

9 October 2015

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission  
Re: Proposed Public Right-of-Way Vacation Request of N Lombard at N Richmond on  
PSC meeting November 17, 2015

Dear Chairman Andre Baugh and Commission Members,

Before you is a request to vacate a portion of N Lombard at N Richmond Street in St Johns commonly referred to as 'Ivy Island' (traffic island in the St Johns/Lombard Plan) which is a part of proposed 'The Union at St Johns' development project. We support the proposed vacation and present our reasons for that support below.

The Portland Comprehensive Plan contains STREET VACATION CRITERIA Policy Section 6.21 Right-of-Way Opportunities for evaluating such requests. Below are the five objectives to be addressed together with suggested facts and findings supporting the street vacation as proposed:

**Objectives:**

A. Evaluate opportunities and the existing and future need for a bikeway, walkway, or other transportation use or potential for use as a stormwater management facility when considering vacation of any right-of-way.

facts: The St Johns-Lombard Plan, pages 36-38 (Lombard/Richmond Intersection) speak to the recommended action for the vacation of Ivy Island and the redesign of the N Lombard/Richmond intersection. The Plan states "Several alternative plans were considered for improving the Lombard/Richmond intersection. The main objectives of the redesign were to create a stronger gateway to the business district, calm traffic, and enhance safety for children and other pedestrians crossing Lombard." The Plan continues "The preferred alternative keeps traffic flow on Richmond and Ivanhoe. A signal is installed at the intersection of Lombard at Richmond to slow traffic, increase pedestrian safety, and improve visibility for the St Johns commercial core. The newly created space can function as a plaza, and offer an opportunity to create an enhanced gateway to the downtown business district." The main alternative considered in the planning process (page 38) would result "in additional bridge-bound traffic downtown, creating congestion and decreasing pedestrian safety."

The proposal retains right-of-way along the proposed development and reconstruction of the current sidewalk (walkway) of six feet or greater together with a public plaza; sufficient area for bikes in the new 90 degree reconstructed intersection (50 ft right-of-way) and provides more space than the current narrow 'current curved slip' for bikes; the city can condition the approval to retain area sufficient to move any facilities present and require the developer to pay for the moving of the facilities. The plaza needs to be designed with the public's use in mind and that it not be merely an extension of the adjoining commercial uses on the ground floor of the proposed development.

The approval of the request can include conditions that would include construction of stormwater management facilities if needed.

B. As a condition of street vacation, require pedestrian and bicycle facilities if needed, with first preference for dedicated right-of-way and, secondarily, through a public walkway and bikeway easement.

facts: See A. above.

C. Acquire or control parcels of land that may be needed in the future for any transportation or transportation-related stormwater management purpose when the opportunity arises through sale, donation, or land use action.

facts: No additional parcels have been identified as being needed.

D. Preserve existing and abandoned rail rights-of-way and examine their potential for future rail freight, passenger service, or recreational trail uses.

facts: No rail rights-of-way are involved in this request.

E. Consider the need for maintaining right-of-way for other infrastructure needs.

facts: The St Johns/Lombard Plan has been adopted by the City of Portland that recognizes the need and importance of moving Ivy Island northerly in order to create a safer vehicle and pedestrian access to St Johns. The need for a safer N Lombard/Charleston intersection for vehicles and pedestrians was recognized by the community as enunciated in the Plan and that a redesign and reconstruction of the N Lombard/Richmond intersection would accomplish that objective. The current development adjacent Lombard 'slip' makes for a dangerous intersection at N Charleston and Lombard, especially for traffic, bikes and pedestrians trying to cross heading westerly. I utilize this intersection almost daily (mostly to visit the Library) and have on numerous occasions almost been hit by drivers not seeing me (or ignoring me) as they enter downtown St Johns. The intersection is used intensively by those utilizing the library and James John Elementary School. The redesigned and reconstructed Lombard/Richmond intersection would, by design slow traffic, improve visibility, and with the addition of a marked crosswalk and lights would meet the intent of improving safety in this location (Transportation Actions TC 5 on page 54 and TC 20 on page 56).

Thank you for your consideration of our support for the vacation,

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