

Morningside Neighborhood Association
February 9, 2022 Meeting
MINUTES

Call to Order: 6:30 PM by Janet Bubl (In for Chair Pamela Schmidling.)

Police Report: Officer Kizzar and Officer Painter – reported that the SPD Strategic plan has been finalized, emphasizing transparency and is posted on SPD Webpage. Body-worn cameras have been approved and staff will be hired to administer and manage; no firm timeline yet on implementation. Officers noted comment about speeders in vicinity of Battle Creek – to Pringle Road transition and fielded questions about recent car crashes, shootings, community engagement, Coffee with a Cop program. Training is in progress which takes 20% of force off streets for about five weeks.

Introductions: Nine of eleven board members present, of twenty in attendance (see attached attendance sheet.)

Code Compliance Report: Officer Hinkle and Officer Jones – Uptick in illegal dumping; asked us to call 311 (Public Works Dispatch) to report. Also, increase in RV and travel trailer abandonments, requiring towing; towing contractors are very busy, and more time required for removal service. (Councilor Phillips mentioned stopgap funding on the way to address the problems.) Officers fielded questions about legality of curbside “free stuff”, vehicle parking on street, and status of the unpermitted tree cutting issue at 27th and Kuebler (can’t share details other than formal notification is in process.)

Community Improvement Bond Proposal: Trevor Smith, Public Information Officer for City of Salem – gave presentation on \$300 Million Bond Issue to be on the November 2022 ballot. Proposal would not add to the property tax *rate* (though tax *base* is increasing with new developments.) Bonds will cover improvements to fire truck fleet, repairs to streets and sidewalks, parks and other infrastructure. Smith asked MNA to help identify needs. Alan Meyer mentioned the long-time need for sidewalks on Pringle – north of Madrona. Board agreed to discuss later, to allow time for rest of agenda. (Councilor Phillips reported the matter is on Council’s agenda for February 18th meeting.)

Fairview Park Report: Rob Romanek, Public Works Administrator for City of Salem circulated a map illustrating plans – including modification needed to protect possible cultural resources at north end of park. Brief reports on park interface with adjacent residential developments, temporary storage of chips from Ice Storm damage clean-up, installation of boulders to block vehicle traffic on trails. (Al Tocchini asked Romanek to help nominate a tree or grove in that area to the Oregon Heritage Tree roster, and explained

the history of Oregon Heritage Trees and Historic Signs administered by Oregon Travel Information Council.) Romanek mentioned the recent land donation adding to southwest corner of Park. Agency is looking to create facilities there for public uses. A volunteer work party scheduled for 9AM, Saturday, February 19th to work on new trail northward from The Grove apartment complex. He cautioned any of park visitors to be aware of possible hazards left from the demolition phase of the development, and to report such to Public Works Dispatch (311.)

City Council Report: Councilor Trevor Phillips reported on updated Code for Tree Protection to allow for alternative measures to mitigate removals. City now has a *managed* Micro-shelter camp on Turner Road, funding for more such sites. Oregon spends the least amount on mental health in USA. City staff is doing their best. Local mental health service is traditionally a County function. He talked about “plusses” in the \$300 Million bond proposal, possibility expand City services, improve Police and Fire response times. Efforts being made to establish a “Cahoots” program to respond to and help de-escalate mental health incidents. Recent Financial audit revealed no issues: we’re OK for now, but funding will diminish over next few years and may require cuts in City services.

The Grove Apartments: Facility Manager Jessica S. reported that site work is well-underway on Phase II, with construction of “verticals” to begin in the next two or three months. She introduced new “Community” Manager Laura Robinson. There was some discussion of recent complaints from tenants in completed Phase I complex regarding Phase II construction noise and dust, etc. – which Laura is working on holding community meetings and events to help them get through this temporary disturbance. They reiterated their offer for MNA to use their Clubhouse for its meetings.

Committee Reports:

Traffic – Alan Meyer – Thanked Grove Apartments developer for the Reed Road improvements that are underway. Some discussion of proposed Code change relating to Comp Plan update and Traffic load thresholds “Looks like City is going to tolerate more congestion.” Discussion revealed the proposed change had more to do with Staff functions, and doesn’t affect development. There was discussion of the over-representation of developers and realtors – and lack of “mainstream” on the Planning Commission. Sue Reid suggested that Neighborhood Associations should help find candidates when positions open on the Planning Commission.

Parks – Muriel Meyer – Nothing new to report (cited earlier report on Fairview Park.)

CERT – No report.

Liquor License – No report.

Transit – Bob Krebs announced he is on a committee exploring streetcar service between Salem and West Salem.

Volunteer Hours: Muriel Meyer – 2 hours; Sue Reid 1 hour.

New Board Members – Board voted Elizabeth Backer and Jenny Hiatt onto the MNA Board.

Note: At this point, Councilor Phillips left the meeting.

Resume Committee Reports –

Land Use – Geoffrey James reported Planning Commission ignored MNA’s letter and has approved rezoning of 14 acre tract at southeast corner of Kuebler and 27th Street from Commercial Residential to Commercial Retail. Some discussion about need to fill-out a form for submitting comments on zone changes, and that MNA’s letter should suffice. Also, MNA representatives should attend March Council meeting to support Southgate NA in their objections to the zone change.

Other Business –

Geoffrey James called for discussion of controversial January 10 Council meeting/Meyer Farm testimony. Janet Bubl explained it was already discussed at January 12 MNA meeting, Chair Pamela has sent a letter to Council to explain misunderstanding of the question from Council and to clarify MNA’s concerns and recommendation that developer’s plan should be denied. Council support acknowledged receiving the letter. Brief discussion ensued about the challenges of testifying before public councils, the difficulty of Chairing association boards such as MNA, and the lack of persons stepping up to assume the Chair’s duties – including testifying on specific areas of concern to the neighborhood. Board agreed that situation has been rectified and we should move-on.

Janet Bubl thanked Liz Backer and Jenny Hiatt for joining the MNA Board.

Adjournment – Janet Bubl adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.