Right 2 Dream to a spot under the Broadway Bridge and follow its own land use, zoning and development procedures — the very procedures that yielded the successful Pearl District in the first place.

And second, they want to stop being painted as wealthy developers unconcerned with homelessness.

The group will press its first point through the state's powerful Land Use Board of Appeals as well as the circuit court system and potentially a mediator.

On the second, it has only its record to speak for it.

"I'm just dumbfounded that the city is not following the rules that it holds everybody else to," said [Tiffany Sweitzer](#), president of [Hoyt Street Properties](#), the company that has worked to transform 34 acres of former rail yard into residential, retail and office space over the past 15 years.

"We go into design review. We do parks. We talk about how to do things better. We've done that for 15-plus years now. We followed the rules and it's a success,"

said Sweitzer, who called the city a steady partner until now.

She resists being labeled an uncaring developer who doesn't want homeless people in the neighborhood.

Hoyt Street's long-standing agreement with the city calls for it to set aside at least 30 percent of the 2,700 residential units it plans to build for low-income residents.

To date, it has constructed 2,000 units, with 34 percent serving low-income residents, easily beating its goal. Housing, not tents, is the solution to the very legitimate concerns about homelessness, she said.

"If you're an advocate for homeless, why throw them under a bridge? Let's find them a place to live."

The Bureau of Development Services is due to issue its recommendation on the lawsuit-driven move on Friday. The Portland City Council will take public testimony on the matter when it meets Oct 3.

The outcome is a fait accompli, said Greg Close, president of Wyse Investments, a real estate consulting firm that represents Ziba. Portland-based Ziba spent more than \$20 million to build its headquarters in the Pearl District. The deck where it entertains visitors, including prospective clients, overlooks the parking lot in question.

Close said legal proceedings will proceed on two tracks and will commence "sooner rather than later."

On one track, the coalition will challenge the camp through the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) if the city presses the move. LUBA has judicial authority over the myriad of land-use questions raised.

The coalition also will sue in circuit court or press for mediation if necessary, he said.

It could sue over more than just the camp.

Close said the camp will chill property values, hinder leasing efforts by design firm Ziba and others and depress rents by as much as 15 to 25 percent.

Property owners could sue to recover their losses, he said.

Close said Ziba chose its home near Union Station as it outgrew its prior home in the Pearl District about eight years ago.

The company considered leaving Portland. The city, through the Portland Development Commission, offered modest incentives as well as parking and infrastructure support that convinced it to stay.

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Real Estate Daily

Oct 2, 2013, 2:57pm PDT Updated: Oct 2, 2013, 3:19pm PDT

Showdown looms over Pearl District homeless camp plan



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Pearl District residents and developers are actively resisting the city of Portland's plan to relocate the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp to a Pearl District parking lot.

This week, an attorney representing Pearl Hotel Investors, which is associated with Williams & Dame Development and Hoyt Street Realty, informed the [Portland Development Commission](#) that the move [breaches a development agreement](#) that covers the parking lot and pledged to initiate mandatory arbitration. Failing that, it said it would sue.

The investor group is being represented by attorney [Keith S. Dubanevich](#) of Stoll Stoll Berne Lokting and Shlachter.

In another move, [David Lokting](#), a partner at Stoll Stoll, wrote a blistering five-page letter challenging the rationale behind the move and the city's legal reasoning. Lokting, writing as a Pearl District resident and chair of the owners association for Park Place Condominiums, said the dispute has nothing to do with helping the homeless.

"If your goal is to destroy the citizens' faith in the integrity and competence of their City government, you are succeeding," he wrote to Mayor [Charlie Hales](#) and the City Council.

The council will hold a public hearing at City Hall Thursday from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and then from 6 p.m. until comments wrap up. The council is widely expected to approve plans to move the camp to a parking lot under the Broadway Bridge's Lovejoy ramp, in the Pearl District's Station Place neighborhood.

The deal is part of a settlement agreement stemming from litigation over the city's efforts to relocate Right 2 Dream's camp at Northwest Fourth and West Burnside.

[Paul Scarlett](#), the city's planning and director, has recommended that the move be allowed, calling the camp a [legitimate use](#) of the city-owned Pearl District parking lot under city rules.

[Read the full letter here.](#)

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Oct 1, 2013, 10:35am PDT Updated: Oct 1, 2013, 11:36am PDT

It's on: Pearl District heavyweights

initiate legal action over homeless camp



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A group of Pearl District investors has initiated legal proceedings over plans to move the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp to a parking lot under the Broadway Bridge.

An attorney representing Pearl Hotel Investors LLC and [Hoyt Street Properties](#) LLC notified the [Portland Development Commission](#), the city's economic development arm, that using the parking lot as a homeless camp violates [a development agreement between developers and the PDC](#), triggering arbitration and potentially a lawsuit.

In a Sept. 30 letter, Stoll Stoll Berne Lokting & Schlachter attorney [Keith S. Dubanevich](#) said clients Pearl Hotel Investors, which is associated with Williams & Dame Development, and Hoyt Street Properties wish to arbitrate the matter under terms of their agreement with the agency. If the city presses ahead with the camp, the developers will turn to the courts for an emergency injunction.

Pearl Hotel Investors is constructing a 225-room Residence Inn by Marriott one block north of the proposed homeless camp. Both it and Hoyt Street Properties are parties, along with the development commission, to a legal agreement that spells out how the parking lot is to be used.

Last week, [Paul Scarlett](#), the city's development director, issued an opinion that the [camp is a legitimate use](#) of the parking lot under current codes.

The city council will hold a hearing starting at 2 p.m. Thursday. It is widely expected to approve the homeless camp move to the Pearl District.

Dubanevich said the agreement requires the city and PDC and all parties to consent to any change of use. Pearl Hotel Investors and Hoyt Street Properties do not consent, he said.

If the PDC does not cure the default, the investors will initiate arbitration under terms of the agreement.

City Commissioner [Amanda Fritz](#) wants to move the camp from its current location at Northwest Fourth and West Broadway to settle a [separate legal dispute](#).

The Pearl camp would house about 100 people per night for about a year.

The Right 2 Dream Too issue has brought the issue of homelessness and investment to a head in the Pearl District, where developers who invested [tens of millions of dollars](#) say they are not unsympathetic to the issue of homelessness, but resent being cast as bad guys for insisting the city hold itself to its own code and development requirements. In addition to violating the city's own procedures, businesses say the camp will [harm the neighborhood](#).

More than 2,869 people in Multnomah County were homeless during a census conducted by 211info, the Portland Housing Bureau and Multnomah County in January.

Of those, 2,361 were individual adults, 474 were families with children and 24 were unaccompanied youth.

The report noted that half of Portland's unsheltered population had been homeless for a year or less, but that chronic homelessness increased 27 percent.

Stay tuned for more on this story as it develops throughout the week.

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PORTLAND TRIBUNE

City, group look at moving Old Town homeless camp to new site

Created on Wednesday, 02 November 2011 17:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Police say no officers have been dispatched to Burnside group



by: CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT About 100 Occupy Portland demonstrators marched in support of the Right 2 Dream Too homeless campers two weeks ago, but the fates of the two sites appear to be on different paths. Church leaders and public officials this week continued to explore the possibility of moving Right 2 Dream Too to another site.

With signs that the Right 2 Dream Too homeless encampment on West Burnside Street is taking on the look of a more permanent development, Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish will meet this week with clergy to discuss the possibility of [moving](#) Right 2 Dream Too to a church property.

City development officials have notified Right 2 Dream Too that its tent city probably violates city anti-camping ordinances. The group is [leasing](#) private property for the camp.

Last week, a number of people involved in homeless issues, including representatives of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and the Old Town Union Gospel Mission,

discussed the possibility of a move for Right 2 Dream Too.

That would necessitate a city resolution similar to those in effect in Seattle and Eugene, which allow churches to host homeless encampments on their properties. Fish said he would meet this week with David Leslie, executive director of Ecumenical Ministries, about the issue. Leslie said last week that he likely could find churches willing to host Right 2 Dream Too if the resolution were passed.

Meanwhile, 12 blocks to the south, early Tuesday morning Portland police arrested 10 Occupy Portland demonstrators who tried to expand their encampment to the federally owned Terry D. Schrunk Plaza. According to the city, more than \$186,000 in police overtime has been spent on Occupy Portland and more than 50 demonstrators have been arrested. Fish also warned that Occupy Portland campers had caused more than \$19,000 in damage to two downtown squares.

Police say there have been no dispatch calls to the Right 2 Dream Too camp in Old Town.

Nationally, a number of Occupy encampments have found homeless men and women joining their campsites, but Mike Dee, president of Right 2 Dream Too, said on Tuesday that the people camped on West Burnside appeared to prefer their own site and saw no need to join Occupy Portland campers.

'We've got a little more control of our situation,' Dee said. 'They like it here. They know who their neighbors

are. These are people they've been seeing on the street for years.'

Dee noted that Right 2 Dream Too adopted a strict set of rules governing behavior even before Occupy Portland, which preceded Right 2 Dream Too. For example, the camp has set 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. as its quiet time. Dee said that 'a handful' of Right 2 Dream Too campers had been asked to leave because there was reason to believe they might have drugs, alcohol or weapons, or because they treated other campers with disrespect. Enforcing a code of conduct, Dee said, might be 'a little more challenging' at the larger Occupy Portland site.

On Tuesday, visitors to Right 2 Dream Too were greeted by a new sign with a professional [architectural rendering](#) of how the camp is intended to look in time, with trees and a more centrally located common area. But that sign ignores pending action by the city's Bureau of Development Services, which could fine property owner Michael Wright for allowing the encampment.

At the same time, the bureau also notified the city's parks and recreation bureau that the Occupy Portland campsites were violating city code. A bureau spokesman said that the parks bureau was 'evaluating the situation and will follow up with BDS.'

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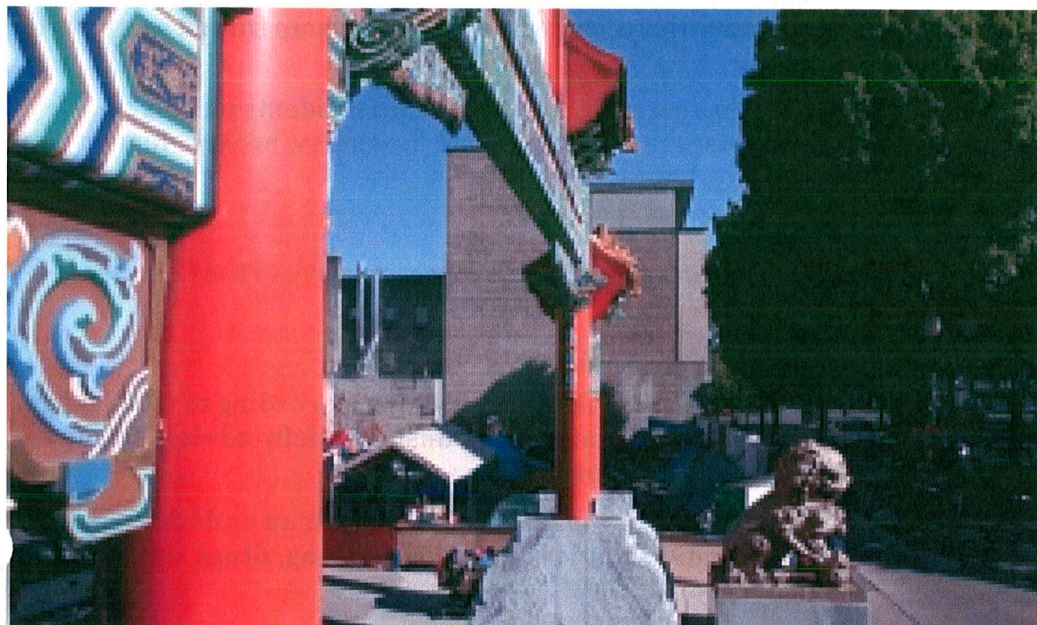
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Homeless campers may get a reprieve

Created on Wednesday, 30 November 2011 16:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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City permit could let Right 2 Dream Too campers stay put



by: CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT Portland's Chinatown Gate frames the Right 2 Dream Too campground, which may soon become a permanent outdoor facility for the homeless thanks to a new bureau of development services ruling.

Occupy Portland's downtown campsite is long gone, but Right 2 Dream Too, the campground for the homeless at West Burnside next to the Chinatown gate, has quietly gone about its business and may be about to gain semi-permanent status.

That's the latest word from the Portland Bureau of Development Services, which sent a letter three weeks ago informing Right 2 Dream Too leaders and owners of the property that they were in violation of city codes.

Property owner Michael Wright had signed a one-year, virtually rent-free lease with the nonprofit that runs Right 2

Dream Too, but the development services' letter threatened fines that could have reached \$583 a month. That would effectively have shut down the campground, which has tents housing about 70 previously homeless men and women.

But somebody in City Hall decided to take a closer look at the situation, which has resulted in a new interpretation of city code.

Apparently, [campgrounds](#) are allowed on private property zoned for commercial uses, as long as property owners obtain a permit from the Bureau of Development Services and have the campground inspected.

Matt Grumm, policy manager for City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the development services bureau, says until Right 2 Dream Too came along, nobody had ever asked about locating a campground in the city.

'Anybody can have campsites on private property if they go through the proper process,' Grumm says.

So, Right 2 Dream Too has only to take out permits and lower the height of its exterior fence, which at nearly eight feet is about two feet too tall under city rules.

The fee for the campground permit could run about \$700. That won't be a problem, says Mike O'Callaghan, secretary and treasurer of Right 2 Dream Too. 'We've got money in the bank,' he says.

The new bureau code interpretation was news to O'Callaghan when told of the development on Monday.

'They've never actually told us it could be legal,' says O'Callaghan, adding that he has [meetings](#) scheduled with City Hall staff next week.

Also on Monday, Right 2 Dream Too residents started selling Christmas trees to raise money. O'Callaghan says that he purchased the trees from a local tree farmer.

Regardless of how the sales go, he says, the campground's nonprofit had more than enough money from donations to pay the permit fee.

Changing opinions

The prospect of a permanent campground at such a high-profile Chinatown site is sure to upset a number of Old Town/Chinatown residents and business owners, who have complained to the city and spoke up at a neighborhood meeting shortly after Right 2 Dream Too opened.

Some of those neighbors might have changed their opinions of the campsite,

Stephen Ying, president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association and a leader of the downtown Chinese community, says he was 'very upset' when he first heard about the campsite. He told Right 2 Dream Too leader Ibrahim Mubarek that the Chinese community was offended because the campground was next to the Chinatown gate.

Ying says he walks by the campground frequently and has seen Right 2 Dream Too residents picking up cigarette butts and dog feces off the ground. When a restaurant next door had its window broken, Right 2 Dream Too offered to pay half the cost of a [replacement window](#).

'I see them being good neighbors,' Ying says.

Ying has changed his mind about letting Right 2 Dream Too stay. But, as a representative of the Chinese community, he is conflicted.

'The Chinese community doesn't want the campsite being there at the gate,' he says.

Being an exemplary neighbor has been part of the Right 2 Dream Too plan all along, according to O'Callaghan. In fact, he says that more than once Right 2 Dream Too representatives had unsuccessfully advised Occupy Portland campers that they needed to establish the same type of order.

Right 2 Dream Too has a fence around its property, with only one entrance and a doorman or doorwoman on duty so only permitted campers are allowed inside. In addition, rules outlawing drinking, drugs and violence at the campsite are strictly enforced.

According to O'Callaghan, more than two dozen campers have been evicted for not following the rules.

In a dramatic contrast to Occupy Portland, no arrests have been made of Right 2 Dream Too campers. In fact, there have been no police calls to the campground.

'Everyone here knows if they mess up, the whole camp loses,' O'Callaghan says.

Church campsites

Meanwhile, the possibility of more homeless campers in Portland took a step closer to reality this week, as a number of influential church leaders wrote a letter to City Commissioner Nick Fish and Multnomah County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury supporting a city resolution allowing churches to host small campsites for homeless people.

The resolution would be modeled after a similar ordinance in Eugene and would allow smaller campsites than Right 2 Dream Too, 10 people or fewer residents in most cases, according to David Leslie, executive director of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, which is spearheading the church effort.

[Click here to read the letter from church leaders about the homeless camping ordinance.](#)

Leslie says he doesn't yet have churches committed to hosting homeless campers, but that a city resolution making it legal should help him firm up commitments. The resolution could help the churches as well as the homeless, he adds.

'It's pretty exciting,' Leslie says. 'I think this is something that could energize, educate and allow churches to really say, 'What assets do we have that we could put to use right now?''

Betsy Ames, Fish's chief of staff, says that the commissioner expects to introduce a resolution within two or three weeks based on the recommendation from church leaders.

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City rejects homeless camp appeal, begins to ring up fines

Created on Wednesday, 11 January 2012 16:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Right 2 Dream Too counters that group's efforts are paying off

City officials have denied Right 2 Dream Too's appeal of fines for its homeless camp next to the Chinatown Gate on West Burnside Street.

That means the city could begin fining the camp's property co-owner, Old Town businessman Michael Wright. The first month's fine, for January, is \$641. The same amount will be assessed in February. After that, the fines double to \$1,282 per month.

Right 2 Dream Too's small tent city took root in October, about the time Occupy Portland campers set up tents in two downtown parks a block from City Hall. Initially, city officials said the homeless camp was illegal, but in December Portland's Bureau of Development Services informed the property owners that it could be legal, if state rules governing recreational campgrounds in rural areas were followed.

Right 2 Dream Too leader Ibrahim Mubarek says his nonprofit will pay the January fine, but in protest. Mubarek says the camp, which hosts about 70 per night and has been widely praised by neighborhood leaders and police as a good neighbor, is turning away 20 people a night who want to sleep there.

Mubarek says he doesn't see the sense in removing the encampment at the same time the city is waiving rules so that churches can host small groups of homeless campers in their cars, and thousands of other homeless men and women sleep outside each night in less supervised and more dangerous situations.

'What is the message they are sending us?' Mubarek says. 'They want us back on the streets? This is working.'

Mubarek noted that two formerly homeless residents of the new Bud Clark Commons apartments in Old Town have recently died of drug overdoses, but that none of the homeless at Right 2 Dream Too - which does not allow campers to drink or use drugs - have had such problems.

Ross Caron, spokesman for the bureau of development services, says the fines do not mean the city is intent on closing Right 2 Dream Too.

'Ultimately, we'd like to see these folks come in and go through the recreational campground process,' Caron says.

A number of leaders in the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood have said they support Right 2 Dream Too but that it should be moved to a less conspicuous site. Mubarek says he would be open to a move, but nobody has suggested an alternate property.

Owners of the West Burnside property are leasing the site to Right 2 Dream Too at no charge.

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Old Town camp defiant as city bureau fines pile up

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Michael Wright ready to fight for Right 2 Dream Too



by: Nick Fochtman Right 2 Dream Too residents Amber Dunks (left) and Carey White play with the site's unofficial mascot, Paige. City fines are piling up against the homeless encampment on Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside Street.

Michael Wright knows he's caught in the middle, and that he sort of asked for it.

Wright, co-owner of the property next to the Chinatown Gate on West Burnside Street, is landlord, in a sense, to the Right 2 Dream Too encampment for homeless men and women.

The city says the camp is illegal, and since January has levied fines against the group running the campsite. As of last week, the fines had reached \$2,800. Not one penny has been paid.

Right 2 Dream Too isn't liable for the fines, now levied at about \$1,200 a month and potentially going much higher. Wright and co-owner

Dan Cossette are responsible for the fines, which are issued as liens against the property.

Right 2 Dream Too leaders say they want to challenge the city's decision to declare their encampment illegal and that money to pay the fines would come from the funds they use for food.

Wright says he wants to support the homeless, but he doesn't know how long he can let the campers stay when in the end, he and Cossette are the two who may have to pay, and may face more drastic action by the city if Right 2 Dream Too stays in place.

City officials admit they may have to do something to make the homeless campsite disappear.

All this falls against a complicated political backdrop that includes the Feb. 22 shooting of two homeless men sleeping beneath the east end of the Morrison Bridge.

In January, when the fines started, a Right 2 Dream Too spokesman said the nonprofit would pay at least the initial amount. But Ibrahim Mubarak, a co-founder of Right 2 Dream Too, says his organization is already paying for electricity, food and servicing of the portable toilet on site, and that is taking up most of the group's funds.

"We don't have the money to pay those fines," Mubarak says.

Mubarak hopes to rally community support so the city backs off on the fines. Among his rallying points is the recent, unsolved shooting beneath the Morrison Bridge. Mubarak says places like the Right 2 Dream Too encampment could offer a safe alternative for the homeless.

Since it opened, there have been no police calls to Right 2 Dream Too. The group strictly enforces rules against violence, drugs and alcohol use at the site.

"This is something that the public is unaware of, that is happening constantly," Mubarak says. "People are being abused, and crimes are committed against the houseless community, and nothing is being done about it."

Possible city hearing

Mubarak also says the city's Bureau of Development Services has erred in requiring Right 2 Dream Too to meet the requirements of a recreational campground. City officials insist that those requirements, usually enforced for rural sites, are the most applicable rules they can find for a situation not directly addressed in city code: a homeless campsite on property zoned for commercial use in the city.

Matt Grumm, policy manager for City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the Bureau of Development Services, says the fines are not aimed at the homeless people living at Right 2 Dream Too.

"The property owner is being fined," Grumm says. "Right 2 Dream Too is not being fined. They're not supposed to be paying the fines."

Grumm says if the campsite remains and the fines aren't paid, the city might consider requesting a hearing at which it could ask for larger monthly fines or other action that could remove the tents.

'Fighting for them'

The pressure is on property owner Wright. He says Right 2 Dream Too leaders have told him they hope to get an injunction against the city levying fines.

"It sounds a little wistful to me," Wright says.

Wright says his contract with Right 2 Dream Too states that his property will be unencumbered from liens. In return, he is allowing Right 2 Dream Too to stay at no cost. Now, he sees a different scenario evolving.

"Eventually, it will probably be money out of my pocket," Wright says. "This has taken on a life of its own with me."

Initially, Wright had his "own agenda" when he leased his property to Right 2 Dream Too. Wright, who used to operate Cindy's Adult Bookstore at the site before the city had it closed for code violations, has battled the city for years because of his property. Last summer, he rented space to two food carts before the city declared the site illegal for food carts and began issuing fines.

But Wright says the ongoing battle with Right 2 Dream Too has morphed into something different for him.

"It kind of makes me feel good about it, and now I feel like fighting for them," he says. "It's crazy."

But even Wright is unsure how long he will sustain that fight, and how much in liens against his property he is willing to incur.

"I can't go on forever with it, but I'll shoot the dice a little," Wright says.

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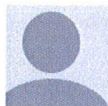
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Unions to city: Stop Right 2 Dream Too fines

Created on Wednesday, 06 June 2012 17:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Some city employees pledge funds for Old Town encampment



by: CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT, City union employees called for the city to reverse its decision declaring illegal the Right 2 Dream Too homeless encampment beside the Chinatown Gate on West Burnside Street.

The latest chapter in the ongoing saga surrounding the Right 2 Dream Too homeless encampment unfolded Saturday when some city union employees called for the city to reverse its decision declaring illegal the campsite beside the Chinatown Gate on West Burnside Street.

Portland's Bureau of [Development](#) Services has ruled that the campground is out of compliance with city code, and the city has fined the property owners \$1,282 per month.

But three unions, including Laborers Local 483, representing city government workers, last week voted to support Right 2 Dream Too,

which its founders call a "rest area." The unions asked the city to withdraw the fines.

AFSCME Local 88, which includes many Multnomah County workers, and International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 28 also joined the solidarity pledge and donated funds to Right 2 Dream Too.

The three unions painted their symbols on three of the doors that make up the patchwork fence separating Right 2 Dream Too from West Burnside Street.

The Bureau of Development Services has ruled that for Right 2 Dream Too to remain in place it would need to meet the code requirements that govern recreational [campgrounds](#) in rural areas.

Right 2 Dream Too organizers say those rules should not [apply](#) to a facility that keeps homeless people off the street in the city, and that leases its space from a private property owner.

Megan Hise, communications director for Laborers Local 483, says Saturday's events were timed to run the day of the Rose Festival Starlight parade for a reason. City officials have traditionally allowed residents to stake out camping spots on downtown sidewalks as a means of ensuring favored viewing places for the Rose Festival parades.

"It's to point out the contradiction," Hise says. "The city allows local residents to camp out for pleasure, but they won't allow people to pitch a tent for protection on the streets for survival."

Right 2 Dream Too has called for a Pitch A Tent Night June 8 at its site, encouraging supporters to set up tents along the Rose Parade route to better highlight what its organizers say is the contradiction in city policies.

Limited contact

Bureau of Development Services Manager Mike Liefeld says Right 2 Dream Too representatives have made "limited contact" with bureau staff about meeting code requirements and obtaining legal permits. Liefeld reports that the property owners have paid \$3,907 in fines and that the outstanding balance is down to \$1,335.

Michael Wright, co-owner of the property leased free of charge to Right 2 Dream Too, in the past has said he would let the campers stay as long as they did not become too big a burden on him. Wright says that he is also pursuing legal action to have the city's fines declared illegal.

Right 2 Dream Too opened in mid-October with about 70 people sleeping in tents hidden behind fences. Police have reported no problems at the site, and nearby property owners have praised the facility as a good neighbor.

Some leaders of the Chinese community, however, have said they believe Right 2 Dream Too is disrespectful of the Chinese community because of its position next to the Chinatown Gate.

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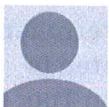
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Struggling to survive is not a criminal offense

Created on Thursday, 15 August 2013 07:00 | Written by [the Portland Human Rights Commission](#) | 

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My View: Choose words wisely; don't equate homelessness with lawlessness

Words are powerful, particularly when they come from City Hall and are accompanied by controversial and highly publicized government action.

The city's recent effort to address issues of livability around City Hall and elsewhere in the central core have resulted in headlines and sound bites that have many Portlanders concerned that their elected leaders and police are equating homelessness with lawlessness.

In an Aug. 7 [newspaper](#) article, "Police begin sidewalk sweep of the homeless," Mayor Charlie Hales is quoted as

saying, "This is about lawlessness."

News articles and television coverage addressing this issue have further fueled the fire for anonymous online posters who relate their own anecdotal experiences and further perpetuate the harmful and misguided stereotype of persons struggling with homelessness as a largely [criminal element](#).

The city's Human Rights Commission encourages all involved in this ongoing dialogue regarding livability and opportunity in the downtown area to resist the impulse to paint in broad strokes when discussing and taking action regarding as diverse a population as our fellow Portlanders struggling with homelessness.

While the acts and statements of the mayor and other elected officials likely do not intend to label all Portlanders struggling with homelessness as lawless, these comments can be easily misconstrued as an endorsement of that notion, which is counterproductive to the work our city leaders and others have undertaken to find solutions to Portland's housing crisis.

In times like these, where sound bites rule and the city's words can be easily misconstrued, we would encourage our elected leaders to actively distinguish those who are intentionally violating the law from those who are dealing with homelessness and trying to balance the limited choices those circumstances present with strict compliance with laws that can be difficult to understand.

In doing so, we also call on our leaders to acknowledge the growing number of Portlanders who are legitimately struggling with housing insecurity and to pursue solutions to this crisis as aggressively, if not more so, as any effort to improve livability in the central city by removing perceived lawbreakers.

Finally, we call on the media to responsibly report the actions and statements of everyone involved in the effort to balance the rights of our homeless and others in the city of Portland. Although Hales, in his statements to the media, noted that the eviction of people violating city law was a "livability issue," that was not as widely or prominently featured by the media as his statements regarding "lawlessness."

The media's presentation of the views our leaders espouse is what creates the framework for our understanding of those views. We hope they can be fairly and accurately presented so as not to exacerbate an already contentious problem.

We agree there is a legitimate need to address livability issues for all our citizens in the central city, including those without housing. We are wary, however, of any statement or action that equates homelessness with lawlessness.

By perpetuating an environment, even unintentionally, where "public safety" and "lawlessness" are issues directly associated with homelessness rather than crime itself, we are encouraging harmful images and stereotypes of an entire class of people as "dangerous" or "in disregard of the law." It is wrong to do so.

Members of Portland's homeless population are a diverse group of Portlanders who deserve respect and the right to be judged on an individual basis. In this climate, where words and actions can be misconstrued to suggest the opposite, Portland's leaders should say loudly and clearly that this is so.

Portland's Human Rights Commission works to eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen intergroup [relationships](#) and to foster greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in Portland.

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City deal could move Right 2 Dream Too camp

Created on Tuesday, 27 August 2013 15:52 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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(Image is Clickable Link) by: TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO - The Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp in Old Town could be moved as part of a city deal that includes dropping a lawsuit and ending city fines against the group.

Portland city officials are on the verge of a settlement to move the controversial Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp from its Old Town location at Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside Street.

The camp will be moved to city-owned property beneath the west end of the Broadway Bridge, according to several City Hall sources. The site is used as a parking lot, and area employees who have monthly parking agreements with the lot have been told to find new parking spaces this week.

Among the issues holding up an announcement of the deal is the length of the lease for the new campsite.

At the same time, the city has agreed to drop more than \$25,000 in fines levied against Right 2 Dream Too, if the homeless group agrees to drop its lawsuit against the city.

[Attorneys](#) representing Right 2 Dream Too have argued in Multnomah County [Circuit Court](#) that city's fines for being an illegal campsite are unwarranted. An agreement among the city, property owners and Right 2 Dream Too would drop the case shortly before a judge's ruling, which could be issued soon.

When Right 2 Dream Too set up the camp in October 2011, Portland city code did not include rules governing an urban homeless campsite. Bureau of Development Services officials soon afterward adopted state recreational campground rules to govern the Old Town camp.

The removal of the campsite next to the Chinatown Gate could affect other properties in the area. Across the street from Right 2 Dream Too, the Portland Development Commission's abandoned [Grove Hotel](#) was to be part of a project by developer David Gold, who planned to turn the building into an international youth hostel. Gold pulled out of the deal early this year, saying he could not commit to the project as long as the homeless camp remained across the street.

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Handshake spurs deal to relocate R2DT camp

Created on Thursday, 05 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Details being hammered out; Old Town homeless group ready to go



by: TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - Right 2 Dream Too organizer Ibrahim Mubarek stands at the proposed site of the new homeless campsite. Under a proposed settlement, the city will lease the new site to Right 2 Dream Too free of charge.

A handshake helped pave the way.

One of the stickiest and most highly visible Portland conflicts appears ready to be resolved this week with a deal to move the controversial Right 2 Dream Too homeless campground from its site at Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside Street.

The anticipated deal means each side gets some, but not all, of what it wanted. Right 2 Dream Too is getting a new, rent-free, city-owned site for a homeless campground underneath the Broadway Bridge ramp. But the lease on the new site is not indefinite.

Owners of the Right 2 Dream Too property are being let off the hook for more than

\$20,000 in city fines for [hosting](#) what the city claimed was an illegal urban campground. But they still face restrictions on their property that will make it difficult to gain revenue by hosting food carts.

The city gets rid of two big headaches. Right 2 Dream Too disappears from its site next to the Chinatown Gate. That distinction has angered Chinese community leaders and held up some Old Town development. Also, the property owners and Right 2 Dream Too representatives agree to drop their lawsuit against the city.

The deal sounds simple, yet for nearly two years there had been virtually no real progress concerning Right 2 Dream Too.

The handshake? That happened three weeks ago, according to Michael Wright, co-owner of the Right 2 Dream Too property, who says Mayor Charlie Hales approached him and offered his hand.

"He said, 'On behalf of the city of Portland I'd like to apologize for the way you've been treated for these last few years,'" Wright says.

Hales has been on vacation the past two weeks, but Dana Haynes, his communications director, says the meeting took place. "I can confirm that the mayor and Mr. Wright met before the mayor went on his vacation," Haynes says. "The mayor wanted to say: 'The past is the past. I don't care who was at fault then. It's important to find a site for Right 2 Dream Too.'"

Fritz takes new approach

To understand the significance of that handshake, you have to know a little bit about Wright's history, and the history of Right 2 Dream Too.

In 2007, city inspectors closed down Cindy's Adult Bookstore, which Wright, who has a murder conviction in his past, had been operating at the Burnside property. Wright had the building razed, and the property became an eyesore of an empty gravel lot where homeless people occasionally slept, people occasionally urinated and others scrawled graffiti.

Wright, who hopes to eventually sell the property, became convinced the city was trying to force him to sell at a discount, and he erected a series of signs on his lot accusing City Commissioners Randy Leonard and Dan Saltzman of illegally targeting him.

Looking to gain income from the property, in the summer of 2011 Wright leased space to two food cart owners who stayed open late and, by most accounts, improved the property. But Portland's Bureau of Development Services, once headed by Leonard and later by Saltzman, ruled that Wright could not [rent to food carts](#) because his property was unpaved and city rules require carts to sit on pavement.

Wright offered to pave the property for the food carts, but the bureau ruled that would be illegal due to a moratorium on new central city parking lots. So, in fall 2011, Wright began talking to talk to leaders of the Dignity Village homeless camp near Portland International Airport. Eventually he invited them to set up rent-free at his Burnside property.



by: TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - Right 2 Dream Too resident Marty looks over a series of doors that were among the city justifications for fining owners of the homeless campsite property. A deal to move the campsite will render the door/wall obsolete, unless it is moved to the new site underneath the Broadway Bridge.

The city responded by declaring the campsite illegal, though Portland city code does not have a regulation specifically governing urban campsites. The city began slapping monthly fines on the property owners that eventually reached more than \$20,000. Very little of the fines was ever paid. Wright and property co-owner Dan Cossette, along with Right 2 Dream Too, sued the city in Multnomah County Circuit Court, with Portland attorney Mark Kramer handling the case for free.

A stalemate had been reached — until three weeks ago. Multnomah County Circuit Judge Karin J. Immergut asked all sides to attempt an agreement before she ruled on

whether to dismiss the Right 2 Dream Too lawsuit. In addition, new pressure was exerted from Portland's Chinese community because a national conference bringing more than 500 Lee family members was scheduled for Labor Day weekend, and organizers wanted to hold a walk through Chinatown.

Attorney Kramer credits Hales and City Commissioner Amanda Fritz for much of the breakthrough. Fritz assumed control of the Bureau of Development Services this year. Kramer says she brought a new attitude toward the tricky zoning questions represented by Right 2 Dream Too.

According to Kramer, when he started working on the case he held two meetings with Commissioners Nick Fish and Dan Saltzman. Fish headed the housing bureau and was focused on homeless issues. Saltzman headed BDS, which had been issuing fines on the Right 2 Dream Too property. Neither, according to Kramer, actively sought a solution.

"Basically, the end game at that point was, 'You want to move? Find a place and we'll think about it,'" Kramer says.

Fritz, he says, took a different approach, and found a site. "She's been very positive," he says. "She's been a visionary in a sense. Yes, we do need this alternative model, not everybody can go to a shelter."

Lease terms for new site

Right 2 Dream Too has positioned itself as an alternative for homeless people who can't go into shelters for social reasons. Some are couples, and most shelters host men or women exclusively. Some have pets — not allowed in shelters. Others suffer mental illnesses that make them uncomfortable in a crowded shelter.

"Right 2 Dream Too is really a different model for dealing with that population, and Amanda, to her credit, realizes there is something there," Kramer says.

Fish says that while he headed the housing bureau he had staff look at the possibility of designating Right 2 Dream Too a transitional housing campground, but the Right 2 Dream Too leaders were not interested. Beyond that, Fish isn't sure finding a new site for the campground or encouraging other such campgrounds for the homeless makes good policy.

"It doesn't fit," Fish says. "It's not our model, which is long-term, cost-effective strategies to combat homelessness, and it's built around permanent housing."

Fish sees Right 2 Dream Too as a short-term solution. The housing bureau, he says, has limited resources, and he'd rather see them spent on building and finding apartments.

"I understand the temptation to look for short-term fixes, but we've got to continue to look long term and to seek the funding for what we know works," Fish says. "A campground is no substitute for a home."

One of the final issues holding up an agreement was precisely how short- or long-term a lease the city would give Right 2 Dream Too. In initial talks, Right 2 Dream Too insisted on a one-year minimum. The city started at six months.

In an Aug. 21 proposed final offer, Fritz agreed to a one-year lease, with a working group to include city and Right 2 Dream Too representatives looking at what happens after that year. An alternative site could be found or the lease could be extended — assuming Right 2 Dream Too upholds occupancy and "good neighbor" standards.

In that offer, Fritz wrote in an email detailing the plan, "While it is possible this site may become a permanent site for the resting community organized by R2DToo, the longevity will depend on how well it works out for all parties."

Meanwhile, property owner Wright told the Tribune early last week that he was starting to feel left out of the negotiating process. He said he would not sign any deal that didn't allow him to once again lease his property to food cart owners.

But eventually Wright relented, saying he would not hold up Right 2 Dream Too's move to a new site.

"I'm in no worse shape than I was when this started," Wright says. "I'm still sitting there with an empty lot with almost no ability to pay the taxes on it."

For his part, Wright says the handshake from Hales mattered, no matter what the reason.

"I'm guessing (Hales), being a politician, the best thing to do with somebody they think is a dangerous nut is to go ahead and diffuse them, whether they mean it or not," Wright says.

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Sources Say: Fritz offers a lesson in media savvy with deal

Created on Thursday, 12 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Jim Redden](#) | 

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City Commissioner Amanda Fritz showed recently that she certainly has her own negotiating style while working out the move of the Right 2 Dream Too homeless campground from Chinatown to its new site under the west end of the Broadway Bridge.

Government transparency and equal access don't appear to be high on her list, according to sources involved in the negotiations. Favorable press, on the other hand, rates way up there.

With every media outlet in town trying to figure out the status of R2DT, in an August [email](#) to those involved in the negotiations Fritz wrote, "I believe both you and I desire to talk to Street Roots and the Mercury first, when the time comes, to appreciate their attention and concern on houselessness issues."

For the record, the Tribune was first to report the story in early October 2011 as Old Town property owner Michael Wright turned his vacant lot into a "rest area" for homeless people. The Right 2 Dream Too camp sprouted just about the time nearly 400 Occupy Portland movement members were staking a claim to Lownsdale and Chapman squares a block from City Hall.

Midway through negotiations to move the camp, Fritz baffled attorneys when she insisted on a session with the Right 2 Dream Too folks and some city staff without attorneys in the room — not even the city attorney.

Fritz got the deal done, as long as Pearl District representatives don't get too carried away with objections to the new site for the homeless campground. Right 2 Dream Too has a one-year lease on the city-owned parking lot and thousands in fines have been erased as part of the deal.

City auditor candidate's strategy adds up

Mary Hull Caballero is not yet facing any opposition in her race for Portland City Auditor, and that's not entirely because of dumb luck.

Caballero, a Metro performance auditor, originally filed a campaign committee to run for Metro auditor in March. But she switched it to run for city auditor in July, weeks before incumbent LaVonne Griffin-Valade announced she would not run for re-election. Now Caballero admits she heard rumors Griffin-Valade might pass on another term before she made the switch, although she could not be certain.

Although Caballero does not have any name familiarity, her opposition will be limited because the city charter requires candidates to be either a [Certified Public Accountant](#), Certified Internal Auditor or Certified Management Accountant.

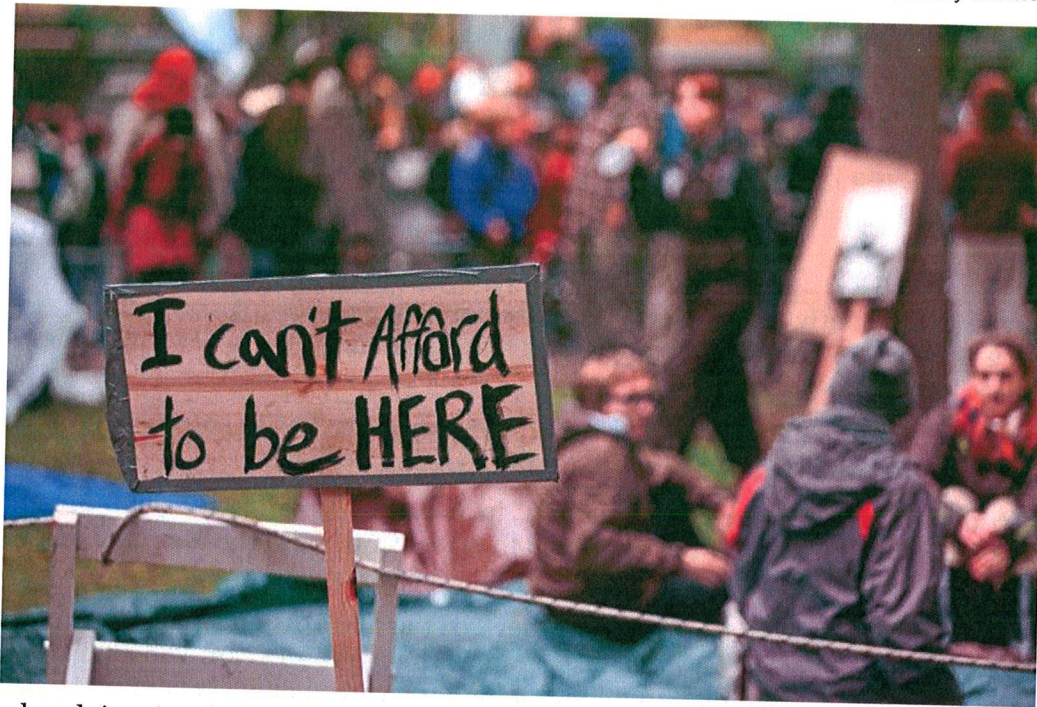
by: TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER ONSTOTT - Campers with Occupy Portland took up residence in Chapman Square in October 2011. Two years later, the loosely organized movement is handing out ID cards to distinguish its protesters from homeless people.

What do we want? Occupy ID cards!

At first Sources thought the email press release was a joke.

Nope.

It seems Occupy Portland began issuing "official membership" ID Cards last week. The loosely organized direct action group's free wheeling general assembly that sets policies approved the new ID cards to distinguish homeless camper protesters from homeless campers who merely cause trouble, or



something like that.

But then, after the first 40 cards were issued, other people associated with the movement questioned the decision, so the idea will apparently be debated and decided again at another assembly meeting.

In the meantime, if you have an official Occupy ID card, hang onto it. Someday it might be more valuable than an early Garbage [Pail Kids](#) card.

Bureau's whistleblower treatment heads to court

Portland's police command is under attack again in federal court, this time by a desk clerk

who claims in a lawsuit that Police Bureau superiors berated her and violated her constitutional rights even though they knew she was a victim of domestic abuse.

An attorney for Kathryn Elise Johns filed a lawsuit Sept. 6 in U.S. District Court, seeking an unspecified amount of damages and changes in Portland Police Bureau policies on equal employment and treatment of whistleblowers.

She also wants the court to restrain bureau officials from retaliating against employees who exercise their free speech rights.

Portland city officials do not comment on pending litigation. The city has several weeks to submit an answer to the court. No court date has been set for the case.

According to her 39-page complaint, Johns, who has worked for 16 years as a precinct desk clerk, claims that she faced discrimination and angry tirades from her superiors because of her gender and her status as a domestic violence victim.

City homeless camp deal worries some

Created on Thursday, 12 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Neighbors say Right 2 Dream Too could attract wrong crowd



by: TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - Ibrahim Mubarak, co-founder of the Right 2 Dream Too Old Town camp, stands under the Broadway Bridge where the homeless group plans to move as part of a city deal negotiated during the past few weeks.

One of the more interesting meetings residents of Station Place Tower have had in recent years took place two weeks ago. City Commissioner Amanda Fritz was working toward a deal to move the Right 2 Dream Too homeless campground from its highly visible site on West Burnside Street.

The spot her staff had identified as the new home for Right 2 Dream Too, while tucked away from public view under the west end of the Broadway Bridge, is about 30 paces from Station Place Tower, an [affordable housing](#) apartment building for more than 200 senior citizens. At the meeting, Fritz outlined her plans to about 60 of the

residents.

Many in the group expressed sentiments similar to those of Nancy Snyder, who has lived in Station Place Tower for seven years.

"I feel they have a right to be somewhere, but I don't feel it's good for them or for us," Snyder says.

Snyder is 64 and disabled, and says the Pearl District address for Station Place belies the status of many of its residents. Many live on fixed incomes. A number, she says, suffer from [dementia](#) and wander outside the building in vulnerable states. Snyder says she's just fortunate to have been offered an apartment at Station Place.

"I'm no more privileged than they are," she says, referring to the Right 2 Dream Too residents.

Fritz was instrumental this week in securing an agreement to move the Old Town homeless "rest area" to the new city-owned parking lot under the bridge's ramp. The deal was reached after weeks of negotiations and calls for a one-year lease on the site by Right 2 Dream Too. As part of the deal, the city also dropped more than \$20,000 in fines against the group for camping in an urban area.

Find a better place

According to Snyder, Station Place residents have little choice but to walk under the Broadway Bridge on their routes to Union Station or MAX stops, which will bring them in contact with Right 2 Dream Too residents. Snyder's not worried about the Right 2 Dream Too residents so much as others who might be

attracted to the area.

She says many of the Station Place residents have sent angry emails since the meeting with Fritz, whom she says told the group they could not always choose their neighbors.

"You can't choose your neighbors but we chose our neighborhood," Snyder says.

Barbara Weerth, another disabled Station Place resident, says she will feel less safe but she also doesn't think the new Right 2 Dream Too site, with its lack of sunlight, abundant pigeon poop and exhaust fumes is safe for the homeless residents.

"I find it absurd that in a city this size they couldn't find a better place than under a bridge ramp," Weerth says.

A few Station Place residents, including John Hubbird, who has volunteered at Dignity Village, say Right 2 Dream Too deserves its new site based on the group's record. "That needs to be honored and respected," Hubbird says.

Fritz and Right 2 Dream Too leader Ibrahim Mubarak say the move might improve the area underneath the Broadway Bridge. They point to Right 2 Dream Too's spotless record on West Burnside Street near the Chinatown Gate, where not only have they not had trouble with police, but police have commended them for acting as good neighbors and assisting with occasional Old Town dust-ups.

Mubarak says Right 2 Dream Too contributed to making Old Town's streets safer, not more dangerous. Strict rules against drinking, drugs and violence are enforced at the campground. On a larger scale, he points to the number of homeless people whose lives were bettered after stays at Right 2 Dream Too, claiming 71 found housing and 72 found jobs. Also, about 100 people a night who would have been sleeping on the streets have instead been inside Right 2 Dream Too.

Mubarak acknowledges that the West Burnside location kept Right 2 Dream Too residents under constant public scrutiny. But he doesn't think the shadowy new location will make a difference in behavior at the campground. In fact, he says the lack of constant attention could be a boon.

"We'll be more relaxed and can build a better campground," Mubarak says. And he doesn't think Right 2 Dream Too will truly escape attention. "The city is going to come by and be Peeping Toms, and the neighborhood association too," he says.

Old Town options

On Aug. 28, the Pearl District Neighborhood Association wrote a letter to Fritz objecting to "encampment in our neighborhood or any other neighborhood of the city."

The association decried the lack of public process involved in moving Right 2 Dream Too to its new site.

Mubarak has throughout the life of Right 2 Dream Too insisted that the facility is not an encampment or campground. He calls it a rest area. Among the reasons, he says, is that a city ordinance allows for two homeless campgrounds. There's currently only one, Dignity Village, near Portland International Airport. He does not want Right 2 Dream Too to be considered the second. In fact, Mubarak says that he would like to see the Right 2 Dream Too model replicated in a number of different parts of the city.

"If they want to call us a campsite all right, but we know what we are," Mubarak says.

Fritz on Monday called the new Right 2 Dream Too site a "pilot project."

A settlement agreement signed by the property owners, Right 2 Dream Too representatives and Fritz is notable for what it doesn't say as much as for what it does. Right 2 Dream Too gets its new site under the Broadway Bridge. A lawsuit filed by Right 2 Dream Too and the property owners against the city will be dismissed. The Old Town property owners get more than \$20,000 in city fines erased.

But nowhere does the document say what the property owners, led by Michael Wright, can and cannot do with the land once Right 2 Dream Too departs.

Wright is being evasive about the site's future. He says Fritz has told him the city is strongly interested in purchasing his property. He says he paid about \$1 million for the site nearly 30 years ago, and he figures he'll take \$2 million for it now. But if the city doesn't make him that offer, he has uses planned for the property "that may be of benefit to other people."

The Right 2 Dream Too camp sprouted two years ago after the city forced Wright to remove food carts from

his property and fined him for having leased his land to the food cart owners. After that, Wright told Dignity Village representatives in early October 2011 that he would let them set up on his West Burnside property for free.

"I'm not going to sit with an empty lot paying taxes on it without doing something with the property," Wright says. "I have a lot of ideas."

Attorney Mark Kramer, who represented Right 2 Dream Too and the property owners as a volunteer through the lawsuit and agreement talks, says that two weeks ago Portland Development Commission officials proposed an independent appraisal for the property and offered to buy it from Wright and his partners. Kramer says he thinks the city is genuinely interested in the purchase, and should pursue that course.

Kramer says the settlement stipulates only that Wright cannot locate another overnight campground on the property, but doesn't bar him from a variety of day uses.

"If PDC and the city know what's good for them, they'll make a deal with Michael Wright," Kramer says.

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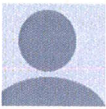
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Pearl neighbors gather funds for possible homeless camp legal fight

Created on Friday, 13 September 2013 12:01 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Right 2 Dream Too's homeless campers shouldn't pack their bags just yet. The Pearl District Neighborhood Association voted Thursday night to spend at least \$10,000 to pursue legal action against the city of Portland, if necessary, to stop the move of Right 2 Dream Too to a new location beneath the Broadway Bridge.

Board member Joan Pendergast says that the association hopes legal action won't be required. If it is, the \$10,000 is expected to be part of a larger sum that would include money contributed by Pearl District developers.

The new site for Right 2 Dream Too, part of an agreement negotiated by City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, sits next to a Pearl District [affordable housing apartment](#) building for seniors. Residents of the building expressed concern about the possible homeless camp and safety of elderly people who would walk by the camp each day.

Commissioner Fritz was not available for comment on Friday.

Fritz announced the deal this week to move Right 2 Dream Too from the controversial and highly visible site it had held for nearly two years on West Burnside Street, next to the Chinatown Gate. At Thursday's meeting, to which Fritz was invited but did not attend, Pearl District residents expressed dismay that they were not included in discussions about the move of Right 2 Dream Too before a final decision was made.

"If a restaurant wants to put a sign up there's a design review for everything that goes in the neighborhood," says Pendergast. "We're hoping that somebody will have some sense of realization that this isn't the way you operate. This is not the way Portland works."

Board President Patty Gardner says the neighborhood association is not certain what type of legal action might be taken, if it is needed. Possibilities include land-use appeals or a lawsuit in [circuit court](#).

Gardner says she has spoken to Fritz about Right 2 Dream Too only once, and then only briefly. "She had no intention of talking to us until this was done," she says.

In addition, Gardner says the city has not made clear how Right 2 Dream Too would fit into the zoning at its new site.

"There are agencies set up, permits set up, there is a public process set up," Gardner says. "How is (Right 2 Dream Too) able to avoid this? Is the city holding themselves up to a different standard than they would hold any private citizen to?"

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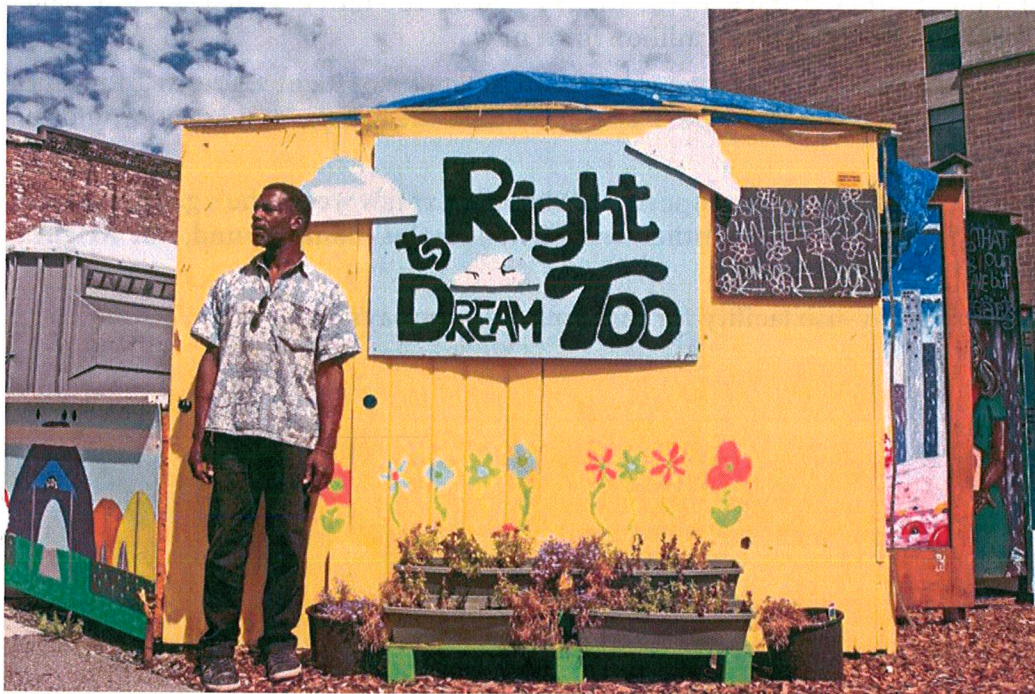
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Legality of 'Dreamers' camp still uncertain

Created on Thursday, 19 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Peter Korn](#) | 

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Owner of original Burnside homeless site awaits city offer



by: TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - A resident who gave his name as Clarence stands outside Right 2 Dream Too, which city commissioner Amanda Fritz says would have been judged in compliance with city code - if property owners had gone through the city's permitting process.

As far as the city of Portland is concerned, that flap about Right 2 Dream Too was just a big misunderstanding. The homeless campground/rest area on an Old Town private lot would have been [legal](#), says city Commissioner Amanda Fritz, if Right 2 Dream Too had obtained proper approvals from the Portland Bureau of Development Services before its tents went up in October 2011.

The distinction is especially important this week, because last week the Pearl District Neighborhood Association voted to commit \$10,000 to a fund to pursue legal action against the city of Portland to stop Right 2 Dream Too's

move. Fritz brokered a deal last week to move the homeless campground to a city-owned parking lot beneath the Broadway Bridge ramp, which is next to a Pearl District affordable [housing](#) building for senior citizens.

Pearl District officials say siting Right 2 Dream Too in their neighborhood was not subjected to the normal public process, and may not meet zoning requirements. They say if the campground was considered illegal by the city at its location next to the Chinatown Gate on Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside Street, it should be considered illegal under the Broadway Bridge.

So, if the move goes through, the neighborhood officials plan either a land-use appeal or a lawsuit in circuit court.

Erasing city fines

Fritz told the Tribune this week that the campground on Burnside would have been declared legal if the property owners had asked beforehand for the proper approvals.

That's not the way Burnside property owner Michael Wright remembers the process. Wright and property co-owners were fined more than \$20,000 for hosting the homeless rent-free. The deal to move Right 2 Dream Too includes erasing those fines, with Wright and Right 2 Dream Too dropping a lawsuit against the city for ruling the campground illegal.

Wright says when Right 2 Dream Too began erecting tents on his property 18 months ago, Bureau of Development Services officials came to tell him he needed to follow procedures to learn if the campground

would be declared legal. But Wright says he never had the sense that city officials were going to approve the campground.

"I don't think there was a person involved in the process who had any intention of allowing that to be an illegal campsite for homeless use," Wright says. "They were looking for a way to stamp it out of existence."

Now, Fritz is hoping Right 2 Dream Too at its new site will be declared legal. She says the fact that the new site is on public property and the old site was private property shouldn't matter.

"We're going to be holding ourselves to exactly the standards that we asked for on the current site," she says. "The city has to comply with its own laws just like any private (property) user."

In answer to Pearl District officials who criticized the lack of public participation in the negotiations that yielded last week's agreement, Fritz says, "It will be a very public process."

Wright, in the meantime, is waiting for a promised outside appraisal of his property, having been told the city will make an offer to buy his vacant lot in conjunction with the Right 2 Dream Too move. Wright says he paid \$1 million for the lot about 30 years ago and will take \$2 million for it now.

Wright is curious about what happens if a Pearl District appeal holds up the move of Right 2 Dream Too from his property. He wonders if, now that the city fines have been erased, should the campground stay, would the city begin fining him again?

Wright says if the city doesn't offer him enough for his property within the next few weeks, he's got plans for the site. The new agreement bars him from putting up another overnight homeless campground, but Wright says this time he won't offer overnight accommodations.

"If they lowball me, I am going to put in a day-use facility for the homeless," he says.

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Find a better place to relocate homeless

Created on Thursday, 19 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Barbara Weerth](#) | 

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My View: Some Pearl residents just as vulnerable as R2DT campers

This is an [email](#) sent to City Commissioner Amanda Fritz:

Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to visit Station Place Tower Apartments (Northwest Ninth Avenue near Lovejoy).

While you did an admirable job of advocating for Right 2 Dream Too (although I do not believe it is in their best interest to live under the Lovejoy Ramp with the pigeon poop, no sunlight and exhaust fumes), it would have been nice had you shown some empathy and understanding toward those of us residing here. Many of the statements you made regarding the folks at Right 2 Dream Too apply to those of us living here.

Most of the residents at Station Place Tower Apartments live on a fixed income that is well below the norm for the area and live on a month-to-month basis. Many have physical and mental disabilities that make living a challenge and safety concerns a priority.

We have chosen to live here because of the environment (safe neighborhood, easy accessibility to public transportation and the necessities of life, i.e. grocery stores, post office, etc.) and its walkability (sidewalks, lack of hills, parks) rating. Additionally, we waited months (years for some) for a vacant apartment in order to move in here.

Therefore, when you tell us that Right 2 Dream Too has no options, those who live here also fall into that category. We don't have the financial resources to move, we are physically unable to pack and move our belongings, it would be emotionally hard to leave a community we are vested in, and most apartments in our price range have waiting lists.

Many comments were made that Right 2 Dream Too residents were good neighbors and that we should be good neighbors. Do you think we are not good neighbors? Being apprehensive because you are moving a homeless camp into our neighborhood does not make us bad neighbors. I notice you are not moving them into your neighborhood (and what would the reaction of your neighbors be if you did?).

We, too, are good neighbors. Many of us volunteer for various groups throughout the city, we take care of our neighborhood by picking up trash and watching out for others, and we take care of fellow residents who need help.

You also commented that we do not get to choose our neighbors. You are right! We do, however, get to choose our neighborhoods. And while we knew there were vacant lots that would be developed either into some sort of commercial enterprise or multifamily residences, not one of us anticipated a homeless camp of transient people.

According to what you stated, my understanding is that it is not the same 100 people each night and that there are some who come to spend the day. You also stated that they police themselves and would help police the other homeless people in the neighborhood because they know one another.

I do not understand how that would work because the police are not necessarily effective in dealing with the small number we have sleeping in that area, using drugs and alcohol. Because this is a transient population, I also do not understand how we are to know who is part of their community and who is just hanging out. None of that eases our apprehension.

Finally, it is my naive understanding that our elected officials are here to work for all of us, not just a small sector of our society. Decisions should be made after gathering as much information as possible and based on the greater good.

You admitted you did not check into our neighborhood before selecting this site. You also stated it is the only site available (which seems like an absurdity, considering the size of Portland).

So, since you are advocating for Right 2 Dream Too, who do we have in a position of authority or power to advocate for us as we, too, are a fragile, vulnerable group of seniors?

Barbara Weerth moved to Portland four years ago to be closer to family and chose her new home because it offered all the things she desired to live a productive, safe, secure and independent life.

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[Corwin McAllister](#) • 8 days ago

Unless you start cramming boxcars full of them to ship off to Parts Unknown, I don't see how you can remove the homeless population from anywhere near where most of the social services are.

If you're truly living month-to-month, you must have stood in line for clothing or food boxes with these tatterdemalion miscreants at some point. Well, I'm in these lines all the time, living much as you do — only in a dingy old building full of vermin and lead — and I have yet to have seen a single person get rolled or stabbed, or anything worse than the occasional shouting match or fight. I'm talking eight years.

Is your fear based on hard facts, or bogeyman fear-mongering misrepresentation sprinkled with a smidgen of exaggerated anecdote?

All that aside, where is the feasible solution you neglected to substitute? Maybe we ought to found a colony on Mars and send TPI, OutsiderIn, Sisters of the Road — to name a few — and DHS up there alongside all the homeless who sully your petite bourgeoisie Epcot Center? Because it sounds to me like all your kind-sounding words amount to "Anywhere but here!"

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monica thomas • 8 days ago

hi my name is monica the homeless come from differtent towns that was flooded and the came for higher grounds stop lowering backwards. I can help as a job I will leave my job and have this company give me a job and I will help all I can.there is hope this is are country first. let us do the wright thing we can help.

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Our Opinion: Stop-gap solutions don't help homeless

Created on Thursday, 26 September 2013 07:00 | Written by [Editorial Board](#) | 

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In trying to solve one large problem — namely, the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp that's anchored itself at the Chinatown gate — Portland city officials are on the verge of creating a new and potentially larger problem to take its place.

City leaders cannot be blamed for trying to address an intolerable situation, but their actions to date demonstrate they lack a higher-level and longer-term strategy for dealing with the homeless population in Portland.

The city has been playing catch-up every step of the way as it first tried to prevent and now attempts to relocate the Right 2 Dream Too encampment. The latest plan is to move the campground to a city-owned parking lot beneath the Broadway Bridge ramp.

Predictably, the neighbors of that site are less than enthused about having a homeless camp nearby. The Pearl District Neighborhood Association already is pledging to take the city to court if it proceeds with the camp's relocation.

Pearl District representatives argue, quite logically, that if Right 2 Dream Too is illegal in its present location, it also will be illegal a few blocks to the north. City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who brokered the deal to move Right 2 Dream Too, is now countering that the camp would have been legal on its current, private lot in Old Town/Chinatown if only the owner of the site had gone through the land-use process.

Our own reporting, however, tells a different story. Officials from the Bureau Of Development Services did everything they could 18 months ago to deter Right 2 Dream Too. We happen to agree with them on that score, but Fritz cannot rewrite history as a way of justifying the move to the Broadway Bridge. After all, the city has levied more than \$20,000 in fines against the owners of the Right 2 Dream Too site, even as it now tries to buy the land to facilitate the move.

Let's be clear on two points: First, Right 2 Dream Too is a hindrance to business and development in downtown Portland and it ought to be relocated. Second, a move to the Broadway Bridge site, while it may clear the way for redevelopment of the Grove Hotel in Old Town, solves nothing. It simply shifts the problem to a new location.

City officials are grasping for a solution, but they also must think about the long-term consequences of shortsighted actions. Portland needs a grander vision for how to deal with the homeless population — providing shelter and services for those who accept them, and moving away from makeshift campgrounds that detract from their surrounding neighborhoods.

One possibility that's been discussed is to repurpose the never-used Wapato Jail in North Portland as a shelter and service hub for the homeless. The \$58 million facility has plenty of rooms, beds, bathrooms and an industrial-size kitchen. It sits on a large parcel of land and has capacity for social-service agencies to house offices or staff there. Plus, Multnomah County already spends money to keep the jail mothballed.

Wapato is somewhat distant from downtown service providers, but Portland is supposed to be known for its innovative transportation. Surely, the community can provide a few shuttle buses to travel back and forth to the site.

Whether a long-term strategy involves Wapato or not, it's obvious that Portland's 10-year plan to end homelessness — a plan that is now nearly 10 years old — did not receive the resources necessary to achieve its goal. This city must not look for quick and seemingly easy remedies to problems such as Right 2 Dream Too. Instead, it should focus attention on a larger vision for helping the homeless — a vision that doesn't include creating a burden for individual neighborhoods.

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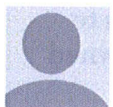
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Skepti-Cal • 7 hours ago

Dignity Village is in an out-of-the way location, and that seems to be working. Residents use public transit to get around. I think this could work from Wapato as well.

^ | ▾ Reply Share ›

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Richard_Ellmyer • 4 days ago

On the surface housing the homeless in Wapato may seem like a good idea. It isn't. In fact it's a terrible idea discarded along with many other bad ideas for Wapato use by Multnomah county commissioners years ago.

The homeless are not criminals and cannot be locked up to keep them out of sight. They would be free to come and go, wandering around North Portland as they pleased.

The current and previous mayors of Portland have long targeted North Portland aka House District 44 as a dumping ground for Public/Regulated Affordable/Low-Income/Publicly Subsidized Affordable Housing which equals Means Tests + Government Subsidy + Rental Agreement. The homeless citizens of Multnomah county fall into this category. North Portland/House District 44 has the highest concentration of Public/Regulated Affordable/Low-Income/Publicly Subsidized Affordable Housing of any House district in the state of Oregon (with support from its state representative Tina Kotek, state senator Chip Shields and North Portland Multnomah county commissioner Loretta Smith). And now the Pamplin Media Group proposes an increase to that indefensible number. If the homeless housed at Wapato started roaming around Pamplin's pride in North Portland, the University of Portland, you can be sure that Portland Tribune editorial support would abruptly change

[see more](#)

Right 2 Dream Too camp move legal? Hearing Thursday on proposal

Created on Monday, 30 September 2013 01:00 | Written by [Jim Redden](#) | 

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(Image is Clickable Link) by: TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - City officials say the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp set up in Old Town can legally move to a city-owned parking lot under the Broadway Bridge. A hearing on the proposal is planned Thursday afternoon at City Hall.

The director of the Portland Bureau of Development Service has determined that zoning codes allow a controversial homeless camp to move under the west end of the Broadway Bridge — the same homeless camp that has incurred more than \$20,000 in fines for city zoning code violations.

The City Council will hold a hearing on the determination on Thursday afternoon. The hearing was requested by Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who is in charge of BDS and has brokered the deal [to relocate](#) the camp from its current site at Northwest Fourth Avenue and Burnside.

Fritz has requested six hours for the hearing. She is asking

the council vote to [support](#) the determination.

That position is likely to be challenged by opponents to the move, including representatives of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association.

In a Sept. 26 letter, BDS Director Paul Scarlett says the city-owned land under the bridge is zoned EXd, which stands for Central Employment. Although the property is being used as a parking lot, Scarlett says a homeless camp is also allowed as a Community Services use. Scarlett, who refers to the camp as a "rest area," says no land-use review is required.

"My recommended determination is that the proposed rest area is a Community Services use that is permitted outright in the EXd zone without a land use review or design review," Scarlett says in the letter.

The letter was written in response to questions raised about the zoning by two people on opposite sides of the [dispute](#). One is Ibrahim Mubarak, who is involved with the non-profit organization called Right 2 Dream Too that is operating the current camp. The other is T.B. Dame, president of Williams/Dame & Associates, a development company that opposes the move.

The move is part of a settlement in a lawsuit between the city and the owners of the property where the homeless camp is located. BDS has fined the owners more than \$20,000 for violating city codes. The owners sued to have fines dismissed. The city has agreed to drop the fines if the camp will move to the location under the bridge.

Under the deal struck by Fritz, Right 2 dream Too will operate the new homeless camp. Scarlett's letter says permits will be required for water and electricity, and any permanent structure, such as a fence, will be subject to a city design review.

Scarlett's letter can be read at www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=50265&a=465264.

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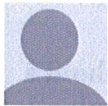
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Ikoerjtopied • a day ago

This is pure political correctness, and will probably be ruled illegal, after the city spends a lot of our money on lawyers to fight off a lawsuit about this probably-illegal decision. I guess Amanda didn't want to be re-elected again anyway - she's not good at the job...

3 ^ | ▾ Reply Share ›

Avatar

Corwin McAllister • 3 days ago

This could be an opportunity to show nervous Pearlites that homeless people can be sanitary and well-behaved (maybe even worth being regarded as fellow human beings). I hope the leadership of Right 2 Dream Too is prepared to police residents in a location that will be less visible than the current location; I remember the riff-raff problems during the first year of Dignity Village and the recent Occupy Portland camp.

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