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From: David Sonnichsen [mailto:lita@efn.org]

Sent: Friday, January 27, 2006 2:27 PM

To: MORTENSON Ann

Subject: CPC motion text plus background

Hello Ms. Mortenson:

Please forward the motion and explanatory text below to the members and key staff of the MPC, including the members and staff of the CAC.

Thank you,
David Sonnichsen

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At its Wednesday, January 11, 2006 meeting, the Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park passed the following motion by a vote of 13 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstaining:

To protect the scenic views and wildlife habitat of the Willamette River Greenway, which are essential to the natural and recreational values of the Whilamut Natural Area in Alton Baker Park (EABP Plan, pp. 1, 15, 20), the CPC recommends that no additional bridges crossing the Willamette River, exceeding the existing total of five functioning bridges or their replacements, be constructed within the riverside border of Alton Baker Park. This recommendation is also intended to preclude the modification of existing pedestrian bridges to carry motorized traffic (EABP Planning Goal 14.0, p.23).

[The bridges referenced are: Ferry Street, DeFazio pedestrian/bicycle, Autzen pedestrian/bicycle, Knickerbocker pedestrian/bicycle, Interstate 5.]

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The need for this motion began with an unattributed proposal for a Willamette River bridge northeast of the new federal courthouse in early designs for the courthouse district, as studied by the "Planning Commission Plus Three" -- the Eugene Planning Commission plus three Eugene city councilors -- in 2002. No planner was able to say where the idea for this proposed bridge originated, and after questions from at least one councilor and several planning commission members, the bridge proposal was not included in later drawings.

Two years later a similar bridge appeared in a draft of the Mayor's PROS plan. A member of the PROS committee, who was also a member of the CPC (and who had been a planning commissioner in 2002), again questioned the bridge proposal. It was removed from later drafts of the plan.

The motion also advises against any freestanding ramps crossing the river which are proposed in connection with, or subsequent to, construction of the permanent replacement I-5/Willamette bridge. As a representative of Kittleson and Associates has told the Metropolitan Policy Committee, such ramps would be "separate bridges." Of course, the permanent replacement bridge itself is anticipated in the motion language.

Within the parenthetical reference in the first sentence of the motion are three page references to the East Alton Baker Park plan:

The page 1 reference addresses the history of efforts to protect the natural beauty of this area, and to create a central park for residents of Eugene and Springfield.

Page 15 addresses the park's "role in the Willamette River Greenway, and the long tradition of the greenways movement."

Page 20, goal 7.0 asks that we "recognize the river and its edge as important elements of the park design, providing opportunities for park visitors to pursue water-oriented passive recreational activities, including boating, fishing, swimming, and nature study."

The motion's second sentence refers to planning goal 14.0 on page 23:

"With the exception of the I-5 overpass, establish an environment free of motorized vehicles that will enhance the use of pedestrian and bicycle corridors and serve the needs of park users. Locate any driveways, parking areas, rest rooms, or any other facilities requiring access by motorized vehicles at the periphery of or outside the boundaries of East Alton Baker Park [now known as the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park]."

The East Alton Baker Park plan was adopted by the Eugene City Council and the Willamalane Board of Directors in 1995.

David Sonnichsen
Chair
Citizen Planning Committee for the
Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park