

Comstock Neighborhood Council
Meeting Notes for March 15, 2023
6:00 PM –7:30 PM

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MEETING AGENDA:

- **Welcome**
- **Public Safety Report by the Neighborhood Resource Officer**
- **Updates from City Council**
- **Office of Neighborhood Services**
- **Report by Comstock Chairperson**
- **Public Comments**
- **Next Meeting –Wednesday April 19, 2023 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM, Sacajawea Cafeteria**

WELCOME/OPENING TASKS:

- Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM by Jeff Mergler.
- Jeff welcomed the residents.
- Recognized Sharon Genung for providing the February meeting notes.
- Approved minutes from previous meeting
- Called for a volunteer to take minutes; Phil Svoboda volunteered.

MEETING NOTES:

Neighborhood Resource Officer - Public Safety Report

- No report – no police representation present.

Updates from City Council by Breann Beggs bbeggs@spokanecity.org. 509.625.6255

- **Traffic Calming:** The city is transitioning from a yearly project cycle to a more comprehensive 4 year project cycle of projects that will encompass multiple neighborhoods as needed.
- An Idaho Engineering company is creating a 4 year project plan that will be submitted in the next couple of months.
- Question posed about the previous neighborhood requests: Answer: The 2020 projects are now getting ready for consideration.
- A question/concern was expressed about equity among neighborhoods.
- **Traffic Camera discussion:**
 - There are two groups of traffic cameras; There are the 12 “red light” cameras, and the “School Zone” speed radar cameras.
 - During the last state legislative session Spokane requested authority to put cameras near parks. The new law allows for cameras in hospital and park zones of the city.

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- o The city is in the process of choosing and placing the cameras in various locations. It is anticipated that there will be 12 new cameras. Locations of cameras will be dictated by police, and streets department. It is anticipated that the cameras will be functioning in 2024.
- o Question: are the cameras constitutional? (another state has declared them unconstitutional): Beggs did not think that they were unconstitutional since cameras throughout the state have been operational for a number of years.
- Brief discussion about the tickets and the distribution of the funds to various city departments. It was noted that the company that operates the cameras receive a large portion of the funds.
- Police Traffic Officers: at one time there was a dedicated staff of officers for traffic monitoring, but it was sunset a couple of years ago. It was revived in 2022, but there are currently no Traffic Officers because of staffing issues.
- Discussion about the 20 MPH speed limit on Bernard near Manito Park and other sign questions in general. Beggs responded that the Streets Department does decide the distribution of signs based on data. It was suggested to contact Clint Harris, Director , Streets (Phone: 509.625.7744. Email: ceharris@spokanecity.org) regarding the decisions and placement of street signs.
- Other questions/comments to Beggs: The excessive speed signs on 43rd and the speed on 29th and the noise in Comstock Park by teens at night.
- There was discussion about the initiative to paint the cross walks with colorful art and the cost of such decisions when the monies can be utilized for more cross walks. It was noted that the data/studies indicate that vibrant colored crosswalks increase safety. The visual stimuli slow cars down. Other items of this discussion were:
 - o A resident inquired about his perceived wasteful spending of funds earmarked for the project of upgrading the crosswalks in the city, and Beggs was asked about the illegality from a Federal level of non-white colored crosswalks.
 - o In addition, it was argued that more crosswalks could be painted in white instead of allocating the funds for fewer colored artistic painted crosswalks. A fear was expressed that the earmarked \$1 million in funds would be spent unwisely.
 - o The resident claimed that these issues were raised at the meeting with the intent of advocating for fiscal responsibility and accountability from our elected and appointed public servants.

Office of Neighborhood Services - Patrick Striker pstriker@spokanecity.org

- Patrick introduced himself; He was previously director of C.O.P.S. and has been engaged in this job for about 5/6 weeks.
- The neighborhood Spring Clean Up is coming soon. Striker encouraged residents to utilize the Disposal Pass program; you can receive one pass a month.. See the web site for details: <https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/clean-up/>
- Traffic Calming workshops will be coming up. <https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/traffic-calming/>
- NOTE: If you are concerned with speeding in your area, contact the Spokane Police Department's Traffic Unit Hotline (509.625.4150).

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- He reminded the Council about the \$850 community grant. The monies can be used for neighborhood events or to purchase materials for the neighborhood.
<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/community-engagement-grant/>
- The video for the Engagement Grant link:
https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/5aIKz2tzH1RiTQdeu9FknV7YKkArEZEaFK9tMi1GJf6LrW_kP7p7g5spDP7xPxC-6sW1DmSKB0pliWqJ.SyWqoawtYIbZpYbt?canPlayFromShare=true&from=share_recording_detail&startTime=1678757797000&componentName=rec-play&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fus06web.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2F_ZtrS_q2TR7ZXy_KxVmjlPAAteKEA37N3BdNV7nG0F209EFQFCUIDgpYEn08PH2z.zqgT34w5nG8ygf0%3FstartTime%3D1678757797000
- ONS would like to hear from the residents. There are surveys on the web site that a resident can take to provide feedback.
- There was a discussion about the data that is collected by the mobile radar equipment. It was noted by the Comstock council that the data is not readily available and that the streets department's benchmark threshold criteria is not reflective of the actual need for addressing traffic calming issues in our neighborhood. Striker indicated that he would look into getting and providing the collected data.
- The ONS annual reports can be found at
<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/>

Report by Comstock Chairperson

- Avista Bluff project: the deadline for public comments was extended until Mar 17.
Contact Bluffproject@avista.com
- Cycle 10 (2020) Neighborhood Council Traffic Calming Approved Projects To Be Constructed in 2023:
 - Comstock project: Build sidewalk on Bernard St. from High Dr. to 37th Ave including bump outs on the northwest and northeast corners of 37th Ave./Bernard St., with a marked crosswalk and signage on the north leg. Install approach side illumination for the crosswalk. Coordinate with Streets Dept. and Spokane Public Schools to determine if this should be signed as a school crossing for Jefferson Elementary. NOTE: Brynn Snyder was acknowledged for her steadfast work getting this project on the docket.
 - Manito-Cannon Hill project: Install a hard-wired Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) system at existing 29th Ave. at the Manito crosswalk. Install approach side illumination. Prune trees to minimize interference with lighting.
 - Lincoln Heights project; Install a hard-wired RRFB system at the existing crosswalk at 29th Ave. by Rosauers. Relocate/install new luminaires to provide approach side illumination of the crosswalk. Install stop bars. Prune trees to minimize interference with lighting.
 - Source Document: cycle-10-traffic-calming-program-projects.pdf
 - <https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/neighborhoods/programs/trafficcalming/2023/cycle-10-traffic-calming-program-projects.pdf>
- District 2 Neighborhood Traffic Concerns: 5 projects that have “will be investigated” status:
 - 33rd Ave and Lincoln Dr intersection: Speeding and pedestrian crossing safety – visibility due to on street parking and vegetation
 - 37th Ave and Perry St: intersection Traffic volume, congestion
 - 37th Ave from High Dr to Bernard St: Speeding

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- o 37th Ave from Bernard St to Grand Blvd: Children bike in road with no dedicated bike facility, cars parking on sidewalk
- o 33rd Ave and Grand Blvd intersection: Bottleneck and traffic flow difficulties
- Ongoing recruitment for Neighborhood Council volunteers.
 - o Needs:
 - o Vice Chair: lead meetings in the event of chair absent and take on misc tasks (~3 hours or more per month)
 - o Secretary: take in-person meeting minutes and provide electronically to team (~3 hours or more per month)
 - o Treasurer: maintain accounts (and possibly apply for grant for 2023, see below)
 - o Community Assembly Representative: attend monthly CA meeting and represent Comstock: report highlights from previous month to CA and report highlights to Comstock from previous CA meeting. (6 hours per month)
 - o Clean up (Clean Green) coordinator for 2024 (deadline has passed for 2023)
 - o Community Engagement Grant Coordinator: Grant Training was on Mar 13, 6:30 pm Here is a link to the document with grant details:
<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/neighborhoods/programs/community-engagement-grant/2023/2023-guidelines-for-community-engagement-grant.pdf>.

New business

- Mobile Speed Feedback Trailer applications due on April 7. Proposed is to target the locations of the traffic cameras nominations to provide additional metrics. A motion was passed to submit two applications with a total of 6 locations.
 - o Proposed locations:
 - High Drive (northbound)
 - High Drive (southbound)
 - 805 W 29th (eastbound)
 - 805 W 29th (westbound)
 - Manito/29th Ave Crosswalk Location. (eastbound)
 - Manito/29th Ave Crosswalk Location (westbound)
- A second application for the mobile radar will also be submitted.
- Gretchen McDevitt presented information regarding SB 5536 concerning controlled substances, counterfeit substances and legend drug possession and treatment. SB 5536 passed in the Senate 28-21. She also briefly mentioned SB 5352, concerning vehicular pursuits. Passed in the Senate 26-21. Both bills have strong bipartisan support and opposition and are now in House committees. To encourage residents to send comments to our legislators, Gretchen also made available step-by-step directions on How to Comment on a Bill or Testify when there is a public hearing on it. If you want an electronic copy of the handout on SB 5536 or on How to Comment..., let us know.
- NOTE: There are two related attachments to these notes that are on the website related to the SB discussion.
- Discussion about voting requirements for Comstock NC, our bylaws Section 4 states:
 - o Council membership shall be open to anyone who lives, owns property, or operates a business in the neighborhood and who is at least 16 years of age.
 - o Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the second meeting attended within a 12 month period.
 - o To maintain voting privileges, each member shall attend one meeting annually.
 - o This was tabled due to lack of time.
- Post Meeting note regarding amendments to change the bylaws:

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- o SECTION 13: Amendments to the Bylaws A. These bylaws may be amended by approval of a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at a regular Neighborhood Council Meeting. The resolution to amend must have been proposed at the preceding regular Neighborhood Council Meeting. Notice must be given as to the proposed amendment concerns in the call for the meeting at which the amendment shall be voted upon.
- o The link to the Comstock bylaws:
<https://comstock.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Amended-Bylaws-Comstock-Neighborhood-Council-2-17-16-finalized-1.pdf>

Public Comments

- No comments due to lack of time. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.
- Next Meeting –Wednesday April 19, 2023 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM, Sacajawea Cafeteria

Supplemental Documents:

- How to comment on a bill or testify
- SB5536 – Summary
- Cycle 10 Traffic Calming Projects
- District 2 Neighborhood Traffic Issues Memo
- Traffic Problem Reporting Checklist