



## Community Involvement Committee (CIC) Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** March 14, 2023 | Time: 5:00 -7:00 pm

**Location:** Vanport Building

1810 SW 5th Ave Suite 710

Portland, Oregon 97201

### Attendees:

Jim Gorter, Brian Romer, Calvin Hoff, Janette Clay, Susan Novak, Harmonee Dashiell (BPS), Nikoyia Phillips (BPS), Sarah Omlor (Enviroissues), Cayla McGrail (BPS), Mary Hoffman (BPS), Rachael Hoy (BPS), Johnathon Cruz (Pregame)

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### Welcome + Check-in (5:00 pm)

Harmonee Dashiell welcomed the committee and reviewed the meeting guidelines and agenda for the evening.

### Portland Engagement Project Overview (5:15 pm)

Johnathon Cruz, Pregame, told the committee about the ongoing Portland Engagement Project. The Office of Civic Life is leading the update of the existing 50 year old plan, with the help of Pregame, a strategic planning consulting firm. He shared that the project is currently holding listening sessions, then they will move into the design phase, then the plan will be enacted by City Council in about 2025.

Jonathan asked the committee and staff the following questions:

#### 1. If you need to tell the City something, or get information from the City, are you happy with your options?

- Nobody answered “Yes, and I’m happy”, 8 people said “Not sure, I don’t know the options”, and 1 person said “I know how, but it could be better”
- The central phone number for the city generally works for specific questions, but if you are asking about larger policy issues it’s hard to get an answer or a call back.
  - Clarification on which number. 311 is the assumed number for calling the city but there may be others.
  - Question if 311 is a joint number between the City & County?
  - Yes, it is a joint effort and you can reach both agencies.
- Most people don’t know which bureau, or agency (City, County or Metro) they need for certain issues. It’s common to be pointed to one bureau and then that bureau directs you to somewhere else.
- Some participants didn’t know there was a central number to call.

- BPS employees in the room shared they are still learning new resources even as city employees and/or lifetime Portland residents.
- It would help to have a more ‘united front’ from the City because the public doesn’t know the nuance of different bureaus/offices. By pointing people to other bureaus, and a lack of communication between bureaus, people feel dismissed and lack trust in the City.

## 2. What is your idea for how the City could communicate better with you?

- An online FAQ directory to easily answer your question/issue or find what department you should contact. This should be a centralized, trusted “.gov” site that is very user friendly.
- Answer phone calls more and return phone calls faster, especially Commissioner’s offices.
- A ‘welcome packet’ for new residents with a list of relevant information. Similar to a list of utility information from a realtor or rental management. This could be given out at apartment buildings, schools, faith communities, etc.
  - This could include information like the 311 city information line, relevant social media pages to follow, and city e-newsletters to sign up for.
- More advertising campaigns, billboards, bus ads, local news station coverage on projects etc.
  - However, the city should be conscience who they give ad revenue to because every media outlet has different audience demographics and this can skew a lot and have real consequences downstream.
- Example from other county; local libraries have documents, display boards and maps for planning projects. You can view them in person and ask questions and find out who to contact about them.
  - This is a legal requirement for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) projects, but would only apply to large projects that go through a formal environmental review process.
  - It would be great to have small projects’ documents available at the libraries too.
  - Most participants didn’t know they could find any plans at libraries, it’s not well publicized.
  - The current legislative bill about creating community resilience hubs would create a good location for this.
- Resourcing city staff to spend more time in the community/doing outreach.
  - Hopefully with the city commissioners change and more commissioners, they will be able to be more visible in the community as well.
  - Distinction between city sponsored events and city staff attending other events. Sometimes it’s better to be on a level playing field.

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 Письмовий або усний переклад | 翻訳または通訳 | Turjumida ama Fasiraadda | ການແປພາສາ ຫຼື ການອະທິບາຍ | الترجمة التحريرية أو الشفوية

- Reinvigorating Neighborhood Associations and Community Coalitions. The city could steer them into areas that need attention and assist in broadening engagement so they are more diverse.

### 3. How would you like to be involved with the City's decisions and direction?

- Office hours
- A participatory website where you could be informed and make comments.
  - Something location based so you can learn about things in your neighborhood
- Participation should be more than information dissemination. It should happen earlier so that input can happen.
- Accountability that your comments have been heard, even if your suggestions can't be realized because sometimes comments are contradictory. Provide follow-up to explain why either way.
  - This is also helpful because sometimes the reason something isn't feasible is because another jurisdiction would need to be involved. If I'm already civically involved, I could then contact the other jurisdiction with my comment and possibly help move something.
  - Provide reports of survey/comment data so everyone can see what the whole community said.
- E-newsletters are helpful, especially if there are options to sign up for neighborhood based or issue-based e-news.
- Would be helpful to have a tracking number for issues so that if it involves different bureaus or you talk to multiple people, it can be kept track of.
  - Could even have a status bar (similar to shipping tracking) to see where your issue is in the process.
- Acknowledgment of receipt of a comment at the bare minimum.

### LGBTQ+ Historic Landmark Designation Project Update (6:15 pm)

Cayla McGrail, BPS, shared what the LGBTQ+ Historic Landmark Designation Project has done since the project last presented to the CIC and asked for suggestions for improvement. They now have an open survey, have had multiple one on one coffee chats and off-record conversations, recruited an informal committee with 10-12 people, posted on social media and started creating relationships with other organizations.

The project is currently working on improving the project website and has plans to attend upcoming events like PRIDE.

Cayla shared that this project is difficult because they are asking for personal stories. The team is cautious to not come across as extractive to the community by sharing their own queer orientation. They are also trying to gather undocumented stories, and so far many responses are highlighting resources that are already in the archives.

CIC shared the following feedback:

- What current outreach efforts are working well?
  - Giving paper survey forms at the Q center
  - Holding drop-in office hours
  - Volunteering at community events
  - One on one meetings
- How was the survey publicized?
  - E-news, Facebook groups, and word of mouth
- Suggestion to connect with organizations and groups:
  - Oregon Jewish Museum- they are a great resource for historic sites.
  - Portland Gay Men's Choir
  - PSU
  - Connect with Alan DeLaTorre (BPS) to reach AARP circles and community center groups.
  - Employee resource/affinity groups at Nike, PGE, etc.
- Feedback on the survey questions; they way that questions are worded may urge people to share already documented resources rather than personal stories on undocumented resources.
  - The survey's intro text is too much "legalese"
  - Put the demographic questions at the end of the survey
- Suggestion to try the Portland Reddit page and other social media to find different demographics.
- Suggestion to try other city governments beyond Portland to reach people who lived in Portland decades ago.
  - The project has done outreach to Eugene but will try other cities.
- Suggestion to ask Powell's to post a QR code I the LGBTQ+ book section.
  - Other business pop-up suggestions:
    - Books with Pictures (queer owned comic bookstore)
    - Scandals & CC Slaughters
- Create a video for sharing to tell the story of this project.
  - Other city's preservation projects are using Story Maps. Possibly could try this.
  - Reach out to **Megan**, the BPS Communications Director for help.
- Table at upcoming street fairs this spring/summer
  - An event at Friendly House is planned.
- To engage the project's committee, use hands on exercises to brainstorm for the context statement.

- Once survey data is collected, is there concern that historic resources won't be approved by the commission?
  - Yes, this could be an issue. Oregon requires owner consent of a site and the National Register has a lot of criteria for what resources are accepted.
  - Important to engage people at this point of the process too to advocate for sites because it would be unfortunate if all this work was done and then nothing came of it.
- Is the project looking for historic resources that are buildings, or other places too?
  - Not just buildings, it could be a park etc.
  - Suggest to say that clearly in the survey.

## Announcement & Updates

Harmonee shared a few updates:

- New CIC members have been approved; 4 new people will be joining as soon as the next meeting.
- Susan is staying on for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term.

## Adjourn (7:00 pm)

The group adjourned approximately at 7:00 pm.

## Action Items:

1. Harmonee will share the Portland Engagement project website link with the committee: [pdxengagementproject.org](http://pdxengagementproject.org)
2. Harmonee will be providing upcoming meetings in emails to the CIC to keep them informed of opportunities to engage more.