

## **Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council Minutes of December 19, 2023 Meeting**

The Zoom meeting was called to order by President Carol Tomsic at 5:59 p.m.

Attendance: Carol Tomsic, Sally Phillips, Carol Landa-McVicker, Marilyn Reimann, Hank Reimann, Jerry King, William Bidowski, Terea Bidowski, Shawn Terjeson, Marcia Tunik, Jim Vandermeer, Joan Zimmer, Richard Sola,

Guests: Sgt. Rhian Wilkerson, Annie Deasy, Samantha Hennessy, Paul Dillon, Senator Andy Billig

**Shawn Terjeson** gave an update on the Designation of 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a Pedestrian Street.

He thanked everyone for sending letters in support of the designation to the Planning staff, Planning Commission and City Council members. He noted that the next meeting will probably be January 10, and an announcement will be sent to the neighborhood. Public testimony will be taken at this meeting. He and Carol T. will be coordinating talking points and speakers for our Neighborhood Council. In the meantime, he asked that residents continue to send letters emphasizing the safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Carol introduced **Sgt Rhian Wikinson** who gave an update for the South Precinct, headquartered at 5<sup>th</sup> and Stone. He said he rotates duties with Sgt. Matt Rose. The precinct covers everything south of the Spokane River except for downtown.

- Most crime occurs north of our neighborhood.
- Kia thefts have been eliminated.
- With colder weather, crime tends to be down this time of year.
- The precinct is adding 4 more motorcycle patrols as officers complete training and are reassigned.

He provided his email address, [rwilkinson@spokanepolice.org](mailto:rwilkinson@spokanepolice.org) and phone number for the precinct 509 873-4736 and suggested that emails and phone calls are more effective than reporting incidents to 311. With staffing down, they cannot respond to every incident but do collect data from reports. If they notice a particular concentration of incidents, they will dispatch neighborhood patrols to act as a deterrent.

**Samantha Hennessy** from Spokane Mental Health gave a presentation on Pedestrian Collision Data Review. This data is collected and analyzed for traffic planning.

**Annie Deasy** provided information on the crosswalk art project. Artwork cannot be on a street with broken asphalt, and cannot be on a STA bus route or an arterial. Carol T. indicated that a meeting is being planned to develop a plan for our neighborhood project. She asked for neighbors to send her suggestions on where the art work might be located.

**Senator Andy Billig** was introduced and gave an update on the upcoming Legislative session. Senator Billig represents the 3<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District, has been in the legislature for 13 years and is currently the Senate Majority Leader. He said this session marks the second year in the two year legislative cycle. This is a shorter session and the main focus will be on Housing, Behavioral Health and Childcare all of which impact workforce

shortages and our state economy. They will also approve the supplemental budget.

A question as asked about why Washington State gas taxes higher than other states. He explained this is because we don't have an income tax so other taxes in general tend to be higher. With state that have an income tax, gas taxes may be lower, but other taxes may be higher.

One bill he is sponsoring is to close a loophole in the laws addressing hate crimes. Currently the law only applies to damage to private property. The new law, if passed, would also apply to damage to public property.

He explained that there are potentially six initiatives gathering signatures. If certified they can go directly to the voters or to the legislature. If they go to the legislature, the legislature can either enact them into law or send them to the voters as is or with an alternative drafted by the legislature. There are two initiatives, sponsored by a single wealthy individual, that could have the most impact on the state finances if passed:

- Repeal of the Capital Gains tax which affects fewer than 100 people in Spokane. The money collected is essential for funding childcare and K-12 education and construction.
- Repeal of the Climate Commitment Act. He said this law provides our state with both national and global leadership in climate change. The money collected goes to communities and transportation projects throughout the state including the NorthSouth Corridor in Spokane.

He urged everyone to email him with their comments and concerns.  
Andy.billig@leg.wa.gov

**Councilman Paul Dillion** thanked everyone for their letters in support of designating 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue a Pedestrian Street. He and Council President Wilkerson both support the designation and said the City Council will probably vote on the recommendation from the Planning Dept. On January 29<sup>th</sup> or February 5. He urged that we keep sending letters and also prepare to testify.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Landa-McVicker, Secretary