

## Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council meeting minutes

January 15, 2019

6-7:30 pm

Southside Community Center

Carol Tomsic, Council President, led the meeting.

The hearing examiners decision regarding the Garden District PUD was briefly mentioned at the start of the meeting, but was put off until later in the meeting.

**Roll/Introductions** were made around the room.

**Approval of Minutes** A motion was made to approve the minutes from last meeting. The motion was seconded. A vote was held and the minutes were passed unanimously.

### **Neighborhood Resource Officer Update – Detective Bob Mosman**

- Detective Mosman mentioned that he would encourage any interested citizen to go on a ride-along.
- He gave some brief stats. Violent crime has gone down on the South side by 25% overall. Assault, unfortunately, did go up. Garage theft went down about 55% since 2017 [good job locking garages.]
- He reminded us about the importance of reporting (and pressing charges) when a crime occurs. Det. Mosman told us an anecdote about a recent crime where a guy (who was on work release and doing lawncare work in a gated community) stole a bunch of jewelry from a house where he was working. The important thing was that since the people reported it in a timely manner, and decided to press charges, he was sentenced to a lot of jail time (which will keep him off the streets). He already had ten strikes on him, and repeated charging of these guys is what keeps them in jail and keeps the theft rates down.
- A neighbor asked why the guy was not properly searched if he was on work release and probation. Det. Mosman said that there are rules prohibiting searching of the groin area (where the jewelry was hidden).
- A neighbor mentioned a friend who had a purse stolen from inside an unlocked house door.
- Lori Kinnear added that around 20% of car theft in Spokane occurs when the victim has left their keys in or around their vehicle.

### **Property Tax Levy for Public Safety Staffing –Council President Ben Stuckart & Council Member Lori Kinnear**

- Council President Ben Stuckart spoke with us about an upcoming tax levy that would be a permanent increase in property tax at a rate of \$0.30 per one thousand

dollars of home value in order to fund public safety. This levy would replace some funding that will be lost when a SAFER grant we got a few years ago expires.

- When the federal staffing grant expires, we would have to lay off 48 firefighters and we would lose the valuable ARU (Alternative Response Unit) teams. These ARU SUVs act as emergency medical vehicles and have been invaluable in keeping response times down for our fire department. 87% of fire calls in Spokane are medical calls. There has been a 30% increase in medical calls, and yet, due to our ARUs, we have not seen an increase in response times. No plan was made in advance to sustain what this grant has provided. With this levy, we could have enough funding available to keep 30 firefighters and 5 of our 6 ARUs.
- Council Member Kinnear added that last year, we had 101 wildfires in the city limits and this threat is getting worse each year.
- Kinnear added also that in terms of police staffing, our detectives are currently unable to handle their workload without additional staff. Many victims go without callbacks because the department is just swamped and we haven't met the staffing needs of a hub city of our size. This levy would allow for the hire of 20 additional officers to be hired.
- The most common concerns that the council hears have to do with public safety. This levy addresses those concerns.
- Council President Stuckart also added that since other tax increases are going to expire and change, we will actually still have a lower overall tax rate on home value that we did in 2017.
- A neighbor asked why the police and fire funding is being proposed together rather than separately. Council President Stuckart said that they both fall under the funding area of public safety.
- A neighbor wonders how we know that these funds will be allocated properly.
- Council President Stuckart explained that the levy simply earmarks the funds for public safety and as going towards Police/Fire/and Criminal Justice. The Council has a plan for how the money will be used for staffing as described above, but, no, the vote doesn't specify allocation. He did tell us that another Council Member has proposed adding a citizen oversight committee to make sure funds are used as intended to make people feel more comfortable. Neighbors expressed that we would like to see that go forward before the vote takes place.

### **City Council Update – Council Members Breean Beggs and Lori Kinnear**

- Council Member Kinnear talked about the traffic study that was done on the 29<sup>th</sup> corridor. It is finished and they are working on preparing the report. This will give us a lot more information about pedestrian safety, which she is concerned about.
- She also wanted us to know that she is going forward with her comprehensive plan to amend the designation of Crestline to prevent it from becoming an arterial or from connecting through to Southeast Blvd. The Comp Plan will go before the planning commission and then before City Council. We will be able to attend that hearing and also we can email both the planning commission and the council with concerns.

- Council Member Beggs addressed a neighbor question regarding the contract negotiations with the police department regarding the new traffic officers. He reiterated the issue of funding based on school zone revenue and said that talks are ongoing.
- Council Member Beggs also talked about the city's infill code revisions. Essentially, there are too many people moving into Spokane and not enough housing. Four hundred single family homes and 400 apartments are going up each year, and yet more people than that are moving in. Supply needs to be increased. Many issues come up when vacancy is so low. He mentioned that landlord/tenant relationships are strained in times of low vacancy.
- Now, a compromise has been made that, although we need more multi-family housing, we also will make neighborhoods have some say in this. New rules about historical overlay zones will allow neighborhoods with concerns to set design standards. Neighborhoods zoned for multi-family housing, but which contain many single family homes, will be protected by transitional space rules separating them from having a huge building put up right next to them.
- More information can be found here <https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/infill-housing-strategies-infill-development/>

### **Expansion of Goodwill on 27th – Clarke Brekke**

- Mr. Brekke Shared with us the new plans for the Goodwill on 27<sup>th</sup> avenue.
- The property was purchased last year, and they plan to add another 7,000 square foot building to house their production area (allowing for them to expand the entire existing structure to be retail).
- This will allow Goodwill to add 5 employees, add a beautiful drive-through donation area that is easier to access, and will help them with their many homeless, veteran, and job skill training programs to benefit our local community.
- There were 52 thousand drive-up donations in the last year at the South Hill location, which was the busiest of any Goodwill in the Spokane area.
- The new building will open in June.

### **Marilyn Lloyd – Community Development Block Grant vote**

Neighbors nominated pre-approved projects for our block grant money. Excelsior Youth Center, Catholic Charities, and the Women and Children Free Restaurant were nominated. We held a vote to prioritise these options.

- Excelsior Youth Center; gym roof replacement (7 votes)
- Women and Children Free Restaurant; volunteer center and restroom improvements (4 votes)
- Catholic Charities; shelter beds (3 votes)

## **Neighborhood Council Traffic Calming Program**

Suggestions were taken from neighbors as to what areas would benefit from traffic calming projects. Suggestions made were as follows;

- Saree Gregory suggested that the Southeast Blvd corridor between Perry and 29<sup>th</sup> needs calming. It is dangerous with speeding traffic mixed with many residential driveways. There are no stop signs or lights along that stretch, and it is a downhill.
- Many neighbors suggested the area on 37<sup>th</sup> around Hamblen Park. Bumpouts as well as a 4-way stop on Crestline and 37<sup>th</sup> were discussed.
- Emily Wenzel suggested that there be some attention paid to the back-up that occurs with heavy traffic on the Southeast Blvd and Perry intersection.
- Natalie suggested the area between Mount Vernon and 9<sup>th</sup> as an area of concern. It is a residential street that is frequently used as an arterial.

### **Carol Tomsic – Council Reservoir comments**

- Carol Tomsic passed out a proposal for Lincoln Heights Councils comments regarding the reservoir discussed at the last few meetings.
- A motion was made to approve the comments, and members (Chuck Milani, Marcia Milani, Richard Sola, Joan Zimmer, Henry Reimann, Marilyn Reimann, Bobbie Ahouse, Dave Gindrich, Carol Tomsic, Marilyn Lloyd, Makaya Judge, Adam Miles, Rick Boal, and Saree Gregory) passed the motion.

7:45 the meeting was adjourned

Submitted by Makaya Judge, Secretary