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January 7, 2016

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Mayor Hales and City Commissioners,

On December 15, 2015, the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) held a hearing on proposed street vacation RW #8030, SE Harrison St east of SE 3rd Ave. Much of the discussion at hearing focused on a potential future use of SE Harrison St and the adjacent OMF parcel: relocation of Right to Dream Too.

After much deliberation, the PSC voted against the street vacation request by a vote of 6-3.

Sixteen members of the public provided oral testimony, and we received numerous additional letters from those who may be affected should the street be vacated, including advocates from the Hosford-Abernathy Neighborhood Association, Right To Dream Too advocates, Central Eastside Industrial Council members, employees of the adjacent property and residents from other U.S. cities.

We understand that the purview of the PSC in street vacation requests is limited and does not extend to any potential future use of the property. We further acknowledged that the business adjacent to the proposed vacated street, East Side Plating, does not have a legal right to access its facility via the OMF property. For the purposes of a street vacation, this means that SE Harrison St technically should not be considered critical to East Side Plating's operation.

The PSC found credible the testimony that East Side Plating had, with at least the tacit knowledge of the Oregon Department of Transportation (which at that time owned the OMF parcel), used that parcel for many years as a transportation facility, in conjunction with SE Harrison St, for the purpose of delivering liquid chemicals to the south side of their facility. Additionally, given the longstanding City policy to retain and support industrial uses in the Central Eastside industrial sanctuary, and knowing parking is at a premium in the Inner East side generally, it makes it difficult for us to find that SE Harrison has no transportation function.



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The PSC recommends that if City Council chooses to approve the vacation, the following conditions should be included in the approval:

1. Continue to allow access to ESP on the south end of the building.
2. Provide for liquid chemical deliveries at the south end of the building or in a similar way.
3. Require a Good Neighbor Agreement between East Side Plating and Right to Dream Too.

Separate from our statutory role in the street vacation, based on the testimony heard, the PSC would also recommend that any and all information about life-safety factors related to the site should be made available for public review and discussion.

Thank you for consideration of our recommendation against vacating this portion of SE Harrison St.

Sincerely,



André Baugh
Chair

