

Leading an effort to grow a green community

New director of Lloyd eco-district says she plans to start by engaging stakeholders in the process

BY ANGELA WEBBER
angela.webber@djcOregon.com

The Lloyd eco-district finally has its first director: Sarah Heinicke will start on July 1. She has experience in planning, development and financing of sustainable projects in work with the Portland Development Commission; Brightworks, an investment-banking firm; and Verditas LLC, her consulting practice. Some of Heinicke's work is creating business-friendly ways to pay for energy-efficiency and green building projects. She says she will call on her experience in both the public and private sectors to lead the eco-district.

Heinicke recently spoke with the DJC to discuss her new role.

DJC: What is an eco-district?

Sarah Heinicke: An eco-district, for me, is a place where people are looking beyond the built environment to find solutions to the way people live in a neighborhood, district and area.

The eco-district is the green building proposition exploded larger, to a more efficient scale. You may want to embody sustainability in a green building project, but realistically your environmental impacts are much larger than a stand-alone building. I think the district-wide answer is a scale that makes a little more sense. It's not quite so unwieldy as a city

A conversation with
Sarah Heinicke

See GREEN, Page 3



Sam Tenney/DJC

Inside: Classified 6-7 // Call for Bids 13-14 // Construction 5 // Public Notices 14-24 // Public Record 8-12

THE OREGON JOURNAL OF COMMERCE IS PRINTED IN US

©The Daily Journal of Commerce. All Rights Reserved.

COMPANY

0 94922 50385

Green: Focus will be on jobs, economic development

Continued from Page 1

or even as a quadrant; it's something that people can kind of get their hands around and maybe actually make some progress in.

So, there's this aspect of buildings and infrastructure, but the eco-district part of that is bigger and more robust than in a green building. It's really dependent on how people interact with their neighborhood, their workspace and their environment.

DJC: Why is it hard to pin down what an eco-district is?

Heinicke: I think people like to have a black-and-white answer, but I think, like in a lot of things that are complex, we all must find some comfort in the gray. An eco-district evolves with time, space and people. All those things are huge X factors that change over time, over space and through peoples' personalities.

That's not blowing off the need for some measurable objectives,

but I think the fact is that the eco-district will be different for Lloyd than it will be for the other eco-districts in the city – at (Portland State University), in Gateway and in Lents. I think that's a really good thing, because those places and the people involved there are all really, really different.

DJC: What will be the first milestones in the Lloyd eco-district? How will we know what is a success?

Heinicke: That is really hard to say, because I don't want to preempt too much right now. I want to be respectful of the folks who have already come together in the district, and I want to hear what they see as being their priorities for the district.

The city and Portland Sustainability Institute have identified a pipeline of projects and possibilities for the district, and I think they're all worthy of consideration. Many of them will move forward, I'm sure. I think my role

for the first six months, at least, will be to really work with all of the stakeholders, identify the nonparticipating stakeholders and expand the tent, as it were, to reconstitute a board that reflects the hopes and dreams and desires of the Lloyd District.

That will be an accomplishment. It doesn't look like a project where you have a gold shovel and you stick it in the ground and take a picture – but it's a huge accomplishment to coalesce a social cohesion around what we all want. Ultimately, this is something that gets implemented by people.

The eco-district will start with how people perceive the area as different. That needs to happen first. You can't just deliver a bunch of cool stuff to the district and hope that people get it eventually or appreciate all the good work you've done for them. That's a kind of approach to development work and approach to municipal overtures that has

proven itself to be unsuccessful.

DJC: Who will be the key partners for the eco-district?

Heinicke: A lot of the partners are already on board and on the resource advisory council – including major property owners in the Lloyd (District) and in the Rose Quarter, business interests and city agencies that are heavily vested in delivering certain sustainable objectives in the Lloyd District.

I think the stakeholders who are not there are the residential population and the smaller business. There's a really vital small commercial sector along Broadway/Weidler and in the intervening nooks and crannies of the Lloyd District that I really want to get involved in this project.

There's also a social equity piece that people in the green building industry and sustainability circles have a really hard time wrapping their heads around. We need to understand how to approach a social equity

– a rising tides lift all boats kind of thing – and apply it honestly to a process like this. That's something that the Lloyd District could certainly benefit from and could be really gratifying.

DJC: What are the other parts of the eco-district process that you think will be important?

Heinicke: I really hope that we can unlock the economic development potential of the eco-district, and not have it be something that only delivers better, more efficient infrastructure.

My focus will be pushing the jobs agenda and the economic development agenda, because I think there are already partners at the table who are heavily vested in the energy efficiency and water resource reclamation agendas. I am so grateful for that, because I think you have to have strong partners that are representing the many moving pieces of this.