

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes  
January 16, 2018

Meeting called to order by President Ann Forrest at 6:58 PM. Seventeen people attending.

Brian Mickelson, the Senior Communications and Outreach Specialist for Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), and Luis Ramirez, the SPU Project Manager, did a presentation about the Thornton Natural Drainage System, that is, what happens to rain water and run off as it relates to Thornton Creek and the waters around us. Their goal is to prevent storm overflows of rain and sewage going into open water (what they call "Combined Sewer Overflow"). Back when Victory Heights was all forest, the trees absorbed a lot of the rain which evaporated, and very little made it to the ground. The rain that did was easily absorbed into the ground. Flash-forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century when there are houses everywhere and paved streets, rain water is a big problem. One solution is putting in Natural Drainage Systems, that is specially-designed gullies along road surfaces that would absorb the run-off and filter it with special "spongy soil" and plants to where it could drain into the creek as clean water at a slow rate. Some of these have already been installed in Pinehurst along 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE. Sidewalks are not really part of this (that's the Department of Transportation's operation), with Brian saying, "We are leaving room for sidewalks but we're not installing sidewalks." The drainage systems would be built in the city-owned right-of-ways alongside the road, sometimes with trees removed and replaced by city-owned trees where appropriate. Various blocks have been considered as part of a study of "technically feasible blocks" to have this work done. Some of the criteria includes being relatively flat (less than 5% grade) and few driveways to interrupt the systems. Several "drop in" sessions were held last August and October on neighborhood streets to reach out to the public about these new systems. Drop-ins will continue this year, they will select options and design them through 2018 and construction would be 2019-2020 in about 50-80 sites. More info here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/util/EnvironmentConservation/Projects/ThorntonNaturalDrainage/index.htm>

Park renovation update: on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 10-11 AM there will be a "soft opening" of the new equipment, sans the basketball court or the path which will be built in 2018. Parts of the park will remain fenced off but playground equipment will be accessible.

News from the Lake City Neighborhood Alliance: On Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, District 5 councilmember Debora Juarez will be holding a "D5 Community Network" which will include a Q&A with the public. It will be from 7-9 PM at the Seattle Mennonite Church, 3120 NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street in Lake City. The Seattle Parks Department is now running the Lake City Community Center. Despite a budget for limited hours they are trying to be open Monday through Friday. The Lake City branch of the Seattle Public Library will be closing in April for six months for renovations.

The \$5000 grant we received from the city in return for maintaining the traffic circles has been translated into new signs you might see around the neighborhood to advertise the blog and meetings, as well as buying the plants for the circles, and supplies for the emergency communications HUB that will be established in the park once the construction is finished. There will be another HUB drill on April 28th.

Still looking for volunteers to build and install crosswalk flags on 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE at NE 106<sup>th</sup>/107<sup>th</sup>. The city doesn't provide these, but lets us put them on city-owned signs/poles.

On Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> there will be a Seed Swap from 3-4 PM in the co-op preschool building in Victory Heights Park. It's not too early to plant!

Plans are underway to coordinate a neighborhood-wide Victory Heights Yard Sale sometime in the spring. That is, we'd have individual yard sales on a single day but advertise it as a group event to attract customers.

Laura Jenkins from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods told us about the "Your Voice, Your Choice" program going on that will fund opportunities to improve parks and streets up to \$90,000 per project, with a total budget of \$3,000,000. Projects can be nominated and will be voted on by the public. This is essentially the same money that was previously dispersed with the aid of the North District Council which no longer exists, and paid for the traffic circle on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE several years ago. Ann wants to propose an improvement for pedestrians who walk down NE 104<sup>th</sup> Way from 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the bus stop on Lake City Way. Currently, pedestrians must walk in the narrow street, there are no shoulders due to the slope, blackberries and parked cars. Nominations can be made now via SurveyMonkey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YVYCIdeaCollection2018>. Hurry, the deadline is February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Someone wanted to know more about the potential sale of the reservoir at 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and NE 75<sup>th</sup> Street. It's been empty for years and SPU is thinking of selling it, possibly to developers. After some research we learned from Laura, "SPU is getting closer to a decision but probably won't have something to tell the public for a few months. I maintain a listserv that I send notice updates out to, so anyone who wants to receive upcoming notices, including one about a decision within a few months, should email me at [Cyndy.Holtz@seattle.gov](mailto:Cyndy.Holtz@seattle.gov) with their contact information."

The next meeting is Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson  
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council