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Peaks Island Neighbor : May 2002

Peaks Island Neighborhood Based Plan

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Plan for Peaks Future Is Now Being Developed

In the late summer of 2001 the city of Portland notified PINA (the Peaks Island Neighborhood Association) that it was requesting all of its eighteen neighborhoods to contribute Neighborhood Based Plans to its Comprehensive Plan which is due early in 2003. PINA responded by setting up a Coordinating Committee which includes Bill Hall, Chris Hoppin, Barbara Hoppin, James Carlson, Cynthia Cole, Lynne Richard, John Erdman, Doug MacVane, Dick Springer, M.J. Burnette. [See page two for additional involved Islanders.] The Committee usually meets every other week. Please join us!

At the first meeting in January, the group suggested that a good plan is realistic and inclusive, addresses priority issues, is based on facts, is accessible to the Island public, can be updated, is visionary, proposes policies to achieve visions, is balanced and allows for diversity.

Do You Love Peaks Island?

by Nate Gray
Peaks Resident and Island Institute Fellow

Often I find myself in awe of the place where we live. So many qualities—stunning sunsets, wooded trails, knowing one’s neighbors, as well as so many more—help make Peaks a truly special place to call home. Unfortunately, this isn’t Eden, though it may be darn close, and there are problems. Parking is limited, and worse in the summer. The loss of the taxi highlights our on-Island transportation needs. Taxes continue to rise, straining community members’ already tight budgets. Also, how is development affecting Island culture and the natural environment? These are just a few of the problems and questions that the Island must confront as a community.

Clearly the Island is changing. One needs only to walk around the backshore to get a sense of the Island’s ongoing transformation. The key issue now is what can we do to preserve what we love about the Island, while allowing for changes that enhance our sense of community and well-being.

The planning process

Fortunately, we have a significant opportunity to direct the change in our community. Last summer the City encouraged PINA to begin a neighborhood planning process. A group of Islanders, with PINA support, seized this opportunity and began such a planning process. The intent of the neighborhood plan is to allow for broader public participation; create plans that are conscious of unique neighborhood character; help form bonds between community members, groups and businesses; provide a voice for the neighborhood with city staff and the City Council; (continued on page two...see “Do you love Peaks Island?”)

Special Events on Peaks This Summer!

PeaksFest is a weekend of activities organized by the Sons of the American Legion with assistance from many other groups and individuals. The Scavenger/Treasure Hunt will begin about noon on Saturday, June 22 and finish at noon on Sunday, June 23. Teams of five persons can enter, receive a Clue Book, and compete for prizes. There will also be a Peaks Island Trivia contest, special walks, a great Lawn Sale, tours on the Fire Boat and Fire Engines, carnival games and music of all kinds, slide shows at the 5th Maine and a Contra Dance at the 8th Maine.

Images of Peaks Island will be a two-part exhibition: beginning June 21, a photographic exhibit of people and places on the Island and, during the July 13-14 weekend, fine art representations of the Island. Also, the Fifth Maine will have slide shows of historic images of Peaks.
The Task Teams: a List

The following descriptions of the task teams are based upon State planning guidelines. State guidelines urge communities to identify and protect rural areas and identify and support areas for growth. Join a Task Team today!

Water, topography, and soil resources [Art Astarita]: Inventory significant water resources on the Island such as aquifers, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas and, where applicable, their vulnerability to degradation.

Other significant natural resources [Lynne Richard]: Inventory natural resources such as wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, significant plant habitat, coastal islands, sand dunes, scenic areas, shorelands, and defined heritage coastal areas. Includes agriculture and forestry.

Marine Resources [Curtis Rindlaub]: Inventory marine-related resources and facilities such as ports, harbors, commercial moorings, commercial docking facilities and related parking, and shell fishing. The plan should ensure preservation of access to coastal water necessary for commercial fishing, commercial mooring, docking and related facilities by discouraging new development that is incompatible with the above uses.

Historic and architectural resources [Kim MacIsaac]: Inventory historic and architectural resources while recognizing their importance to the community and that worthy resources should be protected. Also, will investigate the overall character of the community and how its members feel about that character.

Land use patterns [Brenda Buchanan]: Gather land use information describing current and projected development patterns in an effort to describe two different areas, growth and rural areas.

Housing [Keith Hulls and Marjorie Phye]: Inventory available residential stock on Peaks Island and identify possible locations for affordable housing.

Transportation [David Cohan]: Inventory transportation systems, including the capacity of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, secondary routes, pedestrian ways and parking facilities.

Recreation and open space [Don Stein and Nancy Hall]: Describe existing recreation, park and open space areas and significant points of public access to shorelands.

Public Facilities [Stephanie Castle and Bill Zimmerman]: Inventory capital facilities and public services necessary to support growth and development and to protect the environment and health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Economy/Fiscal capacity [Louis Mandeville]: Inventory economic data describing the neighborhood community and the region in which it is located.

Relationship with the City [Bill Hall]: Describe and assess how Peaks Island is represented within city government.

Images of Peaks Island Exhibition [Barbara Hoppin]: Plan and coordinate an exhibit of Peaks Island images, including past, present and artist representations, to debut during the June 22, 23 PeaksFest celebration.

Planning workshop [Chris Hoppin]: Plan and coordinate the community-wide July 14 planning workshop.

Vision Statements [Cynthia Cole]: Interviews with a representative sample of Island residents about their hopes for Peaks in 2020.

Do you love Peaks Island? (continued from page 1) and shape a set of neighborhood visions.

The first ingredient for a successful neighborhood plan is public involvement. The final outcome of the planning process needs to be more than a chapter within the City's comprehensive plan. Our plan must reflect the wishes of the entire community. We need to create a living, breathing document that reflects the Island's views about itself and where we want to go as a community. We need to seize this opportunity for what it really is, a chance to raise our voices together to gain the ear of the folks in City Hall.

Make your voice heard

If you believe, as I do, that Peaks Island is a little slice of heaven, and should stay that way, I encourage you to become involved in the planning process. Come to a neighborhood planning meeting, volunteer for a task team, come to the July 14th planning workshop, or write what your vision of the Island in 2020 is, but please make your voice heard so that we can keep Peaks the wonderful place that it is. We cannot allow this opportunity to pass us by.

Other people who have participated to date

We hope your name can be added to this list.


[Issues of this newsletter will also appear in June and August of 2002.]