

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2018

Meeting called to order by President Ann Forrest at 7:01 PM. Twenty-two people attending.

Laura Jenkins of the Department of Neighborhoods spoke briefly about the upcoming closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. There are many online resources to see the schedule and the impact: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Viaduct/realign99> . The short story is, avoid driving downtown starting January 11th.

Bill Heubach from Seattle Public Utilities did a presentation about earthquakes and the Seattle water system, in particular the plan with “extra” reservoirs in the city. He talked about the history of past studies that have been done to predict the impact of a major earthquake to Seattle’s water infrastructure, and how many more faults have been discovered in the past 28 years, as well as experience from major quake cities like Auckland and Kobe. Because of that, the standards have been upgraded to survive not just an event likely every 50 years but one that might only occur over thousands of years. Pipes that can withstand shaking were first developed in Japan, originally dismissed by American manufacturers, but since then they have jumped on the bandwagon, bringing the price and availability down. Nevertheless, the cost to replace every single pipe in the Seattle system would cost \$38 billion. We’ll all get sidewalks before that happens. So the thinking is to upgrade the most vulnerable parts of the system, starting where it passes over ground prone to liquefaction during a quake. And to keep two surplus reservoirs, Volunteer Park and Roosevelt, for emergency use rather than selling off the land to developers. (Currently they are not usable for potable water as the last of the open-air reservoirs.) The hope is to eventually decrease the amount of time it would take to restore water to the city in case of a catastrophic event. At the moment figures suggest in a worse-case scenario it would take 3-4 weeks just to get 20% of system back working, and 90 days to be back to 100%. Over the next 50 years the city is going to spend \$15-20 million annually upgrading the most critical systems and hopefully lower those worse-case figures in the event of magnitude 7.0 quake.

Shayna Daitch, councilperson Juarez’s legislative assistant, updated us on the homeless situation in Lake City, in particular behind the Starbucks on NE 120th. A sizable encampment has sprung up in recent weeks, with not just tents, but plywood structures and generators. Ms. Juarez lives nearby and frequents that Starbucks, and not surprisingly, is rather distressed about this situation and put a lot of pressure on the city’s Navigation Team to do something about it. However, the Navigation Team won’t start moving people out unless it has shelter for each person to go to, but that’s in short supply. Last Monday they did their first assessment, and in two weeks hope to have enough shelter space for everyone. With an estimated 400 encampments around the city, the encampment under the 15th Avenue bridge is unfortunately given lower priority for action at the moment (public safety & health are usually the main criterias). Sites that aren’t leaving human waste and needles around don’t merit a quick response. Shayna gave us advance word (later announced a day later here: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/durkan-and-constantine-endorse-recommendations-to-consolidate-fragmented-homelessness-system/>) that the city and the county have finally agreed to create one umbrella group to deal with the homeless situation in King County rather than a patchwork

of agencies and jurisdictions. It may take a year to fully launch this initiative but if nothing else it will create a single target for praise and/or ire when situations develop, and hopefully a sense of responsibility with a one single organization in charge. Meanwhile, if you see an encampment, report it. If you use the Find It, Fix It app/website, use the “Other” option rather than “Illegal Dumping” which just goes to SDOT. You can also call the 206-684-CITY and speak to live human.

Upcoming events: December 23rd, caroling in the park, 7:00 PM – 7:30 (yes, during the Seahawks game, but it should be around halftime, and you’ll still see most of the second half). Two Seed Swaps are scheduled in January, on the 13th and 27th.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council