

Minutes for Victory Heights Community Council

General Meeting May 21, 2013

Meeting called to order by Vice-President Sharon Haggerty at 7:05. 14 people attending.

Introductions made by all present.

Brad Cummings summarized the May North District Council Meeting. The Lake City Farmer's Market opens June 20th and continues every Thursday through the summer. Maple Leaf Children's Park on top of the reservoir opened Saturday. There was discussion about the Pierre Properties in Lake City and there will be further open houses facilitated by the UW grad students on May 29th and during the 3rd weekend in June.

Keith Dekker and Sharon did a presentation about the Emergency Planning Preparation being done for Victory Heights. Several meetings of the Emergency Planning Committee have resulted in the following goals: 1. Mapping the neighborhood and breaking it into block-sized zones. 2. Identifying Captains for each zone. 3. Obtain brochures from the city to be distributed to residents including Family Supplies Kit and Family Disaster Plan hand-outs. 4. Captains to meet their neighbors in their respective zones and distribute brochures and information. 5. Develop a neighborhood information site where residents could come to give and get information (Victory Heights Park is considered ideal because it is centrally located, everyone knows how to find it, and a lack of structures or trees make it immune to damage from a natural disaster and a safe place to congregate. 6. In the event of an emergency, Captains would canvas their zones, see who needs help, and check-in at the park to relay information. For zones where Captains haven't been heard from, someone would be delegated to check them out. A representative would be assigned to venture (by foot or bicycle if need be if the roads are impassible) to the local communication HUB (either the Fred Meyer in Lake City or Maple Leaf) in order to relay information to the city.

Generally the idea is to let people know they should expect to be self-reliant during a major emergency and have enough food, water, drugs to last several weeks if necessary before outside aid might be available. Also, Captains will receive training on how best to make initial contact with their neighbors when distributing information. Using a map created by Susan Causin and Sharon, the call went out for Captains in zones where nobody has volunteered yet.

Ryan Johnson summarized the Spring Clean that Ardith Lupton is organizing on Saturday May 25th at 9 AM beginning in the park. It is merely a clean-up and graffiti removal volunteer team, not maintaining traffic circles or anything similar. Kate Waterous asked for anyone who knows of any graffiti around the neighborhood to let her or Ardith know so they can take care of it on Saturday.

To that end, the woman who is "steward" of the traffic circle just north of the park on 19th Avenue NE asked for help in the future for weeding and planting to keep it nice. Ryan assured her that an announcement could be made on the blog for whenever she'd like to organize a work party to get volunteers.

Justin Almeida talked about the recent rash of break-ins, particularly as he himself was a victim earlier in the month. A number of electronic items were taken from his home. He discovered the deductible on his homeowner's insurance wasn't enough to cover the loss, so folks should consider getting personal article insurance if they have a lot of expensive items in their house. His advice, as the police have told us before, is if you see someone suspicious in the neighborhood call 911. The police do take these calls seriously, investigate, and it becomes part of their record of whether an area needs more scrutiny. We were also reminded that if someone knocks on your door, don't open the door but make them aware you are home.

Old Business: There is much interest in starting a Little Free Library, similar to what Pinehurst has done (Nancy from Pinehurst provided photos of theirs and told us a bit about them). After talk about putting one near the signboard in the park, Monica from the Pre-School suggested the southwest corner of the park at 17th Ave NE & NE 106th could be easily monitored daily from her house and is less likely to be bothered by teenagers or other non-residents in the neighborhood. Someone needs to step forward to build the small structure that will protect the books from the elements.

Kate talked about the current plans for a Neighborhood Night Out potluck/gathering either on Saturday July 27th or Tuesday August 6th (the actual Seattle Night Out). She is looking into a possible SPARKS grant from the city that might fund an event up to \$1000, but the deadline is June 14th, so it might or might not be done in time.

New Business: Someone asked about the Garden Tour but nobody had any information. Apparently Harriet Anderson had organized these in the past, but it's unclear if one is scheduled for 2013 or not.

The University YMCA is expanding its reach for youth programs, and after doing a survey (<http://surveymonkey.com/s/ZCTSGQ2>) announced a Y Showcase Event at the Lake City Community Center (next to the Library) on Saturday June 1st between 1 and 4 PM. It will have zumba, yoga, Barre and Salsa classes with concurrent free childcare, as well as a hip-hop production studio for teens to drop in.

Susan distributed a map from the city showing liquefaction zones around the city. The south side of Thornton Creek by the NE 98th Street retaining wall was the largest one near Victory Heights.

Some "Crime Watch Community" signs were displayed. Apparently if you purchase the official signs from a company in Ballard it is okay to post them on phone poles. Window decals are also available. The board is to consider spending some money on signs.

Brad updated us on the homeless situation under the 15th Avenue NE bridge. There is quite an organized settlement there, with at least two men living there with mattresses, shelves and battery powered lights. The city claims to have "cleaned out" this settlement in the past but it has returned apparently. Although city policy is explicitly against illegal homeless encampments, it's costly for them to clean them out on a regular basis. Nancy offered to bring this up at the next North Precinct meeting and get the official police response to this problem. Monica advocated welcoming anyone who wants to participate in our neighborhood and attend the meetings [Secretary's note: our by-laws state they are open to the

public] but NOT while inebriated (a problem we've had in the past). Justin wants to work with the homeless but his experience with a non-profit is while sometimes this can be productive, there are those who simply refuse any sort of help. He and everyone agreed, "Nobody should be living under a bridge," regardless of where their sympathies lie. More discussion will be done on this in the future, and folks were encouraged to bring ideas.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 18th, location TBD. As we were informed when we started using the Pre-School, they do not have the building during June, July and August and it is incumbent for us to secure use of it through the Parks Department ourselves. Of course the Parks Department wants us to be insured and this costs money. But perhaps it's reasonable and a lot less than insurance would have been for a picnic in the park, so we're going to look at how much and make our decision based on that. An alternative meeting location, at least for June would be the deck at Ardith's house on 23rd, or perhaps a venue outside Victory Heights altogether. The board will be meeting on June 1st to discuss options.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.