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Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2016 1:03 PM
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>
Cc: Tracy J. Prince, Ph.D. <tprince@pdx.edu>; nancy seton <NancySeton@comcast.net>
Subject: Protecting the Vista Bridge Iconic Status

Dear Planning Stewards of our Community,

Going back to the mid-1990's when a group of us-citizens worked with the City to insure that the City not replace its decaying iconic cast-stone light standards on the Vista Bridge with standard-issue aluminum goose neck light poles, we were able to work out a partnership with the City to replace them with authentic cast-stone.

How did we do it?

We cut a deal with City to come up with half the replacement costs by holding a series of bridge tolls on the Vista Bridge. It worked---everybody gave something. What we learned is how important that Bridge is to the West Hills Neighborhood, and to the image of the City in General (Think 'Portlandia's' opening introduction)..We were successful with this project.

Two important issues are at stake right now:

- The View Corridor to and from the Bridge is in danger of being further compromised with future high-rise structures.
- The grossly-unpopular "prison fence" ---deemed temporary, has no support from Commissioner Novick, who unilaterally ordered the fence installed without neighborhood input.

Regarding the fence: An ad-hoc committee, made up of architects, neighborhood leaders, and historians, was formed to recommend less-unsightly alternatives to replace the fence. The spectre of suicide has always been one with us, though distorted, to find a solution. The Bridge since its incept in 1925 has had an average of 2 suicides per year since then. (The recent publicity sparked the suicide frequency.) The "Save the Vista" Bridge Committee has come up with a solution to the problem: a net that neither blocks the view from the Bridge, nor compromises the arch from below it on Jefferson Street. We are waiting for approval.

So---keep in mind that the "views" to and from the Bridge matter tremendously to a broad number of Portlanders---who value the City aesthetics above the accomodated rush to achieve density.

From those of us who care: Let's keep Portland "Portland"---Protect its iconic landmarks for current and future generations to enjoy!
It's in your hands Guys!

Bill Failing
Former Chair Vista Bridge Light Brigade
Current Board Member of SWHRL
Past-Board President of Oregon Historical Society

President of Vintage Trolley Inc.
Past-Board Member Portland Streecar
Past-Board Architectural Heritage Center
Founding Member Multnomah County Library Foundation
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