



April 1996 – Number 29

# \* footnote

The Newsletter of the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition

## Earth Day Pedestrian Action

The WPC's first Pedestrian Action of 1996 will take place in conjunction with Earth Day on Saturday, April 20, at 2:00 P.M., in the Hawthorne Boulevard shopping district. This is the first action to occur at an unmarked "Tee" intersection. Many of these confusing intersections line Hawthorne. Join us at SE 35th Place and Hawthorne Boulevard, where we will be crossing the street, carrying signs reminding motorists to stop for pedestrians, and pointing out where crosswalks exist. No illegal activities are planned. (Take Tri-Met Line 14 – Hawthorne).

A sign-painting party will be held on Saturday, April 13, at 10:00 AM at the WPC office (which we share with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance) at 1117 SW Washington in downtown Portland (5 blocks from the transit mall, or take bus 15 – NW 23rd).

## WPC Annual Meeting and Candidates' Forum

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition will be held Thursday, April 25 at 7:00 pm, in the Auditorium of the Portland Building, 2nd floor, 1120 SW 5th.

This meeting will be a Candidates' Forum for local, county and Metro office-seekers.

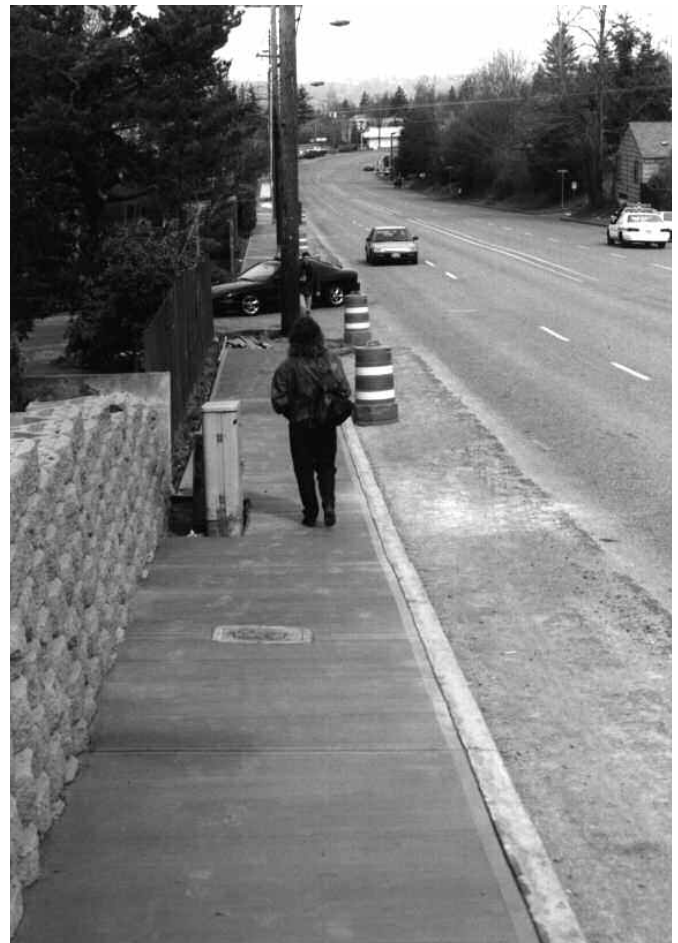
WPC officers and board will also be elected for the 1996-97 term.

## Ped Program Builds Sidewalks on Vital Stretch of Capitol Hwy.

Construction started this month on a Portland Pedestrian Program project to build sidewalks on both sides of SW Capitol Highway for 1.1 miles from Barbur Boulevard to Portland Community College. While the Pedestrian Program has had an influence on the sidewalks constructed in connection with other projects, this is the first time the program has built a stand-alone sidewalk project.

Project manager Matt Brown oversaw the design. Because only 7-1/2 feet of right-of-way was available outside of the curbs, the sidewalk will be 7 feet wide in most stretches. Where hill-sides slope down to the curb, retaining walls are being built, and sidewalks are reduced to 6 feet. Several houses are built almost up to the right-of-way line, making this an exacting process. The project also will rebuild many driveways, incorporating a level area for disabled access in each one. Curb ramps will also be built at all corners.

Construction and right-of-way costs total \$350,000. The street already has curbs and storm drainage in place, keeping the total relatively low. When finished, the sidewalks will connect a Transit Center at Barbur Boulevard, an elementary school, a public library, and the college, in a district with relatively few sidewalks, but much demand for facilities.



*Pedestrians try out new sidewalk on SW Capitol Highway near SW Coronado Street.*

# Broadway-Weidler Plan Adds Pedestrian Improvements, but Retains One-Way Couplet

The Advisory Committee for the Broadway-Weidler Study has recommended an alternative that would widen N.E. Broadway sidewalks but would retain the one-way couplet.

Sidewalks on N.E. Broadway would go from 12 feet to 14 feet wide through much of the business district and some 6-foot sidewalks would be doubled to 12 feet.

While the plan still keeps traffic on Weidler through the Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood, it does reduce the number of lanes in several places.

The Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood favored making Broadway two-way, and removing through traffic from the residential section of Weidler.

Much of Broadway would go from the current four lanes to three lanes, with a bike lane. Several signals could also be added. Curb extensions are planned at many intersections, including at bus stops (similar to NW 23rd).



*NE Broadway's four lanes would be reduced to three, retaining parking, and adding a bike lane. Narrow, upright trees like those on the right would be planted along the widened sidewalks. Parts of Weidler would have wider, spreading trees.*

## Mystery Poster Warns Pedestrians

Several posters have appeared on lampposts along West Burnside Street recently, at the corners of 10th and 11th Avenues and other corners. They are labeled "A Public Service Announcement Brought to you by the Alliance for Pedestrians Trained in Guerilla Warfare, 1996." The WPC has no knowledge of this group. Do any readers know about them?

The posters read:

**WARNING**

**DUMB DRIVER ZONE**

(West Burnside & Surrounding Area)

**DO NOT EXPECT DRIVERS TO LOOK IN DIRECTION THEY'RE DRIVING. DO NOT EXPECT COMMON SENSE OR MERCY.**

**LEAVE SIDEWALK WITH EXTREME CAUTION AND CONTEMPT**

## Court Deems Auto "Dangerous Weapon"

The Oregonian reported in its March 20 West Metro edition that a Portland man faces a prison term for his conviction on charges of trying to use his car to run down a Washington County sheriff's deputy in December.

After a two-day trial, the man was convicted of a Class C felony – CARRYING AND USING A DANGEROUS WEAPON (his car!), and three other misdemeanors: recklessly endangering another person, reckless driving, and attempting to elude a police officer.

## Portland Holds Hearings on Ped, Bike Plans

Three City Council hearings involving transportation issues have been scheduled:

- May 1** Bicycle Master Plan
- May 8** Pedestrian Master Plan

These hearings will both be held at 9:30 am (time certain) at City Council Chambers, 1220 SW 5th.

- May 15** Transportation System Plan, Phase I

This hearing will be held at 9:30 am (time certain) at 2nd Floor Auditorium, Portland Bldg., 1120 SW 5th.

## Right Turn Without Stopping Gets Reprieve

A decision to phase out "Right Turn Permitted Without Stopping" signs has been rescinded by the Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee.

These so-called "free" right turns are often dangerous to pedestrians.

To register your comments, contact: Orville Gaylor, Oregon Dept. of Transportation, 5th Floor, Transportation Bldg., Salem, OR 97310 – (503) 986-3603, Fax (503) 986-4063.

Perhaps a few more convictions of using a car as a dangerous weapon would bring attention to the more usual lack of prosecution when auto drivers hit pedestrians. Although in this case the car attack was intentional, the weapons are no less dangerous when the attack is "an accident."

**\*footnote**

*\*footnote* is the newsletter of the *Willamette Pedestrian Coalition*, a non-profit volunteer organization working to promote a better pedestrian environment in the greater Portland, Oregon metropolitan region.

Membership is open to all. For more information about the coalition and its activities, call 503-223-1597, or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to WPC, P.O. Box 2252, Portland, OR 97208-2252.

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# Private Streets Under Scrutiny

Are all streets open to the public? Can you walk down that pedestrian path without being kicked out? Do pedestrians have the same rights on a "pedestrian easement" through private property as they do on a public right-of-way? These questions were among those asked by the Portland Pedestrian Program Citizen Advisory Committee at their January meeting.

Vicky Diede and Erica Rooney of the Transportation Engineering Department were questioned by CAC members in January about the necessity of allowing private streets in the River District development (see article on page 4). Their response was that it allowed more flexibility in roadway design. Committee members wondered why public ways didn't also provide flexibility. In addition, there

was concern about a growing trend toward private streets and gathering places which, while appearing much like public streets, in fact are not public. Some members wondered if there might be a hidden desire to exclude undesirable members of the public.

The streets in question did not have "public easements." Diede and Rooney promised to research what guarantees people have in this situation. At the March meeting, program manager Bill Hoffman read their response, which was that the references in the Master Plan for the district should assure pedestrians' ability to walk through these streets.

At the same time, Pedestrian Program staff had directed a series of questions to the City Attorney. The responses raised concern among CAC

members. The attorneys wrote that the granting of a public right to passage should be done through a formal process, and the master plan was not necessarily sufficient to accomplish this. They also thought that an easement was as good as a public right-of-way for pedestrians, but it hadn't been tested.

The CAC directed Bill Hoffman to pursue the acquisition of easements on the already platted streets in the district, and to draw up a standard set of conditions that the Transportation Department could use when obtaining easements in the future. Some committee members felt that public rights-of-way should be the preference, a sentiment echoed in proposed additions to the city's Comprehensive Plan.

Private Property & Public Access for Pedestrians		
Type of Legal Instrument	Right for public to pass	Right to do other things (e.g. petition)
"Reference" in a plan document	probably not	probably not
"Easement"	guaranteed	in question
"Right of way"	guaranteed	guaranteed

## Enquiring Peds Want to Know: Can You Walk There?

How can you tell if a street is public or private, or if there's a "pedestrian easement" that gives you the right to walk down a path?

The Willamette Pedestrian Coalition called Kathryn Hall, Right-of-Way Specialist with the Portland Transportation Bureau with that question. Her reply was there is no single place that archives that information

She suggested that an enquiring pedestrian could look at the County Assessor's map, which will show private streets as tax lots, and public streets as right-of-way. To find easements in subdivisions, she suggested studying the subdivision map at the County Surveyor's office, or asking at a title company, which will generally provide this service free of charge.

Obviously, few pedestrians are going to take the time or effort required to research the legal niceties of a questionable street or pathway in their neighborhood. The Pedestrian Program is exploring a requirement that all public easements on private property be posted with signs. This would let the public know if they can legally use a path or if they would be trespassing.

## Neighbors Surprised Path is Not Public

Residents near the new "Palatine Heights" subdivision in Southwest Portland had worked through several years of hearings and talks to preserve a natural stream corridor. They also hoped to gain a pedestrian connection from one side of their neighborhood to the other. It was therefore with some surprise that they saw "No Trespassing" signs go up at each end of the required pedestrian path.

The developer was able to install the signs because of an oversight in the planning process. For a small (31 lot) subdivision, an unusual amount of effort was spent to assure that the banks and forested area around Arnold Creek would be undisturbed, and many conditions of the approval addressed this issue. Unfortunately, a requirement to dedicate a public easement for the path was omitted.

According to Planning Bureau staff, this has not been a problem in other developments, and the public has been able to use the paths without a public easement. This case, however, accentuates the importance of ensuring some sort of legal guarantee that pedestrians can use a facility, if that is the intent of the plan.

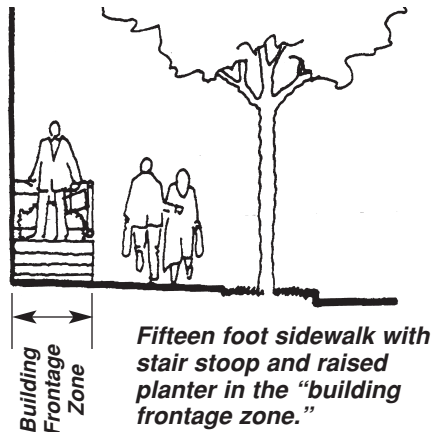


**Pedestrian access can be compromised in new developments, even when planners are conscientious and neighbors are vigilant.**

# City Plans Pedestrian-Friendly Addition to Downtown

Transportation Bureau staff presented the plans for street rights-of-way for the "River District" at the January meeting of the Portland Pedestrian Program Citizen Advisory Committee. The planned neighborhood near Union Station will incorporate 5000 units of housing on an old railroad yard site at the north end of downtown.

Of interest to pedestrians, Portland's famous 200-foot by 200-foot grid of streets is being extended



into the new district. In keeping with the urban setting, buildings will be built right up to the sidewalk, and be multi-story. A basin may be built as an inlet from the Willamette River, and Tanner Creek may be "daylighted" for several blocks before reaching the basin, adding a natural element to the former warehouse district.

The plans show an understanding of the complex nature of sidewalk space, with a "frontage zone" next to the building, a "through zone," and a "fixtures zone" near the curb, where street trees and light poles will be placed. A controversial new element is the allowing of "stoops" (front steps), planters and fountains in the frontage zone. This zone traditionally has had movable objects in it, but nothing permanent. To accomplish this, staff has proposed that the frontage zone actually be private property, not in the right-of-way, even though it will look the same as the sidewalk.

Another proposal that sparked much discussion is the platting of six blocks of streets as "private streets" (see articles on page 3). These streets serve as important east-west links through the district, connecting to the proposed Central City Trolley at several points.

## *Pedestrian Calendar*

<b>Saturday, April 13</b> 10:00 am	<b>WPC Sign-Making Party for Earth Day Ped Action.</b> WPC Office - 1117 SW Washington. <i>Tri-Met Line 15</i>
<b>Tuesday, April 16</b> 7:00 pm	<b>City of Portland Pedestrian Program Citizen Advisory Committee.</b> Room A, Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave. <i>On the Transit Mall.</i>
<b>Saturday, April 20</b> 2:00 pm	<b>Earth Day Pedestrian Action.</b> (see story, page 1) Hawthorne Blvd & SE 35th Place. <i>Tri-Met Line 14.</i>
<b>Thursday, April 25</b> 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<b>Willamette Pedestrian Coalition Annual Meeting and Candidates Forum.</b> Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave. <i>On the Transit Mall.</i>
<b>Weds., May 1, 8, 15</b> 9:30 am	<b>Portland City Council Hearings.</b> On Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Plan and Transportation System Plan. <i>See page 2.</i>
<b>Saturday, May 18</b> 8:30 am to 4:30 pm	<b>Regional Rail Summit.</b> Benson High School, 546 NE 12th. <i>Tri-Met Line 70.</i>
<b>Tuesday, May 21</b> 7:00 pm	<b>City of Portland Pedestrian Program CAC.</b> Room A, Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave. <i>On the Transit Mall.</i>
<b>Thursday, May 23</b> 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<b>Willamette Pedestrian Coalition Board.</b> Room A, Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave. <i>On the Transit Mall.</i>

*This issue of \*footnote has been brought to you in part by a donation from*

**Liz Dally and Jim Houser of the Hawthorne Auto Clinic.**



**Willamette Pedestrian Coalition**  
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Yes, I want to join WPC!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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