

Ravenna-Bryant

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

March 2005 Issue

UW BIOTERRORISM LAB

UW Applies to Build Bioterrorism Facility on Ship Canal

Plans for a bioterrorism facility on the UW's south campus have met criticism from nearby neighborhoods and the UW Faculty Senate. A grant proposal was prepared in the fall and submitted at the end of December 2004 without communication with the surrounding communities or the UW faculty or student body. The plans were made public in January, leaving many to question why the University didn't announce its intentions until well into the process.

The UW has applied for a \$25 million grant to build a Regional Biocontainment Laboratory. An additional \$40 million dollars would be required from other sources to construct the proposed biodefense lab. The planned facility would be used to 1) research biodefense of infectious diseases such as rabbit fever and bubonic plague, and 2) combat bioterrorism in an emergency. It would be classified as a Biosafety Level 3 lab, where pathogens would be studied that can be transmitted through the air and cause potentially lethal infection. For some of these lethal infectious diseases there are no readily available treatments.

In the proposal, the UW selected a site by the Oceanography buildings on 15th Ave. NE near the Ship Canal. The facility would be four stories, built for maximum security and protected by a secured zone, with restricted access.

Among the objections raised by the community and the faculty senate are:

Site Choice – Buildable sites on campus are scarce and should be for activities with a synergy to the teaching and research mission of the University. This facility would displace two units of the oceanography department. The building would have no public access and would not contribute to the campus community.

Water-Related Issues – The State Shoreline Management Act and Seattle's plan require that all areas within 200 feet of

water be water-related uses. This facility doesn't qualify under those regulations. Furthermore, the germs or spores of some of the infectious diseases to be studied can live and spread in the nearby water.

Densely Populated Area – 60,000 people live or work nearby the proposed facility. The University of Chicago sited a similar facility at the Argonne National Laboratory. An analogous site, such as Fort Lewis, would be a more appropriate location.

Cost Gap – The federal government offered \$25 million. Facility construction costs are estimated to be more than \$60 million. To cover the gap, the UW would potentially have to delay construction or renovations of other campus buildings.

Culture Clash – The facility will be a fortress on an otherwise open campus. It may become a magnet for demonstrations, and a target for animal rights activists and possibly terrorists. Nearby populations will feel uncomfortable and vulnerable, including neighborhoods and entities such as the University Hospital.

Risk Analysis – The UW has given conclusions, but no analysis. It hasn't answered the necessary safety questions.

The University has now scheduled public forums for February 23 and March 1. The next RBCA newsletter will carry further information about the community and UW comments. The decision about whether NIH chooses the UW will be made by September 2005, although possibly as early as June.

RBCA has asked the UW to conduct this process openly with the nearby communities, and requested the UW provide answers to the many questions formally posed by the UW Faculty Senate. RBCA at this point opposes having the facility sited on the nearby UW campus.

For more information, there is a

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TRANSPORTATION

Several Transportation Issues Getting Community Attention

Transportation continues to be one of the major issues facing our city and region. There are many initiatives underway to address our frustrations with traffic congestion, among them Sound Transit, the monorail, and highway improvements. And there are many construction projects, including one that begins soon in our neighborhood. This newsletter will cover three transportation issues we've been following:

- The Sound Transit Board decision to head north via the 12th Ave. alignment through Roosevelt.
- The analysis of options for SR 520.
- The 35th Ave. NE Project, which will directly affect our mobility, slowing it down in the short term, but making it more safe and efficient over the long run.

Surely you have your own particular transportation concerns beyond those mentioned in this newsletter. Feel free to draw attention to them by letting RBCA know your comments; the more we get the word out about our concerns, the more likely they are to become addressed. Our transportation chair, Larry Sinnott, will gladly field your comments and questions: renzo-1@comcast.net.

Sound Transit Chooses 12th Ave. Route

After months of maneuverings, the Sound Transit Board unanimously voted to head north via the 12th Ave. NE alignment. The decision pleased the nearby neighborhoods and the desires of RBCA members who have been involved in this endeavor.

The 12th Avenue alignment through the heart of the Roosevelt business district will house a light rail station for its future North Link extension. The Sound Transit Board came to realize that promoting

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General RBCA Information

RBCA Searching for Board Members; Contact Us if You're Interested

RBCA is looking for new members for our Board. While the actual election to the Board takes place at the Spring Community Meeting, our nominating committee is currently seeking active community members who want to be involved.

Board members are elected to two-year terms. Board meetings are usually the second Wednesday of each month. Separate committee meetings occur when necessary. Since we occasionally have elected and city officials come to our meetings to hear our concerns, it's important that we have a steady turnout by our board.

Typically board members bring a broad interest in the community, and specific interest in particular issues which affect our neighborhoods. We like board members to follow their issue(s) and report on the latest happenings at our meetings and in our newsletters and website.

If you're interested in being on the RBCA board, please contact Jody Chatalas at jchatalas@comcast.net.

Community Meeting Coming in Spring

Each spring RBCA hosts its annual Community Meeting, which includes voting on board members and officers. But we always like to present larger topics of interest which appeal to the community.

Past meetings have featured debates between candidates and about initiatives, discussions about city proposals which impact our neighborhoods, and presentations by elected officials and city departments.

With our Community Meeting tentatively scheduled for May, we're in the process of establishing an agenda. Do you have any subjects you'd like us to consider for this meeting? Please e-mail jchatalas@comcast.net with suggestions.

City and County Election Year

2005 is a big year for elections. Four city council positions are in play, as is the mayor. And the county council has new elections because of its recent redistricting.

It's become clear that elected officials' decisions significantly affect our neighborhoods. With that in mind, RBCA will be following candidates' stances on our issues and concerns. We plan on having candidates speak at our meetings. We're also considering creating a survey gauging candidate stances on community issues and publishing the responses.

Transportation...

Continued from previous page

housing density and retail opportunities immediately near the station was worth the minimal cost savings of placing the route along the bleak and isolated 8th Avenue alignment. This is very important for everyone in northeast Seattle because this location will be where future commuters will transfer and where abundant shops and services will become available on their homeward commute. For anyone looking for an alternative to the cost and congestion of commuting by car, this is a big winner. Still, we will be looking for better bus connections to this station from Metro.

The light rail station at Roosevelt is at least 10 years away. Sound Transit is now constructing its initial segment from the downtown bus tunnel to the airport, which is expected to be operating by 2009. Current funding may only get the North Link extension to Capitol Hill or to the University District. At some time in the next couple of years, Sound Transit will need to go to the voters for funding to get to Roosevelt and Northgate.

In the end, the 12th Ave. route was accepted over 8th Ave. for its potential to create a true urban village through Roosevelt, despite its higher price tag. But through the process, an active community worked for this goal using methods that caught the attention of the elected board members, and the imagination of neighborhood groups increasingly frustrated about a lack of influence with decision makers. The Roosevelt Neighborhood Association and those joining the effort deserve great credit for their work on this matter. The combination of common cause, innovative outreach and savvy tactics served to swing the momentum and votes toward this desired alignment.

State Route 520 Options

After years of heavily increasing usage, the 520 floating bridge stands wearily on its last pontoons. Simple renovation will likely give way to expansion in

width and/or height. And although 520 is a far more passionate issue for those immediately tangent to it, its future directly affects our neighborhoods which share thoroughfares like Montlake with the masses accessing the amenities and freeways nearby.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is conducting an environmental impact study (EIS) on the most likely options, a 4-lane and a 6-lane bridge.

The **4-lane option** would be similar to the existing bridge, with two lanes in each direction, but also emergency shoulders so that a stalled vehicle won't create backups. Under this configuration, 520 would expand to six lanes from Montlake to I-5. The **6-lane option** would have two general purpose lanes and a HOV lane in each direction.

No matter the choice, these options still aren't addressing the traffic congestion on the nearby streets, including the existing Montlake woes. And as Montlake continues to be gridlocked, many are shifting their routes to the neighborhood streets, including NE 75th which has become a dangerous speedway.

Now along comes the latest proposal for 520, put forth by the Montlake community and publicized in the *Seattle Times* opinion page on February 13. This approach envisions a suspension bridge above Portage Bay and Montlake, connecting I-5 to the floating bridge. There would be a new entrance to the bridge near 10th Ave. East on Capitol Hill.

More important to our community, the new proposal also calls for a second suspension bridge to carry traffic from near Husky Stadium to 520. This bridge would move 520 access to the north side of the Montlake Cut, which the proposal authors feel would help alleviate the Montlake backups because crossing the Montlake Bridge to access 520 would no longer be necessary.

While this sounds good in theory, it's questionable whether the intersection at NE Pacific Street and Montlake Blvd.

The RBCA Newsletter is published periodically by the Ravenna-Bryant Community Association. Articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board.

Board meetings are the second Wednesday of each month. All are welcome. If you wish to be on the agenda, please notify us at rbca@scn.org.

RBCA Coordinating Board Jorgen Bader, Matt Bowman, Kirk Brewer, Jody Chatalas, Brett Frosaker, Barbara Holya, Nazila Merati, Peter Ramels, Andrew Schmid, Larry Sinnott, Bob Solomon and Mary Whitfield
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RBCA membership dues are \$15/year. Dues cover the costs of operations and communications. Please send check to RBCA, 6527 29th Ave. NE, Seattle, 98115.

To subscribe to our e-mail list, send an e-mail to rbca@scn.org and ask to be added. Your e-mail address will not be shared with any group or commercial entity.

NE, can handle even more traffic; this area between Husky Stadium and University Hospital is already overwhelmed by vehicles and pedestrians. Also, with 520 access north of the Montlake Bridge, those coming from the south may descend on the Arboretum for access to 520, making neighbors and the Friends of Olmstead group howl as that beautiful drive becomes even more busy.

WSDOT has made some effort to be responsive to concerns of the Montlake, Portage Bay and Roanoke neighborhoods, but your elected officials need to hear what you think should happen with this project. There is a meeting on March 1, 7 pm, at the Museum of History and Industry to discuss 520 options further. We'll cover this meeting and report back to you in our Spring Newsletter.

35th Ave. NE Improvement Project

Usually when traffic and road improvements are underway we tend to focus on the inconvenience rather than the practical benefits. So while the 35th Ave. Improvement Project will be a bit of a pain in the short term, it nonetheless will be a noticeable enhancement to our community over the next few decades.



Beginning in May, and continuing for a year, the Seattle Department of Transportation will be doing maintenance and upgrades for roadways, sidewalks and traffic signals throughout the neighborhood. The project will span 35th NE from NE 95th to NE 55th, with some improvements also to NE 75th and NE 65th.

Among the project's priorities are:

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Dr. Michael Lewis, CCSP, CSCS

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Join the Ravenna-Bryant Community Association

RBCA and its members work on important issues for you. Like any organization, we want new contributing members, and need volunteers for tasks such as distributing the newsletter and working on community projects and concerns.

Annual dues are only \$15. Your dues help cover our operations, including printing and mailing newsletters. Return this form with your dues to: Ravenna-Bryant Community Association, 6527 29th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98115. You will receive the newsletter and other information, and know you've made a contribution to your community.

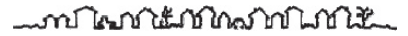
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RAVENNA PLAYGROUND

Group Preparing Application for City Funds, Needs Volunteers

Friends of Ravenna Playground continues its quest to renovate the children's play area in Ravenna Park. A few months ago 200 people attended the group's auction, and raised \$18,000 for the cause. The

The schematic design for the playground is complete. A large version of this drawing will be on display at various locations around the neighborhood over the coming year (library, schools, community centers, etc.). Or you can visit the website: www.ravennaplayground.org.

Next up is an application for the Neighborhood Matching Fund where Friends of Ravenna Playground hopes to win a \$100,000 grant. The application will be filed in April.

One important aspect of this application process is the pledging of volunteer hours to the project; each pledged hour is matched with \$15 from the City. Please consider pledging time to help rebuild the playground. The hope is that the project will begin in Spring of 2006, and that's

when the volunteer hours will be needed.

To pledge hours or to find out more about the project, visit the website at www.ravennaplayground.org or call Ella Thompson at 527-4960.

35th Ave. NE Improvements...

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- Repair and replace street pavement, including significant asphalt resurfacing
- Pedestrian improvements, including fixing damaged sidewalks, upgrading pedestrian signals, and installing curb-ramps and curb bulbs
- Landscaping and street trees
- Upgrade 26 traffic signals, including their timing, along the 35th NE, NE 65th and NE 75th corridor.

The project is estimated to cost \$10 million, partially funded by a State Transportation Improvement Board grant. For more information, or to voice any particular concerns, the project manager is Sandra Woods, sandrawoods@seattle.gov and the website is www.seattle.gov/transportation/35thavenue.htm

UW Bioterrorism Facility...

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range of websites available. The extremes are represented by the website UW has created: <http://depts.washington.edu/rbl3/background.html> and the one created by opponents of a biolab in Boston: www.ace-ej.org. For a map of existing and proposed biolabs, see www.sunshine-project.org and choose the "biodefense" tab.

To get involved in this matter, contact the RBCA representative to the City/University Community Advisory Committee (CUCAC), Brett Frosaker at 755-7858. This committee will be an important forum for discussion of the proposed site.

Have Coffee with King County Councilmember Bob Ferguson

King County Councilmember Bob Ferguson regularly meets with constituents one-on-one over a cup of coffee at one of the great North Seattle coffee shops to discuss issues important to you. If you would like to schedule a 30 minute constituent coffee, please contact his office at (206) 296-1002 or bob.ferguson@metrokc.gov.

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