



**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF PORTLAND  
NEW COLUMBIA  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)**

**February 11, 2003  
5:45 – 8 pm  
Community Room, Columbia Villa, 8920 N. Woolsey Avenue**

**Summary**

**Attending:**

**Committee Members:** Joslyn Baker, Liliana Brambora, Zenona Coronel, Diane Feldt, Susan Franks, Alison Gash, Tim Haberman, Mike Houck, Luvenia Jackson, Susan Landauer, Lee Moore, Pamela Murray, Habtemariam Ogbazgi, Penny Rose, Micky Ryan, Helen Warbington, Wyman Winston, Joshua Zeller

**Housing Authority of Portland (HAP):** Mike Andrews, Chris Corrigan, Eileen Ellis, Leslie Esinga, Jacob Fox, Arlene Gregory, Pamela Kambur, John Keating, Julie Livingston, Chrissy McCausland, Lucia Pena, Juan Prat, Steve Rudman, Veronica Sherman, Margaret Van Vliet, Tuck Wilson

**Consultant Staff:** Elaine Cogan, Kirstin Greene, Suzanne Roberts, Cogan Owens Cogan; Jerry Johnson, Johnson Gardner LLC; Mike Smedley, Mithun; Lynda Wannamker, Parametrix

**Guests:** Marvin Green, Lisa Horne, Rob Manning, Bill Vach, Carolyn Wilson

CAC co-chairs Lee Moore and Penny Rose opened the meeting by reviewing the agenda. The first two items—*Update on Possible New School* and *Market Analysis*—were delayed until the presenters arrived. The agenda continued as follows.

**Neighbors Task Force**

CAC and Task Force member Liliana Brambora announced that since Elaine Cogan of Cogan Owens Cogan will no longer facilitate the Task Force meetings, Liliana has been named co-chair, with Penny Rose. Pamela Kambur will supply staff support from HAP.

At their last meeting, Task Force members thoroughly reviewed the draft *Community Relations Plan for New Columbia* and suggested modifications, including the following: rephrasing the goal; removing any references to TriMet as a model; and adding the Post Office, utilities and garbage haulers to the list of Community Groups. They also recommended that residents and neighbors be represented on the new committee for public art and that at least one artist be from North Portland. Since a main concern of New Columbia opponents seems to center on the

perceived increase in the density of low-income housing in North Portland, Task Force members recommended that this be addressed directly by HAP.

Additionally, Task Force member Lisa Horne updated the group on the process to hire a construction manager. Lisa is the citizen member of the selection committee. Julie Livingston, New Columbia Project Manager, asked the Task Force to consider some issues that have been raised during Planning and Design workshops, but are out of their scope, such as the possible addition of a school and/or library, financing and marketing, codes and covenants, and environmental review. Task Force members suggested they might host separate meetings on these issues. Liliana thanked Elaine for her work with the Task Force and said the next meeting is March 5.

***Summarized comments and questions from CAC members and guests are in italics. Summarized responses from staff and the consultants follow in regular print.***

*What do the neighbors see as the problem with density?*

There is growing opposition because of a perception that increasing the density of low-income residents adversely affects neighborhood livability. The Task Force is looking into ways to make the facts more clear.

*I think that is a good strategy.*

*Have you made any progress with the concept of an online whiteboard?*

The Task Force is talking about a chat room to be used by both residents and neighbors. Perhaps it could be a part of the New Columbia website.

Staff has been talking about developing a website geared for use by residents. This would be different from a chat room.

*I would like to hear continued updates on this.*

*Will the individual meetings involve discussions of the issues, or will they be for information only?*

We have yet to decide on both their format and dates.

*The format should be made clear upfront. If you are holding forums, they should be held before a decision on the issue is made.*

*The Community Association of Portsmouth has a website that is accessible to all Portsmouth residents. Maybe it can include a New Columbia section.*

*The Caring Community of North Portland also has an interest in conducting town halls.*

I am hearing that we would like this to be a participatory process.

*Are you looking for artists and others who may be interested in participating in the public art committee?*

Yes.

*The Caring Community of North Portland also has a local artist program.*

Pamela Kambur, New Columbia Community Relations Manager, reported that on February 6, she and Andre Jackson, New Columbia Community Participation Manager, met with about 30 representatives of the faith-based community. The event was part of a larger conference on social justice organized by the Multnomah Biblical Seminary. About eight different denominations were represented. Participants indicated an interest in helping with the New Columbia process. They specifically mentioned relocation issues and a “welcome wagon”-type of program to welcome residents moving into their areas of the city. This was the first in a series of meetings to discuss ways that members of faith communities can help support New Columbia.

### **Update on Possible New School**

Steve Rudman, HAP Executive Director, introduced Pam Brown, Director of Facilities and Asset Management with Portland Public Schools (PPS). He also distributed a letter (attached) from PPS Superintendent Jim Scherzinger, expressing interest in working with HAP to plan an educational complex in New Columbia.

Steve said that HAP has been involved with PPS in many ways and that schools are the most visible way that residents and neighbors interact. HAP is naturally concerned about the impacts New Columbia will have on hundreds of children when their population in the neighborhood schools decreases during relocation and then increases to numbers higher than today, when New Columbia is fully occupied.

He said that the goal of New Columbia is to redevelop a community that is fully integrated with the surrounding neighborhood, both physically and socially. The working vision is of a “main street” with services for seniors, adult education, parks and other community services that complement housing. HAP is considering donating a space for a possible school.

Pam Brown added that the superintendent is interested in this concept, but PPS currently does not have the money to construct a new building. The proposed school would accommodate up to 600 students. A School District Task Force of 33 members has begun meeting to discuss the District’s capital needs for modernization, renewal or replacement of schools that may be financed with bonds. The previous bond, from 1995, was used mostly for seismic upgrades that are nearly completed. Now, the District can consider another bond issue for construction costs. The District is trying to save on operating costs so that more money can be spent on the students. As the letter indicates, she added, the District is capable only of continuing to discuss the issue of a new school on the New Columbia site at this point.

It was announced that two public meetings on this subject are scheduled: February 18, 6 pm at Ball and February 20, 6:30 pm, at Clarendon.

*Will flyers be distributed to advertise these events?*

Yes, the schools are distributing them.

*The Caring Community of North Portland is holding a meeting tomorrow (February 12) about the PPS funding situation in general.*

*We should consider locating the Head Start and Early Childhood programs in this new center.*

*Is donated land the only potential site in North Portland?*

No, we (PPS) also would look at existing sites.

*Are they in competition with the New Columbia site?*

Not, we have not looked at any other land.

*Clarendon has a very open campus. Doesn't that result in high heating costs?*

We have an analysis of operating costs that we can give to Steve.

*Where does the estimate of 600 students come from? It seems high.*

We are looking at a 3.5 acre site, which is the same size as the site Whittaker School is on, so we used the same number.

*What will happen to the vacated property?*

That is unknown at this time.

A recent study, conducted in part by Portland State University and the Portland Development Commission, explored why people leave a community. The first factor was housing, and schools were listed as sixth. We think we could add more affordable housing to the space.

*If the school is not located in New Columbia, the land could be used for other things, such as parks or housing.*

Agreed.

*I am on the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area Committee (ICURAC) Board, where we recently heard from a leader the effort to build a baseball venue in Portland. Possible sites include the Blanchard Building and Lincoln High School. Could that potentially remove one of the two schools from the bond?*

Keep in mind that the Task Force has not made a recommendation yet. After they make a draft recommendation in April, 2003, they will conduct a poll on what the public would support. The Task Force will then make its final recommendation this fall.

Lee Moore pointed out that there are two simultaneous processes—one is the New Columbia project and its potential impacts on local schools, as well as possible uses for the site. The other process is the School District's decision if and where to locate a school. The District's process

will take longer than New Columbia, so it would benefit the community to look at all potential options while reserving the space.

*If the PPS Bond Task Force decides to not locate the school in New Columbia, would HAP still leave the land available for future options?*

That would be HAP's decision. The PPS Bond Task Force recommendation will not be final until the fall.

*What if PPS is interested, but not in the near future?*

Design team members are planning to present a Plan A and Plan B at the next Planning and Design workshop on March 8, showing the site plan options with and without a school site. We expect the PPS decision to be made in 2004, after the levy is up for election (assuming the Task Force recommends the New Columbia site). At that time, we can reprogram the land allocation in a way that fully utilizes the site. The HAP Board of Commissioners wants to look closely at Plans A and B and consider all possible services.

*I would hate it if, in two years, PPS wants to do it and we have to create the space. We should ask them whether they are really serious and if so, where this is in their list of priorities.*

*What would have to be sacrificed for a school—additional units, yards? If there were not a school, would the site be used for housing or a mix of uses?*

We have between now and 2004 to discuss this further.

*Why are we trying to get the community to discuss this issue when the options are limited?*

The existing schools will be impacted by the New Columbia process and we need much discussion.

*At the last ICURAC meeting, we did not discuss the impacts on schools. To not think about this would be irresponsible.*

*Is the Neighbors Task Force is taking on this issue?*

The Neighbors Task Force is beginning to identify the types of workshops, forums or working groups that need to get underway. The issue of a potential school is just now coming up and is one of our issues.

Lee noted that the CAC has much enthusiasm for this issue and asked to remain notified of the progress.

## **Market Analysis**

Mike Andrews, Finance Manager, HAP and Jerry Johnson, a consultant with Johnson/Gardner, summarized the *Executive Summary of the Market Analysis for the HOPE VI Redevelopment of the Columbia Villa*. The purpose of the study is to help HAP build a development plan that is based on solid facts by anticipating who will live in New Columbia and why; how many units will be rented; how many purchased; and how quickly.

Jerry explained that this site is unique as it is a large infill in the middle of a neighborhood, as opposed to a suburban edge, where there is more information on what home prices are likely to be acceptable to the marketplace. The study found that HAP could create a broad range of housing types in New Columbia. A major advantage to this area is its accessibility to many concentrated employment sites with a wide range of jobs. Though the area is somewhat unknown, this is a positive quality for residential use. For commercial use, the lack of visibility from drivers on major arterials would be a concern.

At a focus group with homebuilders, the consultants found much excitement in the private sector for the North Portland market. He also expects that renters will find good value in the rental units at New Columbia. Market-rate homes are expected to sell for between \$120,000 and \$165,000, competing with markets to the north and east.

In summary, their study found strong demand for the planned housing types at New Columbia.

*Have you considered that the nearby wastewater plant affects smells in the area?*

It is considered an issue at the price point, but people tend to ignore it if the odor is not present every day. All places have some kind of drawback.

*Check with the Caring Communities of North Portland. They keep data on this issue.*

*In the Planning and Design Task Force, people have expressed concern about losing control of owned units. Have you looked at this?*

Restrictive covenants are common in residential developments. Covenants, creeds and restrictions (CC&Rs) transfer with the sale of the property. We will discuss what they will be for New Columbia as part of the land use process. We find that neighbors usually welcome them.

*Many families need larger units. Will they be available in different price ranges?*

For the market-rate homes, bedrooms range from two to four. HAP will be the land developer to sell land to construction companies, who will sell the units to homeowners. Affordable homeownership will probably be dealt with by non-profit development organizations.

*Will there be tax credits for Community Development Corporations (CDC's)? For example, Habitat for Humanity and a variety of for-profit and non-profits can assist.*

Habitat for Humanity starts its process with the homeowner, before the house is built. They could control the lot until interested owners specify what they want.

*Why does the name Columbia have a negative connotation?*

We found that it itself does not have a negative connotation, but some people in the focus groups suggested that the name be changed because of some negative feelings about Columbia Villa's past.

*Page 14 of the Executive Summary shows a price range for various unit types. What is the rationale for the sizes of attachments, lots and units listed?*

The numbers are estimates to help us come up with an affordable list of housing types.

*Typically, affordable housing means that units need to be attached, but potential buyers will leave the area to find detached units. Also, would the lot size be different with affordable units, allowing for less private public space?*

We have found that people buying a house in this market want to walk around the house. We are trying to balance this with having a mix of housing available. We may construct some units at a higher density to free up more land.

In a future Planning and Design workshop, we will have a three-dimensional model that will be interactive. This will help the community express their preferences and see the site from a different perspective.

*Are you earmarking a percentage of ownership units for CDC's?*

Yes, 30 of the 230 units will be earmarked for affordable homeownership.

*There will be 230 units for homeownership, 200 of which will be privately developed. Will these be market rate or for the 80% of median income?*

Thirty will be affordable. The balance is market-rate, which could be between \$120,000 and \$175,000, so it is conceivable that those earning 80% of the median income could buy these. CDC's can do more than the 30 units, if they want.

*A new home in an old neighborhood is a plus.*

## **Relocation Task Force**

Jacob Fox, New Columbia Relocation Supervisor, introduced CAC and Relocation Task Force member Diane Feldt, who reviewed the last Task Force meeting, held on January 28. Members discussed how to organize to address the list of unresolved issues. Some want to continue meeting, while others may join other Task Forces. They ultimately decided to monitor the relocation process and meet every other month, forwarding issues to the CAC. Jacob will distribute a monthly report to Task Force and CAC members on the "off months" when there has not been a meeting. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 25.

Jacob asked the new relocation staff members to introduce themselves: Sylvia Franks, Marjorie Harris-Shakier, Nazareth Lincoln, Christina McCausland, Alejandro Vidales, and Ben Wickham.

Veronica Sherman, HAP Community and Supportive Services Manager, then asked the new family specialists to introduce themselves: Chris Corrigan, Arlene Gregory, Lucia Pena, Juan Prat.

Jacob then announced that the Relocation Plan has been approved by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CAC commended this effort.

### **Main Street Services**

Next, John Keating, Assistant Director of Community Revitalization, HAP, reviewed a document on “main street services” for Columbia Villa, a concept that has evolved from the original village square. HAP is now starting to work out the best locations for services and how to combine some of them. HAP will call upon consultants from the “Quick Response” program organized by the state departments of transportation (ODOT) and land use (DLCD). Community partners and Services Task Force members also will be involved in these discussions.

*Head Start and Early childhood programs would be good to locate together and help with overall space management.*

*Will the Services Task Force be the main entry point to discuss this issue?*

Yes, they have begun discussing the issue and will continue doing so.

*How did the draft written text for the main street services come up?*

This concept is consistent with our original application to HUD. We hope also for comments from the CAC on this issue.

*Through which Task Force or venue can people provide input?*

The physical design for “main street” has been a part of the Planning and Design work. We are at a critical point--we are preparing a land use plan by early April and need to show what the main street will look like. We are asking for your input on where everything should go.

*Would the school be included in the commercial zone?*

There may be an overlap. It may be partially in a commercial zone and partially in a residential zone.

*Looking at the school as a smaller space and combining other programs could leave more commercial space for other uses.*

Agreed.

*I thought the Services Task Force would address issues related to the relocation of service providers and the eventual return of services.*

We are, and we have another meeting on Thursday to discuss the services we will deliver after relocation. We want to focus on partnerships.

*What kind of detail is needed in the land use plan that is due in April?*

The design plan can be conceptual at this point, with approximate locations of blocks and streets. We will do more detailed preliminary design work in March and April.

*Where does discussion of actual services happen—in the Services Task Force?*

Yes, I think it fits there. We will have many opportunities to engage the community.

### **Planning and Design Task Force**

CAC and Planning and Design Task Force member Penny Rose reviewed the February 8 workshop for Susan Franks. She said that there was good attendance. The main topics discussed included street calming, because traffic speed is a major concern; tree preservation; and pocket parks. Participants favor a north/south over an east/west street grid. Two representatives from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development were present.

Design consultant team leader Mark Smedley of Mithun Architects reviewed the overall design schedule. Although there are deadlines for completing certain plans, they will be flexible and open to input until construction is complete.

*Staff takes our input month after month and then, people vote at the workshops, but is our input considered?*

Your input is combined with staff input when studies and alternatives are refined into more detailed recommendations. All your input informs our decisions. This is a transparent process and we have always tried to be clear about our goals.

*At the beginning, I noticed a great deal of distrust. People want assurance that they are being heard.*

*There are dynamics in group processes. People want to see the results of their efforts and hear explanations if their suggestions cannot be implemented.*

We consider your input, try to explain where and why we disagree, and incorporate your concerns. We have put a lot of effort into public involvement for this process and want to hear if you feel your input is not considered.

*It would be helpful if staff would develop a list of questions we ask during meetings and for staff to respond, on the same document, how they followed up if the question was not answered during the meeting.*

*I feel this has been a very good process and I feel staff has taken our input seriously.*

Several members agreed.

## **Update on Environmental Assessment (EA) Process**

Lynda Wannamaker, Parametrix, announced that the *Executive Summary of the Concept Alternatives Screening Report* is now available on the New Columbia website and at various locations throughout the City. Very few comments have been received so far. The Alternatives Analysis will be released February 26, with public comments due March 12. Before the next CAC meeting, members will receive an evaluation of the recommended alternative and be asked about the adverse impacts and possible mitigation measures.

*If the opposition to redevelopment of Columbia Villa wants to provide their input, would this be an appropriate meeting for them to do it?*

Yes.

*There seems to be many overlapping issues. I hope they are all integrated at some point.*

Lee told CAC members he appreciates the work they are doing and wants to make any adjustments to make sure they feel heard.

Pamela told members this was Elaine's last CAC meeting and thanked her for her work. Elaine said the role of her firm was to design the process and get it going well. She said that she and her staff would continue to be involved in New Columbia, but in more of a consulting role. She commended members on their dedication and hard work.

With no public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

**The next meeting of the CAC is Tuesday, March 11, 2003.**