

PortlandTribune

Sources Say • Young activists sit in to save their school

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Kids at Leadership and Entrepreneurship, or LEP, High School – one of Portland’s public charter schools – staged a sit-in last week after getting the rotten news that the district is leaning toward not renewing their school’s charter at the end of this school year.

About 50 students, one-fifth of the student body, got permission from their principal to lock themselves in the building at 2044 E. Burnside St. and stay overnight on Thursday evening, while they wrote letters to the school board and taught themselves about civil disobedience.

If the school closes – as recently recommended by the school board’s charter school committee for financial reasons – “a lot of students will probably go back to their old schools but a couple would probably drop out,” says Alik Jarvis, a sophomore. The students plan to rally to save their school before the school board meeting to decide their fate on March 30.

Let the screaming begin

After months of work, Metro has launched a public outreach effort that will give the small but vocal local group of mass transit critics nightmares – an interactive exercise to help decide where to build new transit lines in the future. It is intended to help the regional planning agency decide where to plan for new express bus, light-rail, commuter rail and streetcar lines.

The “Build a High Capacity Transit System” page on Metro’s Web site includes a map showing 15 potential new Portland-area lines, connecting destinations from as far west as Forest Grove to as far east as Gresham and everything in between. The new city of Damascus is even included – shown along a potential new line – even though funding woes and local opposition have slowed redevelopment plans there.

The map will undoubtedly fuel an outpouring of disdain about regional land-use planning policies on fiscally conservative blogs – but should also solicit wonkish exchanges among transit advocates. To get in on the debate, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/goingplaces.

I’m right behind you

Commissioner Randy Leonard is generally considered the most fearless of the City Council members, gleefully wading into such hot issues as the Rose Festival duct tape controversy without a second thought. But when it comes to the possibility of disconnecting the open reservoirs in Mount Tabor and Washington parks, Leonard decided to call in reinforcements.

After Leonard agreed to hold a community forum on the reservoir in Southeast Portland, he declined to set a date until representatives from some of Oregon’s congressional delegation agreed to appear. Some Portland Water Bureau watchdogs have accused Leonard of not pushing hard enough for federal legislation to exempt Portland from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules that threaten the reservoirs’ future. But Leonard believes the congressional representatives will confirm that their bosses back his plan of negotiating with the EPA while planning to comply with the rules, if necessary.

The forum is from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 11, in the cafeteria of Glencoe Elementary School, 825 S.E. 51st Ave.



SARAH GETTYS / TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO
A city reservoir in Mount Tabor park holds 50 million gallons of water. Some reservoir advocates question whether the city is pushing hard enough to fight EPA regulations that could threaten the reservoirs.