

**Comstock Neighborhood Council
Meeting Notes for January 19, 2022
6:00 PM –7:30 PM, Zoom Meeting**

Disclaimer: These notes are subject to revision and corrections from all participants. The contents herein represent the notes and recollections of the Comstock Neighborhood Council's scribes and representatives, and may not have captured the true intent of all statements made by the participants. For clarification of any details of these notes please contact the Comstock Neighborhood Chairperson. For clarification of any statements attributed to the participants of this meeting please contact the individual for clarification before passing judgement on the words contained herein.

MEETING AGENDA:

- Welcome
- Public Safety – Police Report
- City Council Members' Report:
- Neighborhood Services Report
- Open Forum for Neighborhood Members
- Next Meeting –Wednesday February 16; 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM, Zoom

Attendees:

John Schram, Phil Svoboda, Ty Snider, Jeff Mergler, Shannon Bukowski, Ray Thorne, Brent Perdue, Kandy Conrad, iPad(2) = Susan Jensen, 15094756139 = Chad O'Donnell, Jim McDevitt, Gretchen McDevitt, David Condon.

Welcome

John Schram welcomed the attendees and called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Public Safety – Neighborhood Resource Officer Report – Ty Snider Detective South.

- Property task force is being planned. It is in the planning phase which will impact how detectives are assigned to our neighborhood.
- City Web Site, Spokane Police, web site Crime map can be found at : <https://communitycrimemap.com/?address=Spokane,WA> Another URL for crime data is: <https://my.spokanecity.org/police/prevention/compstat/>
- This meeting's report is a year-end report to compare 2020 to 2021
- City Wide stats: This is YTD comparison: Violent crimes up 10%; Rapes up 15%; Commercial Robberies up 34%; aggravated assault non-domestic 13%; aggravated assault domestic violence up 19%; property crime down 9%; commercial burglary up 4%; vehicle thefts up 3%;
- Comstock Stats: YTD numbers: 2021/2020 comparison: South side property crimes were down 17%; violent crimes were up 8.22 %;
- Crime trends from crime analysis: As of last week violent crime is up 17.50% and property crime is down 3.88% year to date city wide.
- Crime in the entire P7 district, which includes West Hills, Grandview/Thorpe, Latah/Hangman, Browne's Addition, Peaceful Valley, Cliff/Cannon, Manito and Comstock neighborhoods is down for violent crime 33.33% and property crime is down 6.15% year to date. The heat map of Comstock shows the criminal activity

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concentration over the last month. The area near 35th/Grand is seeing the most activity. The northeast portion of P7 is where most of the violent crimes occur.

- Question about trends. Ty will send the trends to Comstock Co-Chair: Question to Ty; Any sense of the trends in reports or patterns? Reply: It is an interesting question, but I need to do some research to answer that question.
- Jim McDevitt asked a question about SPD youth police initiative in the school: The program was suspended because of Covid. He stated that he did not get a direct answer to this question when he spoke to the police chief. Is there any information about whether it will be restarted? McDevitt commented that surveys show that it has a positive impact on the students. Ty does not have any information regarding this project. Jim asked a question based on hearsay regarding crimes in schools not being reported. Ty indicated that some entities do not want to report incidences and want to solve their own problems internally.
- Jim McDevitt asked a question about SPD Youth Police Initiative that used to be in some schools in the Spokane School District. The program was initially suspended because of Covid. He stated that when asked, the police department was not given a specific answer by the school district as to why the program has not been reinstated. McDevitt commented that surveys show that it has a positive impact on the students. Ty does not have any information regarding this project. Jim also asked a question based on hearsay regarding crimes in schools not being reported. Ty indicated that some entities do not want to report incidences and want to solve their own problems internally.
- Gretchen McDevitt: What are the rules about schools about reporting crimes? She also expressed concern about the recent trashing of the convention center. Were the police called/involved? Ty responded that there were police assigned to the Convention Center, but the intervention of police was dependent on the people inside calling the police for help. There was some discussion about the behavior of the homeless in the Convention Center.
- An accounting cost fact comment from John: the cost of the warming center was \$400,000; A simple calculation indicates that the city spent \$190 per person per night.
- SCRIBE'S NOTE: The reports provided by Ty Snider will be posted on nextdoor with the notes from the meeting and will be posted to the Comstock Neighborhood website.

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**City Council Members' Report: - Betsy Wilkerson (Lori Kinnear
(lkinnear@spokanecity.org)**

- No Report; the council members were not present.
- John asked for issues to forward to the council members:
 - Susan Jensen: Asked about the cross walks on 29th on Manito: There is concern about safety of the pedestrians especially students that cross there. She sent a letter to the council regarding this issue. Susan would like to see something done about this issue. There was an extended discussion about how this issue has been on our docket for a number of years. It is also a co-issue with the Manito Neighborhood. At one point in the past we managed to get the cross walk installed after extended requests. Jeff indicated that this is one of the traffic calming issues on our project list.
 - Gretchen McDevitt: Wants to hear from the city council about plans to prevent such destruction at shelters in the future. To prevent trashing of the bathrooms perhaps require a key and follow up with a monitor checking to make sure no damage was done each time the bathroom is used. There needs to be better control in shelters for the homeless. She also mentioned graffiti on two benches on the bluff near 37th which she reported twice to 311, maybe 2-3 months ago, but most of the graffiti is still there. It was removed from the cement pad under one bench but not from the benches.

Neighborhood and Planning Services Report ONS – Carly Cortright:

- Carly reported the following in an email to our Chairperson: “But here’s the report – main things are the boards and commissions we are recruiting for, plus the free COVID tests. I should have more on Cycle 10 Traffic Calming projects next month – Council is meeting to discuss the final slate in about 2 weeks, I believe. Otherwise, ONS is ramping up for new year of programming over next month and I’ll have more updates on that in February as well.”

START: Office of Neighborhood Services Report

*Report made for: Comstock Neighborhood Council
2022*

Updated: January 18,

ONS Program Updates

****The Community Program Coordinators are transitioning programs—note the changes below. If you have programmatic questions, please include both the previous and new CPC so we can answer your questions.****

- [Community Engagement Grant](#) | Gabby Ryan | gryan@spokanecity.org | *previously Annie Deasy*
 - Training and application materials will be available in the spring of 2022.
- [Traffic Calming](#) | Annie Deasy | adeasy@spokanecity.org | *previously Annica Eagle*

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- The Neighbors Drive 25 yard signs are available at City Hall and area C.O.P.S. shops on a first come-first served basis.
- Traffic Calming issue-identification workshops: contact Shauna Harshman of City Council's office for latest updates: sharshman@spokanecity.org
- **Note:** *Previous Traffic Calming cycles (up through Cycle 10) will still be under Annica Eagle, so you can follow up with her for those questions (aeagle@spokanecity.org)*
- **Clean-Up** | Annica Eagle | aeagle@spokanecity.org | *previously Gabby Ryan*
 - Updates for 2022 coming soon.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Cendy Ortiz | cortiz@spokanecity.org
 - Check out [current volunteer opportunities](#) like our graffiti cleanup and Meals on Wheels.

Neighborhood Updates

- **Free Covid Tests:** Get free at-home COVID-19 tests. Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-19 tests. The tests are completely free. Orders will usually ship in 7-12 days. You can sign up here: <https://www.covidtests.gov/>
- **Neighborhood Calendar**
 - Please check this [calendar and your neighborhood council's webpage](#)
- **District Videos:** Cendy Ortiz | cortiz@spokanecity.org
 - District video updates are listed on the Neighborhood Council landing page, listed under Items of Interest on the right hand side: <https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/councils/>. Please share on your social media accounts.
 - If you have an idea, event or something that you want to highlight in your neighborhood in an upcoming district video, contact Cendy Ortiz, cortiz@spokanecity.org.

City Updates

- **Leadership Appointed:**
 - **Spencer Gardener:** is the new Planning Director, set to be confirmed by City Council on January 24th and to begin working in early February. [Press release](#)
 - **Eric Finch:** is the new Interim Director of N.H.H.S. [Directory info](#)
- **Boards & Commissions:** Give back to the Spokane community by joining a volunteer Board, Commission, or Committee! The following Boards and Commissions are currently accepting applications to fill current or upcoming vacancies. Please submit completed [applications](#) to the Mayor's office by emailing them directly to mayor@spokanecity.org.
 - **[Continuum of Care Board](#)**

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The mission of the community-based City of Spokane/Spokane County Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) is to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-reoccurring in our area by fostering shared responsibility among stakeholders and coordinating resources essential to the success of local plans to end homelessness. CoC Board members are responsible for approving and implementing the CoC's Plan to End Homelessness and providing leadership, oversight, and accountability for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development CoC projects in Spokane County. Time commitments for this work range between 5-10 hours a month of attending meetings, serving on subcommittees, and researching issues our community faces in addressing housing needs. Board members serve five-year terms. The CoC is looking for applicants for four new board positions. The CoC needs one individual representing each of the following: Education (K-12); Law and Justice systems; Nonprofit (Temporary Housing); and Business. Applications and instruction are at <https://my.spokanecity.org/endinghomelessness/about/coc/>. Applications are due **Feb. 7, 2022, at 5 p.m.**

- **Council Districting Board ([City Charter Article VII, Section 59](#))**
Based on population information from the most recent federal decennial census, it is the responsibility of each municipal government to periodically redistrict (redrawing existing district boundaries) to ensure citizens are receiving equal and accurate representation. The City of Spokane is currently accepting applications to fill three (3) at-large vacancies for the Council Districting Board. Individuals selected for these positions will fill one term, expiring November 30, 2022 after the adoption of the Districting Plan. All [Council Districting Board applications](#) must be received by the Mayor's Office no later than **January 31, 2022**.
- **[Spokane Historic Landmarks Commission](#) (SMC 04.35)**
The Spokane Historic Landmarks Commission is currently accepting applications for one vacancy. The position is to be held by a professional Preservation Construction Specialist and will be a four-year term beginning January 1, 2022. Interested applicants may be City of Spokane or Spokane County residents, and Commission members serve without compensation. Those interested in being considered must send a letter of interest, resume and a completed [application](#) to the Mayor's Office by **January 31, 2022**.
- **[Citizens Transportation Advisory Board \(CTAB\)](#)**
The Citizen's Transportation Advisory Committee is currently accepting applications for multiple positions due to a recent Board expansion. The positions will remain **open until filled**. Applicants for this Board should submit [applications](#) directly to City Council Office – Attn: TBD Administrator, Shauna Harshman (sharshman@spokanecity.org).
- **[Spokane Park Board \(City Charter, Article V\)](#)**
Applications are being accepted for citizens interested in serving on the Spokane Park Board. The board was created in 1910 and granted the power to layout, establish, purchase, procure, accept and have the care, management, control, and improvement of all parks grounds and parkways controlled by the city of Spokane and used for park purposes. Park Board members may serve up to two,

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five-year terms. Interested citizens may submit completed [applications](#) to Parks and Recreation at spokaneparks@spokanecity.org.

- **Street Construction and Maintenance:** Weather permitting, City crews are doing street sweeping, crack sealing, and construction. More information can be found at: <https://my.spokanecity.org/streets/notices/>.
- **Potholes:** If you see a pothole, report it to the City's **Pothole Hotline** at **311**, or for **outside city limits, 509.755.CITY (2489)**. Street Maintenance Crews are also proactive in looking for potholes and getting them repaired.
- **Speeding:** If you have a concern about motorists speeding in your neighborhood, please report it to the **Traffic Hotline** at **509.625.4150**. If it is an emergency or in-progress, please call **911**.
- **Snow Season:** During snow season, please remember to park on the ODD side of the street when a full-City plow is announced until trucks have passed. This allows drivers to do a better job of clearing snow. Obstructions like basketball hoops should also be removed from the right-of-way. As a reminder, RVs, boats and trailers cannot exceed 24 hours of continuous on-street parking, according to [Spokane Municipal Code \(16A.05.310B\)](#). The public will see parking enforcement across the City visiting vehicles and placing courtesy notices on them. Parking enforcement also can issue tickets and initiate towing. [Press Release](#)
- **Winter Shelter Options:** Spokane has a regional network of shelter spaces available for use by those needing a safe place to spend the night or relief from the elements during emergencies. Those include shelter for single adults, families, young adults, and youths. Pandemic restrictions are followed in the shelter system. See <https://my.spokanecity.org/hazardsheltering/> for more information about what is available and where.
- **COVID-19 and City Hall:** City Hall and other City facilities have reopened to the public and masks are required within City facilities. MySpokane is open from 9am - 12pm and 1pm - 4pm. For more information, visit <https://my.spokanecity.org/covid19/>. Drive thru testing is available at Spokane Falls Community College Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:30am-6pm (no testing is done on Wednesday).

Projects/Programs of Interest

- **Point-in-Time Count:** the annual Point-In-Time Count that helps to develop a snapshot estimate of the homeless population in Spokane County is **Thursday, Jan. 27**, for the sheltered count. The unsheltered count will be during the 4 to 5 days afterward. The count is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The data from the count also helps secure funding for future services from state and federal sources as it provides the data used to complete grant applications and reports required by state and federal homeless service funders. If you have questions, contact Point-in-Time Count Coordinator Amira Djulovic at adjulovic@spokanecity.org or 509-435-8609. [Sign up to be a volunteer](#)
- **Weatherizing for the cold:** Here are some [tips](#) on how to avoid frozen pipes.

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Upcoming Meetings

Links to the virtual meetings listed below can all be found on the [Neighborhood Calendar](#)

- CA Building Stronger Neighborhoods (BSN) Committee: Monday, January 24, 12:00pm
- CA Budget Committee: Monday, January 24, 7:00pm
- CA Admin Committee: Tuesday, January 25, 12:00pm
- CA Pedestrian, Traffic, and Transportation (PeTT) Committee: Tuesday, January 25, 6:00pm
- Community Assembly (CA): Thursday, February 3, 5:30pm via WebEx (meeting number/access code: 146 138 6032; Meeting password: neighborhoods)
- CA Liaison Committee: Tuesday, February 8, 2:00 pm
- CA Land Use Committee: Thursday, February 17, 5:30pm

Contact Information:

Director of Community Programs: Carly Cortright, ccortright@spokanecity.org, 509.625.6263

Community Engagement Programs Manager: Cendy Ortiz, cortiz@spokanecity.org, 509.625.6147 (Special events, volunteers opportunities, and bi-weekly district videos)

Community Programs Coordinators:

- Annie Deasy, adeasy@spokanecity.org, 509.625.6343, (Thursday neighborhood liaison, **new Traffic Calming**, Liaison Committee, and CA/CC Program contact)
- Annica Eagle, aeagle@spokanecity.org, 509.625.6156, (Tuesday neighborhood liaison, **new Clean Up**, Traffic Calming through Cycle 10, PeTT Committee, Town Hall contact)
- Gabby Ryan, gryan@spokanecity.org, 509.625.6858, (Wednesday neighborhood liaison, **new Community Engagement Grant**, Admin, Budget, BSN Committee)

END: OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES REPORT

Community Assembly Report

- No Report.

Traffic and Pedestrian Calming – Jeff Mergler:

- The speed limit to 30 on High Drive. The signage is an issue; it seems that there is a lack of 30 MPH signs in comparison to the 20 MPH signs.
- Jeff followed up regarding the signage issue. He will follow up in a few weeks if no response comes from city council members or the council president.
- Jeff provided a list of the calming issues that have been mentioned by the residents of our Neighborhood.

The list is as follows:

- Safe Pedestrian and School route: S. Bernard sidewalk infill project

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- Safe pedestrian crossing at 37th Ave and S Bernard
- Traffic Calming on W 37th Avenue between Bernard and High Drive
- Improved and Safer Crossing at E 29th Ave and Manito Blvd
- Safe pedestrian crossing at E 29th Ave and S Arthur
- Safe pedestrian crossing at W 33rd Ave at S Bernard
- Stop sign at Arthur and E 32nd Ave
- Unsafe speeding (drifting) near Comstock at 33rd and Lincoln

SCRIBE'S NOTE: The full document will be posted on the Comstock website and will be included in a notice on Nextdoor.

- The city wants a list of our traffic calming issues. Jeff is keeping the list of our projects and all correspondence related to each project. The order/rank of the list was determined by the number of comments and discussion regarding that particular issue. The ranking of the projects will be discussed at a future meeting before formal submission to the city. This list was supposed to be submitted last fall, but the city directed neighborhoods to hold onto the list until the spring work shop.
- Upcoming traffic calming work shop probably in the spring.
- Shannon asked a question about putting lights on 29th and Manito. Answer: This is on our request list.
- Jeff reported that the 37th and Bernard cross walk is not in the hopper as part of the side walk infill project. . It does not seem to meet the traffic needs uniform code of the traffic calming. This needs an official traffic study and the streets department does not work on projects that do not meet the uniform code document or a particular metric.
- Jeff will send a copy of the project list to whoever neighbor who requests it.

Open Forum for Neighborhood Members:

- Perhaps there may be some clean and green workshops coming up.
- John mentioned the banners and that there is an obstacle to get them hung up. We need a licensed contractor to put the banners up on the poles. John may contact Avista to find out if they can hang the banners for us.
- Coming up is the application for community engagement grant money. We will get some funds that we can spend and will need input from neighbors about how to best utilize this money.
- There will be a need for a new chairperson of the city wide PETT committee.
- There was a discussion about the two Comstock Neighborhood web sites; one is maintained by the city and the other is maintained by the community volunteer. There is a need to coordinate the information on the information on the two sites because of conflicting information. Jeff Mergler and Phil Svoboda will address the issue. There was an extended discussion about the purpose and intent of our web site as a reference point for residents to access.
- "Neighbors Drive 25" signs are available for residents on a first come first served.
- The Bernard sidewalk from 37th and High Drive is in cycle 10 and may be ready to go. It will still require the council approval.
- Looking for a volunteer(s) to form a committee as a liaison to the mayor's office and the city council. The description of this as follows: :

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- Position: Liaison to the City Of Spokane and City Council on behalf of the Comstock Neighborhood Council in order to promote positive communication and dialogue for further representation of the concerns in Comstock Neighborhood Council. Responsibilities include: Interfacing with the City of Spokane hierarchy as well as the City of Spokane Council in order to facilitate an ongoing dialogue with elected leadership to promote and forward the concerns of the Comstock Neighborhood Council.

Upcoming Meeting:

- Wednesday, February 16, 2022. Look for a notice on Nextdoor for the Zoom meeting link.