

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council Meeting – draft minutes

September 20, 2022

6-7:30 pm

Southside Community Center

Welcome

Chair, Carol Tomsic, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

She showed the attendees a crayon art poster from our Meet Your Neighbors in the Park event. Carol also said there has been no application submitted for the Chick Fil-A as of the day of the meeting. She also said the Secretary position was vacant.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Attendance

Guests - Ben Stuckart, Anne Deasy

Officers – Carol Tomsic, Marilyn Lloyd, Sally Phillips

Attendees – Nancy Plourde, Jim Plourde, Ron Arkills, Frank Trammel, Rob Tannehill, Marilyn Reimann, Henry Reimann, Vanita Davis, Glenn Davis, Clara Scott, Taylor Scott, Chuck Milani, Marcia Milani, John Spencer, Richard Sola, Diane Shuman, Diane Birginel, Ginifer Wallace, Kristen Day

Approve Minutes

July and August minutes were approved, upon motion by Jim Plourde and Hank Reimann

Ben Stuckart – Executive Director of the Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium

Ben introduced himself. He has been the executive director of the Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium since January of 2020. Ben said he was speaking on his perspective on housing and not as a representative of the Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium or the City. His role is advocacy. He said housing is in a crisis. He said rents have increased 20 percent over the last year and property taxes are 60 percent higher over the last six years. He said the younger generation is not in the same position as the last generation. There is a three-year wait list for low-income housing. He cited a Ukraine couple living at Camp Hope. They both have full-time jobs but did not have a translator for housing assistance and lost their apartment when their rent doubled last month. He said the city's housing crisis is a supply problem. He said the supply does not meet the demand and rents are raised and there are no apartments. He cited the deinstitutionalization of people with mental illness in the 1980s as a ramification of homelessness and said community based mental health is not working. He suggested attendees ask for a tour of the jail, specifically floor number three and recommended a book, *Homelessness is a Housing Problem*. Ben talked about the City's one-year pilot project, Building

Opportunity and Choices for All. The pilot will allow duplexes and triplexes, and four-plexes in single-family zoning. He said we need housing variety. He cited the 1900-1910 history of Spokane. The housing variety mixture included three story mansions, duplexes and triplexes in the Browne's Addition, Cliff Canyon, Perry Street and Logan neighborhoods. He said Berkeley tried to pass a white-only neighborhood. It was thrown out because it discriminated. He said the single-family zoning was created to keep wealth in neighborhoods. The redline maps of 1930 matched with wealth. Minority was disproportionate. He said equality is pure economics. Ben said the city budgets for a 2.9 percent growth rate. The growth rate presently is 1 percent. This compares with Spokane Valley at 1.5 percent, and Liberty Lake and Post Falls at five percent. We need growth so our downtown doesn't end up with vacancies and we end up with rich suburbs. As an example, Liberty Lake is planning a downtown center. To fund services, we need a better growth rate. He said if we don't grow the homelessness will increase. He said missing middle is on one end of the spectrum and the growth management act is on the other. He said there has been no speculation since the pilot has passed. He said people won't tear down houses because it's too expensive. He said infill in lots should happen. He also said construction costs are high. He said to keep in mind housing builds generational wealth and duplexes help pay mortgages. He said in mixed income socioeconomics it is easy to demoralize people with harsh judgments. He said to see humanity and one will be less likely to demoralize and instead lift people up. He said there has been no rush in permitting and that people are still flipping houses. Ben answered questions. He said utilities will take care of self. Police and fire will need to keep up with growth rate. If the service suffers the burden increases. Parking will need to be watched. He said Liberty Lake has not affected our city's rentals. He said the rent assistance programs were a confusing system for renters and landlords. He said apartments need to be built around business centers and not the outskirts to avoid traffic problems created by the apartments in 9-Mile and Regal. He said the Perry Street district is a good example of a stall-out. It needs more people walking to the district and more density or it won't survive. He said vacant land and buildings downtown need to be taxed the same. He said we should see more apartments in the University District. He said most developers will not build condos due to the insurance. He said neighborhood councils can carry more weight than individual comments so residents should weigh in with their council.

Thomas Herrlinger, Customer Experience Manager – Library Update via email

“This last month the contractors ran into a delivery issue with the building HVAC chiller. There is a shipping delay on the room-sized equipment which will lengthen the construction period by 4-6 weeks. We are still looking at a winter branch grand opening which is dependent on material deliveries. The bulk of the rest of the construction is moving along on schedule.”

Carol Tomsic, Chair – Resolution for 10-acre park

Carol introduced a proposed resolution for a public-private partnership to merge the adjacent open space in the Garden District PUD with the city-owned 31st/Napa (former water tower site) to create a 10-acre neighborhood park. The resolution was discussed, and a vote was required.

Motioned by Ricard Sola and Chuck Milani – passed

Carol Tomsic, Chair – Street Mural Pilot Program

Carol mentioned the Street Mural Pilot Program was still weeks away from being developed. She said the murals are part of the traffic calming program. Carol said our neighborhood muralist and logo designer, Charlie Schmidt, would have been at the meeting but he had to go to LA. She then asked the attendees to think about intersections or mid-blocks to have a mural. She said two sites, Cook/35th and Fiske/11th were already on the list. Fiske/27th and Hutton/17th were added.

Meeting adjourned

Next meeting 10/18/22 on Zoom

Email Updates

Gonzaga's Center for Climate, Society, and the Environment has launched [Spokane Beat the Heat](#), a multi-year program that seeks to increase Spokane's understanding of and readiness for extreme heat events such as the [heat dome of 2021](#), during which at least 19 Spokane County residents died. Through this study we seek to better understand how community members perceive and experience extreme heat in Spokane, WA. This information will be used to help us better understand heat vulnerabilities in our community. The survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you can enter to win 2 Gonzaga men's basketball or 2 women's basketball tickets. <https://www.gonzaga.edu/center-for-climate-society-environment/our-work/climate-resilience-project/beat-the-heat/survey>

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our annual Meet Your Neighbors in the Park event at Thornton Murphy Park 8/20/22. We had tours of the Thornton Murphy Community Garden, Trader Joe's, a Hi-5 Orthodontics Booth, C.O.P.S booth, Waste to Energy, The Bike Hub, and STA. We had snacks at our booth courtesy of a donation from Rosauers. We look forward to seeing everyone next year!

Our council made a comment at the 9/14/22 Plan Commission Hearing on the Comprehensive Plan Amendments in our neighborhood. The Plan Commission will deliberate and make a recommendation to the City Council at their 9/28/22 meeting. The Plan Commission closed public comment, but you can send your comments to the City Council. City Council will hold a hearing. Here is a link to the staff reports. <https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/2021-2022-proposed-comprehensive-plan-amendments/> Let us know your concerns.

Two pole banners with our new logo will soon be installed on two light poles near the intersection of 29th/Regal. The pole banners were funded by part of our Community Engagement Grant. We voted on the funded projects at our May meeting.

If you have a concern about motorists speeding in your neighborhood, please report it to the Traffic Hotline at 509-625-4140. If it is an emergency or in-progress, please call 911.

The 'Neighbors Drive 25' yard signs are available at City Hall and C.O.P.S locations on a first-come, first-serve basis. Our C.O.P.S location in the Lincoln Heights Shopping Center is not open all the time, so call first 509-625-3326.

Learn more about the City's Shaping Spokane Housing interim zoning ordinances and the Building Opportunity and Choices for All pilot program. <https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/shaping-spokane-housing/>