

Chronology of DNA Involvement with 2300 Naito Parkway Safe Rest Village 12/13/2021

Thank you, Walt, for setting up an emergency board meeting for December 15 to discuss the proposed Safe Rest Village (SRV) on the 2300 block of SW Naito. In preparation for the board meeting, we have provided the following chronology of events for review by DNA Board members. Given our new DNA Board member and the complexity of this issue, we felt this review of events was essential for us to all be on the same page. Here goes:

—Nearly a year ago DNA Homeless/Houseless Team co-chair Darlene Garrett was told by city staffers that the city was considering the 2300 block of SW Naito as a “sanctioned camp” for unhoused individuals.

—Darlene reported to the DNA Board that she would convene a group of “stakeholders” to anticipate this possibility. This included several individuals residing close to the site, as well as others with expertise in the subject matter.

—City Commissioner Dan Ryan announced on July 1 the city ordinance creating 6 Safe Rest Villages. No sites were announced. The stakeholder group met with Ryan’s staff within days.

—In August, 2021 the DNA Board approved a list of conditions which should be addressed in order to for the DNA to support an SRV. Also the board agreed that the Homeless/Houseless Team would represent the DNA Board on all discussions with the city and would gather feedback from neighbors.

—The city announced three sites for SRV’s on 9/30, including the 2300 Naito site.

—An expanded **2300 Naito Parkway Stakeholder Group** was formed. International School of Portland Head Bodo Heiliger and Bridges Middle School Principal Beven Byrnes joined. Both school leaders supported the SW Naito SRV, with DNA conditions.

—Dick Teutsch and Dianna Stuart organized resident forums at the Strand Condominium and LaJune Thorson at Harrison Condominiums to discuss the proposed SRV. Darlene and David Dickson spoke and answered questions. Attenders greatly appreciated the information.

—Membership in the **2300 Naito Parkway Stakeholder Group** includes:

Darlene Garrett, DNA Homeless/Houseless Team
Bodo Heiliger, International School of Portland Head
Beven Byrnes, Bridges Middle School Principal
David Dickson, DNA Homeless/Houseless Team
Dick Teutsch, the Strand Condo resident
LaJune Thorson, DNA Board and Harrison Condos resident

Mary Lucero-Larsen, American Plaza Condo resident
Stephanie Hansen, DNA board
Janice Yaden, Retired Mercy Corps executive
Stan Penkin, Pearl District Neighborhood Assn chair
Homer Williams, Harbor of Hope founder
Marion McNamara, DNA
Thomas Gornick, S Portland Neighborhood Assn representative
Sgt Matt Jacobsen, Portland Police Bureau (gladly accepted recent invitation to join)
We have also talked with several people living unhoused in proximity to the site, and intend to highlight the voices of people experiencing houselessness.

—The Stakeholder Group met with Jake Dornblaser from the city’s Safe Rest Village Team to discuss progress on the Naito site and review the conditions for support. The meeting was cordial and informative. Dornblaser indicated he was not able to respond to the conditions, but asked the group to send him questions.

—Thomas Gorlick from South Portland Neighborhood Assn joined the group, as the SRV property is adjacent to this association’s boundaries. The South Portland Neighborhood Association approved a resolution (see attached), joining the 2300 Naito Parkway Stakeholder Group.

—The **2300 Naito Parkway Stakeholders Group** met following the Dornblaser meeting. The group drafted a list of questions in response to Dornblaser’s request. A letter was drafted to Commissioner Ryan, seeking recognition of the stakeholder group and support for the conditions. The letter included links to the conditions for support and the questions. The signatories included the 2 school heads and the 2 neighborhood association chairs.

—The schools and the S Portland Neighborhood Association approved the letter, the later at its regular monthly meeting. The DNA sought approval of the letter via e-mail; but there were questions raised by board members, and it was determined that the letter should be addressed at an emergency meeting governed by open meeting laws.

—The South Portland Neighborhood Association decided to wait to sign until the DNA signed and removed the name of their chair from the signatories.

—Given the urgency of this matter, the two school heads sent the letter and attachments, with minor changes, under their two signatures. They subsequently held a separate meeting with Jake Dornblaser and requested a meeting with Ryan.

—On December 7 the city “swept” 8-10 tents from the proposed SRV site and fenced it off. The DNA’s Good Neighbor volunteers knew several of these people and had planned to involve their voices in the stakeholder group. The city did not contact the stakeholder group and advise us of this plan. We have no idea where these people are.

—The stakeholder group met Monday, 12/13. We discussed plans that are underway to secure formal support from the three condo HOA Boards for the 2300 Naito SRV, the work of the stakeholder group, and the appointment of condo reps.

—Given the fact that the letter and questions have already been sent to Commissioner Ryan from the two schools, the December 15 emergency meeting will no longer include a request to support this letter. Instead, the purpose will be to respond to DNA board questions/concerns. Our hope is that the DNA Board will affirm its support for the **2300 SW Naito Safe Rest Village (with conditions) and the Stakeholders Group.**

Respectfully,

Darlene Garrett and David Dickson, Co-chairs
DNA Homeless/Houseless Team

The word “emergency” reflects the urgency surrounding this matter. Even though the city is behind schedule in constructing the Safe Rest Village, important decisions are happening very quickly. Campers were recently “swept” from the site