

LINCOLN HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING JULY 18, 2023 MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Carol Tomsic, Council Chairperson
Carol welcomed attendees and reminded everyone to sign in.

Members present: Maddie Sontag, Vanita Davis, Marcia Milani, Shawn Terjeson, Bill Bidowski, Theresa Bidowski, Deb Kutsal, Andy Hoyer, Joan Zimmer, Jason Reid, Jacob Cain, Warren Carpenter, Claire Beagle, Jeri Schmeilzer, Tim Usher, Hadley Marrow, Carol Tomsic, Marilyn Lloyd, Sally Phillips, Carol Landa-McVicker

Guests: Annie Deasy, Chris Bell, Sgt Brian Tafoya, Patrick McKann

Approve Minutes

Marilyn Lloyd moved and Carol Landa-McVicker seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the March, April, May and June Council meetings. The motion was approved unanimously.

Neighborhood Updates

SPD- South Precinct Update – Sgt. Brian Tafoya

- Sgt. Tafoya reported that our area of the City has less auto break-ins/thefts than other areas, however, he reminded us to keep cars locked, don't leave keys in the car or anything of value that would attract thieves.
- He again asked people to use large house numbers and keep porch lights on at night. He suggested disconnecting outside electrical outlets which are often used to charge phones at night.
- He has taught classes on crime prevention with environmental design and asked developers to build these into their initial plans rather than trying to retrofit properties. He suggested bushes around property be no more than 2' tall and be trimmed. He also suggested that trees be limbed up to 6' for good visibility of the property.
- He said that due to funding cuts there is no longer a Block Watch program in Spokane. This is a proved deterrent to crime as neighbors watch out for and report unusual activities. He said officers will still respond to reports.
- He gave KUDOS to the East Central Neighborhood for being a safer neighborhood than in the past. With homeowners keeping their property clean and maintained, it has become a much more attractive neighborhood.

Council Member Betsy Wilkerson report

- Councilwoman Wilkerson reported changes to the City Council with Breen Biggs moving off the Council and Lori Kinnear taking over as interim Council President and Michael Cathcart appointed President Pro-Tem. Applications will be taken to fill Councilwoman Kinnear's vacant position. The person chosen will serve until November when a new Councilperson is elected.
- The Council continues to address major issues: Homelessness, potholes and traffic calming. Redlight cameras as a deterrent and revenue source was discussed, but there are no traffic

police at this time. She thanked our Neighborhood Council for their leadership and for staying engaged. Next week the meeting will address rentals and Airbnb's.

- There is a pilot program for new parking regulations around apartments and she reminded homeowners that they do not own the street in front of their homes.
- The proposal for a new jail will be on the November ballot and so far, the Council has not been engaged in the discussion. At this time there is no public plan available for the jail, but someone has just been hired to develop a public information campaign.
- She reported that the city has a budget deficit this year that will require living with their means by increasing revenue or decreasing expenses. The mayor's budget will be out on October 2.
- Regarding the homeless population, there will be a new RFP for managing the Trent shelter and the Homeless Coalition continues to have going conversations, but so far has no staff or funding.
- She reported that there is currently no dedicated City grant writer making it difficult to access Federal funding.

Resident Spotlight

- Candidate for Mayor, Patrick McKann briefly discussed his concerns for homelessness and his vision for wildlife corridors around the city.

Update on Chic Fil-A project

Before introducing Christopher Bell, realtor for the property on 29th that has been proposed as a site for a new Chick Fil-A, Carol Tomsic read a brief statement:

Our council is extremely grateful the city denied the Chick Fil-A request for a deviation from the maximum parking limit under the center and corridor zoning. The denial aligns with our district center plan and the center and corridor intent for a safe pedestrian environment.

She then introduced Christopher Bell, the realtor for the property, to discuss the current lease between his client and Chick Fil-A.

- Mr. Bell suggested that Chick Fil-A serves the best chicken in the country and would bring economic growth and jobs to the neighborhood. He said Chick Fil-A wants to develop in high traffic areas, would hire 35 employees and has been working with the city to mitigate neighborhood concerns by reducing the number of parking places and including bike racks and walking paths. He did not say whether the jobs created would pay a livable wage.
- Attendees expressed ongoing concerns including increased traffic in our neighborhood whose infrastructure is already inadequate for the current traffic volume created by recent and ongoing housing and retail development in the area. Concern was also expressed for the impact on air quality caused by customers idling their cars as they wait for their orders.
- Carol Tomsic repeated that the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council's wish for a safe, walkable neighborhood for pedestrians as well as for bicyclists.
- There was no support voiced for the project.

Traffic Calming

Annie Deasy, Community Program Coordinator for the City of Spokane, reported on traffic calming efforts.

- On July 19th there will be a press release regarding artist applications for intersection art work.
- On July 10 the city passed a resolution to fund Traffic Calming efforts.
- Location of additional traffic cameras is being studied.
- 25 mph signs are available at COP Shops.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.