

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes  
August 17, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM by President Ben Cober. Twelve people (plus two guests) attending via Zoom.

The Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Jesús Aguirre, gave a presentation about Parks' 2020-2032 Strategic Plan overview. "Leading with equity," is their theme, although the 2020 pandemic put a delay in implementing their 12 year plan, and challenged them to respond to the times and reach out and receive feedback in four areas: Racial Reckoning, Climate Change, Economic Downturn, and Public Health & Well-being. Surveys were handed out to allow for responses which included:

1. In the SW corner of our neighborhood, we have the natural treasure of the Kingfisher Natural Area. I know many residents are eager to see this become more accessible, with bridges across the creek and ravines, paths over frequent wash-out areas, steps in certain steep inclines, and trail signage. We'd love to know what it would take to make this happen.
  - As we do have houseless persons frequently camping beneath the 15th Ave. bridge that spans this property, there is often a good amount of resident concern of safety in this area, as well as pollution from the camps rolling into Thornton Creek.
2. Danyal was kind enough to help us secure a temporary sanican for our park for the summer; but knowing that that time is coming to an end and how popularly this has been received, we'd like to understand options of continuing public restroom facilities.
3. Many residents are curious at the opportunity to add more picnic tables and garbage cans to our park.
4. We have a small, rotting, wooden fence that lines the street-side of our park, and jumps back and forth across Parks & Rec and SDOT property. SDOT will only replace it with a large, metallic barrier, like the ones seen along highways, which our residents do not want. We wish there was a more visually-pleasing option, but we're out of ideas.
5. We worked with Pamela Klement in your office earlier this year to understand how we might upgrade our small community message board at the park to the much larger, standard park boards, but it appears that would be at immense expense to our residents, and not the City. Like the fence, our hands feel a bit tied.
6. Lastly, we know maintenance resources have been reduced during the pandemic, but it seems that we can only get the grass and weeds cut in our park when enough residents complain. We've asked about maintaining it ourselves, but have been informed that we cannot use powered tools (like a lawn mower or weed wacker) due to liability. Due to the size of the field, that's not physically reasonable. We'd like to learn how this area can be properly maintained and continue as an active resource for our community.

The results of the recent Resident Survey of Victory Heights were reported a few weeks ago at a real-world backyard meetup so they could be reviewed and acted on. We're currently looking to put together committees of volunteers to help implement the suggestions which would mainly only take an hour a month of time for organizing, doing research, or reaching out. Please contact us if interested.

There's a new survey on the Facebook group about creating new special-interest groups. Maybe you're into golf, or classic cars, or gardening. Please let us know:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeuT-J2yfV8mr9yQwWbdIqgDShUnaTboT-rZhGVgx3KFrDng/viewform>

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Neighborhood Night Out, several different blocks hosted small get togethers for neighbors to meet each other and connect. Good work, everyone!

Food Truck Fridays have 4 more weeks left this year, and we'll probably do it again in 2022 but maybe for Friday night dinners instead of lunches. Stay tuned.

Brad Cumming updated us on the Link Light Rail which begins service to Northgate on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, and with a host of bus route changes. Sound Transit also moved up the opening of a station at NE 130<sup>th</sup> Street to 2025, just one year after the line to Lynnwood opens.

Ann Forrest gave several updates:

- Community Connections is a new program that attempts to stay connected to older adults in the area, especially those who aren't as wired as the rest of us, making sure they are okay during a heat wave (or from wildfire smoke), and to assess any needs they might have. It might begin with a small phone tree but then spread out to people actually knocking on doors and distributing flyers. An in-person discussion will be held on the tennis court in Victory Heights Park during the final Food Truck Friday on September 10<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM.
- Another Craft Fair is scheduled in November, this one will be organized by the crafters themselves
- September 18<sup>th</sup> will be an Emergency Hub drill to be held in Maple Leaf Park starting at 9 AM. For this drill they want the general public to "overwhelm" them with requests (which will be provided on slips of paper) to test the resiliency of the Hub and work out any possible pain points before an actual emergency.

Plans for creating a new website portal for Victory Heights were reset when the original group got too busy earlier this year. A new group of volunteers is now trying, and might even recycle some of the utility box artwork as logos (5 artists have said it was okay).

The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson  
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council