

Phil Neumann

Paper \$5 (All proceeds go directly to the committee treasury)

1) The Issue: The long-standing commercial establishments on the 4500 block of Woodstock Blvd are faced with an intolerable injustice- the entire block has been slated for demolition this summer. The reason: the buildings are not up to code (asbestos). The real reason: none of the businesses wanted to sell to New Seasons, so CEO Wendy Collie got New Seasons co-founder and 2012 Portland Mayoral Candidate Eileen Brady to pull some strings with her city friends and had the whole block scheduled for demolition.

100% of the businesses affected by this decision face utter ruin, and traffic is likely to increase by upwards of 60% during peak hours, which would gridlock the avenue from 39th up to 52nd.

2) The Vision: Many of the establishments facing closure have been in the neighborhood for decades and are integral to the character of the neighborhood; history and tradition need not be thrown so carelessly to the wind in community affairs. The community benefits from long-standing historical establishments, and it is precisely these that contribute to the neighborhood charm and character, not to mention the economics of maintaining über-local establishments that help to boost monetary circulation within the neighborhood. The project aims to preserve these local establishments.

3) The Objective: The ultimate goal is simple: keep these establishments open and drive out big businesses from monopolizing commerce in the area. Rallying supporters for the objective is key; the committee would aim to amass a mob of 500-1000 local residents, and an elite resistance group of 50-100.

4) The Methods: Informing and uniting the neighborhood is the first key to success. The businesses facing closure represent likely candidates for fostering debate and raising

awareness. A combination of flyers, public soapbox speeches, and barroom announcements will be coordinated to rally members in support of our cause. Hotspots like the library and the parking lots of Safeway and Bi-Mart are prime for addressing local residents. Once enough people are behind the cause, we can launch a formal request to New Seasons asking them to disband and leave the neighborhood. At this stage the participation of local media will become necessary, first gaining momentum in the sphere of social networking, and then through local connections to trusted local newspapers such as Willamette Week, Portland Mercury, and The Bee. At this stage, methods of resistance will likely increase to the level of public demonstration and citywide boycott of New Seasons stores, prompting a response from larger news outlets. At this point it is likely that New Seasons will back down.

5) The Timeline: March 15th we begin distributing banners and soapboxing, the initial rally will be held on March 22nd. We will hold weekly meetings, gaining more and more support until the end of April, when we can launch our formal request. At this point things may move rather quickly, with the buildings scheduled for demolition in late August. By June local media should be involved, and by the end of the month larger press should be involved. In July the final request to disband will be issued, and ideally by the end of August everything will be well in the neighborhood. If not, operations could continue until as late as December. On January 1st, 2015, there will be no New Seasons on the 4500 block of Woodstock.

6) The Obstacles: If we do not succeed in raising a large enough crowd we will need to quickly refine our methods. The structure shall be maintained, but the focus may shift to freebies offered; incentives such as free food, alcohol, and live music. If we fail to

acquire the necessary media coverage, a publicity stunt will become necessary. Vandalism of New Seasons stores will be the first option, for nonviolent methods should be employed until all else has failed (subversive acts cannot be openly committed by the committee, if need were to arise the prompt formation of clandestine splinter-cell resistance groups would need to be arranged). Then there is the possibility that New Seasons will not back down after the escalation of events, in which case more drastic measures of protest will be adopted: public hunger strikes and human walls preventing the construction crews from razing the buildings (think tree-huggers chained to tree-trunk). If after dozens of self-starvations and victims of police brutality lie dead with hundreds more incarcerated New Seasons proceeds to build a store, the splinter cell groups will be forced to adopt extreme measures to drive the business out of town. It is likely that by this time neighborhood losses will have amounted to so much that the store would receive no business anyway, so violence may be avoided even at this late juncture.

7) The Evaluation: Given the simplicity of the objective, the evaluation will be simple as well. Have we preserved the local establishments? If this is failed we may ask ourselves: Have we driven the menacing corporation out of the neighborhood?