

Comstock Neighborhood Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday Sep 20th, 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: Rocket Market 726 E 43rd (corner of S Scott and E 43rd)

Minutes

Call to order

A sign in sheet was distributed.

Meeting called to order at 6:02pm

Jeff Mergler took minutes with post meeting input provided by other members

Guest Speakers

-Olivia Hinds (and two other students) representing the *Gonzaga Center for Climate, Society, and the Environment* spoke about their goals, raised general awareness about their mission, and took questions from the members. More information:

General website: <https://www.gonzaga.edu/center-for-climate-society-environment>

Lecture Series:

<https://www.gonzaga.edu/center-for-climate-society-environment/events>

To join the mailing list:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=BzSjK8xcQEm9Fq4VTwTDyirRxfb15B5LImKc0oRxdNUQjBXMEpIR1NTMFpIWTVN0xJUUVPQUExQS4u>

To donate: <https://www.gonzaga.edu/center-for-climate-society-environment/donate>

-**Swales:** City of Spokane, Meghan Havko, Wastewater Management outreach spoke about swales and responsibility of homeowners in some cases and city in other cases. Elizabeth Goldsmith has been interested in getting better enforcement of maintaining both resident- and city-maintained swales. Post meeting Elizabeth followed up and wanted to share this information with the members:

The swales on High Drive at approx 21st and 25th, are called the "21st Avenue Parkway". Residents can call 311 to put in a maintenance request to have them both cleaned up. It was mentioned that the weeds are causing both fire and physical safety concerns due to the amount of brush, the dryness and

the height and density blocking visibility. Parks operations confirmed their responsibility. The direct Parks number for this is 509.363.5455. Encourage everyone to call about this and we will likely see action!

Spokane Police Department, Ofc Mongan reported crime statistics, recruitment levels and discussed some of the details and challenges of policing today. Specifically

--discussed challenges with interviewing juveniles without counsel present (it was stated in Aug meeting that this is a challenge for policing and particularly for the shoplifting phenomenon that is happening around Spokane)

--changes to how high speed pursuits are performed and what criteria was used (basically chases will only happen if violent offenses are involved). Ofc. Mongan made it clear that police typically don't want to have high speed pursuits but many offenders know that now and with that public knowledge and social media incentives at play there are cases where cops cannot pursue flagrant non-violent traffic violations.

-WA Senate Majority Leader Andy Billig spoke of legislative achievements in the last session and future looking goals in the next. Members asked follow up questions. The senator also addressed the recent legislation that affected how juveniles are treated and while in custody for alleged crimes and how high speed pursuit laws were dialed back to represent previous policies. He relayed a story about a visiting Spokane police officer that asked for some changes to this policy and that feedback was one of the catalysts of the reversal of the aforementioned legislation. The high speed pursuit policy is basically now where it was and appears to be where the police wish it to be. Senator also agreed that these policies being so publicly known are exploited for the social media likes whereas the policies boundaries were less known in years past.

-Office of Neighborhood Services Patrick Striker mentioned that the *Spokane Neighborhood Summit* is on Saturday, November 4th between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. at the Spokane Fire Department Training Center (1618 N Rebecca St).

<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/programs/spokane-neighborhood-summit/>

Announcements

-There will be no meeting for October 2023. Our next meeting will be **November 15th at 6pm at Moran Prairie library. A vote to change, or leave as-is, the bylaws,** specifically the voting requirements, is planned.

Picnic Tables in Comstock Park: Patrick Striker, ONS director, informed the chair that the Comstock Park picnic tables have been painted. This task was originally scheduled for Spring 2024 but it was completed early. If so, the council would like to thank Spokane Parks and Rec for completing this task for the neighborhood.

-Update on the Bernard St infill sidewalk and crosswalk project. From Inga Note (Spokane City):

The 37th/Bernard project includes a crosswalk on the north leg, bumpouts on both the northeast and northwest side of the intersection and illumination. It is part of a large package of traffic calming projects that we'd hoped to get constructed this fall. Unfortunately the design has taken longer than expected and construction won't happen until spring 2024.

However, after some discussion internally and reviewing the site in question, we've decided to go ahead and stripe an interim crosswalk at the intersection. The crossing guard is directing kids to the south leg since it already has ramps on both sides. The marked crosswalk will be shifted to the north leg once the bump outs are constructed next year

The RRFB at Manito and 29th will also be shifted to spring 2024.

-District 2 City Council Candidate Forum

Liberty Park Library, Saturday, September 30 4:30pm - 5:30pm

As part of a series of forums across the city, this event is dedicated to introducing the candidates running for the City Council seat in District 2 for the 2023 general election. Candidates will have the opportunity to present their visions for Spokane followed by a moderated discussion and an audience Q&A.

<https://events.spokanelibrary.org/event/9192081>

-Building Opportunity for Housing: The City of Spokane is seeking public comments through Oct. 4, 2023, on proposed housing changes to the Spokane Municipal Code as part of its [Building Opportunity for Housing](#) project aimed at addressing the housing crisis. More:

Following on the heels of the successful interim ordinance called Building Opportunity and Choices for All, the City is proposing amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code that will increase the opportunity for different housing types in the City's development code.

[Phase 1 of Building Opportunity for Housing](#) updated the vision of housing within the City's Comprehensive Plan and was approved unanimously by City Council on July 31, 2023.

Phase 2 seeks to make permanent changes to residential regulations in the Spokane Municipal Code (SMC).

The proposal amends several SMC sections and includes renaming Residential zones, expanding permitted housing options, adjusting dimensional and design standards for single-unit and middle housing development, and modifying related processes and procedures.

The intent of the proposed amendments is to increase housing choice and feasibility throughout Spokane while ensuring compatibility within existing neighborhoods and the community's vision.

Ref.

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/shaping-spokane-housing/building-opportunity-for-housing>

New Business

-**Sandy Wicht** was nominated to assume **roles of Treasurer and CA Representative**. Sandy spoke briefly on her goals and experience. Nomination was motioned, seconded and passed by voice majority.

-**Mary Ann McCurdy** was nominated to assume the role of **Vice Chair**. Mary Ann spoke briefly on her goals and experience. Nomination was motioned, seconded and passed by voice majority.

-**Gretchen McDevitt** was asked if she would officially assume the roles of Communications Chair and Membership Chair, both roles she has been doing informally for years. Although an unofficial vote of support was made by members present, **Gretchen politely declined** the official roles. These roles are available to other interested members with Gretchen being willing to train any new persons of interest.

Old Business

-**Voting requirements for Comstock NC bylaws**: chair motioned that we have a formal vote on the matter at the next regular meeting, November 15th 6pm at Moran Prairie library meeting room. It was proposed by Gretchen that there be a period of open discussion prior to the voting. Motion was seconded and passed by majority vote.

Details of the proposed:

To make any change $\frac{2}{3}$ of voting members must vote in the affirmative. I.e. bylaws state, SECTION 13:

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.

Ref.

<https://comstock.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Amended-Bylaws-Comstock-Neighborhood-Council-2-17-16-finalized-1.pdf>

Summary of proposed bylaws change:

Dave Randall will make a case for changing by-laws to remove two meeting attendance requirements, ref. point 4B below. Bylaws state, in Section 4:

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. To maintain voting privileges, each member shall attend one meeting annually.

--BEGIN POST MEETING ANNOTATION

Proposed changes, motioned and seconded by the council:

Proposed new CNC Bylaws Section 4:

A. 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.

B. Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the ~~second~~ [first] meeting ~~attended within a 12 month period.~~

~~C. To maintain voting privileges, each member shall attend one meeting annually.~~

Note: Strikethrough indicates removal of text. Square brackets indicate NEW text inserted into existing language.

Therefore section 4 will read:

- A. 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.
- B. Voting membership shall be given to any individual who meets the criteria in 4.A and shall be effective at the first meeting.

--END POST MEETING ANNOTATION

To make any change $\frac{2}{3}$ of voting members must vote in the affirmative. I.e. bylaws state, SECTION 13:

- 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.

Ref.

<https://comstock.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Amended-Bylaws-Comstock-Neighborhood-Council-2-17-16-finalized-1.pdf>

-Ongoing recruitment for Neighborhood Council volunteers. Needs are:

- ~~--Vice Chair: lead meetings in the event of chair absent and take on misc tasks (~3 hours or more per month)~~
- Secretary: take in-person meeting minutes and provide electronically to team (~3 hours or more per month)
- ~~--Treasurer: maintain accounts (and possibly apply for grant for 2023, see below)~~
- Communications Director: provide electronic notifications to the public regarding meeting notifications, agendas, past minutes. If possible utilize other social media sites to communicate with the public. (~3 hours or more per month)

--Community Outreach Grant Coordinator: Grant Training was Mar 13, 6:30pm (ref. email), recording available TBA

-- ~~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)~~

--Clean up (Clean Green) coordinator for 2024 (12 hours per year)

Public Comments

Appendix

-Traffic Calming Projects "Cycle 10" (approved in 2020) to be constructed in 2024:

-Comstock: 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.

Status: **construction moved to Spring 2024**

-Manito-Cannon Hill: 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.

Status: **construction moved to Spring 2024**

Source:

<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/neighborhoods/programs/trafficcalming/2023/cycle-10-traffic-calming-program-projects.pdf>

-Traffic Calming workshops 2022-2023 top concerns

--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

--37th Ave from Bernard St to Grand Blvd: Children bike in road with no dedicated bike facility, cars parking on sidewalk

--33rd Ave and Grand Blvd intersection: Bottleneck and traffic flow difficulties