

Victory Heights Community Council

Meeting Minutes May 19, 2015

Meeting called to order by President Victor Hernandez at 7:04 PM. Twenty people in attendance.

Victor conducted an informal survey around the neighborhood and most of the feedback he received was about swails (overgrown drainage ditches) north of Northgate Way, mail theft, and crime.

Art Brochet, originally scheduled to be our speaker this month who had to drop out, surprised everyone by turning up and giving a charming presentation. He apologized for the confusion surrounding his availability, it was due to personal issues which happily resolved themselves but not before his assistants had canceled all his meetings for a two week period. Now back on the job, he was keen to come speak to us, although he wasn't able to bring his cool, and apparently large, model of the proposed pedestrian bridge for the Northgate LINK Light Rail station. Said bridge would cross interstate 5 and connect the station (and by extension, the neighborhood) with North Seattle College on the west side. Thirty percent of the fully-funded design work has been completed on the steel tube/truss \$25 million structure, the details of its precise "touchdown points" on each side are still be worked out, and the actual construction at this point is only ¼ funded at this point. The bridge will cross the freeway at NE 100th Street and then curve to the north on the east side to gently slope down to enter the station. There will also be stairs at 100th, for those just crossing the highway who don't need to go into the station. On the west side, the bridge will "land" just north of the North Seattle College campus, but just south of the woods. The parking lot there would probably be reconfigured to accommodate this (one of the things being decided). As for funding: currently the city has said it will put in \$5 million if Sound Transit matches this amount, which it has. However, this offer will not last forever without the additional funding needed to complete the project. Originally it was set to expire at the end of July, Sound Transit has extended its part of it until February 2016, the city is expected to follow suit although the city council has not acted on this yet. There are three potential sources of money to make up the other \$15 million cost: 1) the Move Seattle Levy that will be on the November ballot has a \$10 million line item specifically to pay for the bridge, 2) \$10 million from the state if the legislature passes the current transportation budget that has allocated this money, or 3) an application that will be made to the Federal government for a TIGER grant for a second time, for projects needing at least \$10 million, are shovel-ready, and can be justified as an "improvement." Should all three sources come through, the extra TIGER grant money would be used as a grant for an electric bicycle rideshare scheme that would be scalable. There will be an Open House about the bridge design sometime in September. Meanwhile, the Victory Heights Community Council could write a letter of support that would be used as part of the TIGER grant application. More details about this project can be found on the city website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/northgatepedbridge.htm>

Art then briefed us about the upcoming "microsurfacing" project that we were all leafleted about a few weeks ago (and he apologized for calling our neighborhood "North Maple Leaf"—see <http://victoryheights.org/wp/2015/05/01/road-microsurfacing-coming-to-victory-heights/>). In the past road have been "chip-sealed," which has the unfortunate side-effect of creating loose rocks and chips,

particularly in low-traffic areas. Now with the new microsurfacing technique, it uses finely ground rock and sand in a water/cement solution as a slurry which is poured on the road and then squeegeed level and cures in a few hours. It's critical nobody walks or drives on it for a few hours after it is applied, but after that it's ready for use. The microsurfacing is not very thick, so it's not effective on arterials or roads in bad condition, but for residential streets in good condition like in Victory Heights, it's an ideal solution to maintain the road and prevent water damage, cracks, and potholes from forming. As no companies locally do this work yet, bids have gone out to three national companies, and once one is selected the actual dates for the work on each street will be scheduled and announced to the affected residents. In preparation, city workers have been surveying the streets (you may have seen spray-painted words on the roads identifying various parts) and preparing them for the work. An arborist is also going to be hired and if any trees are found to be less than 14 feet over the road, will be carefully trimmed back (at city expense) without harming the tree or doing a ham-fisted job like City Light does around power lines. Owners can trim their trees themselves, if they so choose, but the 12 foot high trucks need to be able to clear any overhanging trees.

Art took some questions and was asked about sunken manhole covers. If we report them sometimes they can be adjusted. The broken fence in Victory Heights Park was brought up, with the usual problem of which city department (Parks or SDOT) is liable for fixing it. He said if someone contacted him, he'd look into seeing who exactly is responsible here. It's possible the "Safe Roads To School" fund, flush with revenue from traffic camera citations (stop speeding, people!), might be able to be of some use here.

Brad Cummings summarized the recent meeting of the North District Council. The city's proposed Urban Design Framework is online (<http://seattle2035.publicmeeting.info/>). One of the proposals would modify some of the commercial zoning rules that affect parking and mixed-use buildings. CleanScapes has changed its name to Recology Cleanscapes, reflecting a buy-out. You might see the livery colors on their trucks changing. There was a District 5 city council candidates forum last night (May 18th) with the 8 prospective candidates (after favorite Mian Rice dropped out). If you missed it, Maple Leaf is hosting another one on June 3rd. The primary is in August to select the top two candidates for the general election in November. We'll also get to vote on two "at large" candidates that represent the entire city.

Ann Forrest is still working on the Neighborhood Night Out, although the city apparently hasn't begun its registration website yet. She is going to talk to Ardi about getting some permanent signs and banners made that would be used year after year. Molly graciously offered to let us have yard signs that the Lake City Farmer's market no longer need. They'll need some paint, but we can put them to good use. We're reminded the Farmer's Market opens this year on June 11th.

This is our final meeting at the pre-school until classes resume in September. Next month's meeting on June 16th will be held outside in the park where hopefully we'll have good weather (a nearby house is available if we need to seek shelter). July's meeting location is TBD, and in August traditionally we skipped having a formal meeting in lieu of the Neighborhood Night Out that month.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson,
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council