

East Lancaster Neighborhood Association
Minutes

February 1, 2024

Attendance: Sue Fowler, Mary Sarabia, Pastor Terry Motte, Pat Mick, Chuck Westbrook, Dennis Will, Lt. Debbie Aguilar, Liz Thorley, Kevin Hottmann, Steve Williams, Councilor Julie Hoy and Vern Golden.

Zoom: Clark Hazlett, Susann Kaltwasser, Brian Banta.

Sue open the meeting at 7:05 with introductions. The minutes for the December 2023 meeting were voted on at the end of the meeting. Mary made the motion, Chuck seconded it and all agreed.

Police Report

Officer Jantz was not available so Lt. Debbie Aguilar of the Salem Police Department took his place.

Lieutenant Aguilar spoke about recent appointments in the Salem Police department. There are three deputy chiefs and on March 7th she will become one herself. As Deputy Chief she will be in charge of the detectives division. Robert Dowd will be in charge of community engagement until someone else is appointed, The other deputy chiefs are Trevon Upkeep and Brandon Dido.

Recently Chief Womack has been working on the issue of community violence and has created a new program called the Community Violence Reduction Plan. This is based upon a study done by a consultant that showed a doubling of violent crime in Salem in the last few years. Chief Womack is participating in a series of community conversations beginning with one in our area on March 6 at the East Salem Community Center from 6-7:30 p.m..

Susann asked about the recent incident at Fred Meyer. She observed that people caught up in the situation needed to be more aware of their surroundings and especially to lock their car doors. Sue asked Lieutenant Aguilar and she said that the people involved were from out of town and it was regarding a drug deal that had gone bad. Everyone involved was arrested. Susann asked about Neighborhood Watch. She said ELNA has had a goal of trying to promote the program, but was finding it difficult. Lieutenant Aguilar suggested we talk about how we could promote the program with Officer Mark Jantz when he returns

Councilor Report

Counselor Julie Hoy said they were working on finding additional funding through the Revenue Task Force. They had 157 applications and they pick 25 people to work with the budget committee and make recommendations to the City Council. Sue Fowler said that there were not a lot of lay people on the committee. There will be public hearings and people can watch the task force meetings online. This group will be looking for revenue to begin in 2025-2026 budget year. Counselor Hoy said that she had a lot of questions and feels that the process is moving too fast, so hopefully this will slow things down to get answers.

Sequoia Crossing opened the past week with 60 units for low income families. Clark Hazlett asked why the city doesn't look into having a police department through the county sheriff. He feels it could reduce costs by eliminating duplication. He also asked about patrol cars and noticed that they had purchased six new Tahoe's for \$419,000. Terry Motte asked if councilors have any staff help. Councilor Hoy said that they do not have any personal staff, but get support from the city managers office. Chuck said that she's now been in office 15 months and he wondered if the city should be providing better training for new counselors

Traffic Calming

Kevin Hottmann outlined the "safer streets program" that the city has just begun. He said that ELNA was going to be one of the first projects and the city would be putting speed bumps on Tierra Drive and Weathers Street. The first step is to notify neighbors and let them vote on whether they approved the project. We need 51% to rate speed bumps as high for needing to be installed to calm the traffic. He needed a vote of approval from the ELNA Board, so Susann moved approval and Chuck seconded the motion and all voted yes.

Another project is to ask citizens to give suggestions about missing sidewalks or safety concerns. Locations need to be submitted by the end of March. Clark asked about a crosswalk on Weathers at Tierra to the park. Another board member asked about parking on Glencoe by large vehicles. Mr. Hottmann said people can paint the curb yellow 3 feet on either side of their driveways. Semi trucks are not allowed to park on the streets, but large passenger trucks are allowed. Call parking enforcement if you feel there is a violation.

Susann asked about congestion on Market Street due to the timing of traffic lights near Fred Meyer. Cars are stacking up all the way back onto I-5. Mr. Hottmann said there's not a lot he can do with the signals. They adjust for the time of the day and try to keep 130 second cycle. They are going to be coordinating the traffic lights on Lancaster in an effort to help the Cherriots stay on time. The city cameras have been down recently because the system crashed from an overload of too many cameras. They are working on seeing if they can fix the problem or if they need a new computer system. Dennis Will asked about a traffic light that is skipping the yellow phase and going directly from green to red. Mr. Hottmann suggested he call dispatch because something may be broken in the light. Susann asked about the intersection of Sunnyview and Lancaster. People are complaining that the flashing yellow light is confusing and causing accidents. Mr. Hottmann said that if there is a problem with running red lights we should request a camera be placed there. That request would be to the Police Department

Crosswalk at Manor and Weathers on Lancaster Drive

Liz Thorley from Public Works said that the city will be putting in a flashing light and crosswalk with an island on Lancaster Drive. It will go just south of Weathers Street at Manor. There was some discussion about points of conflict with cars turning at Weathers. They are in the design phase now, and the crosswalk will be built next spring of 2025. Chuck made a motion to support the crosswalk while Vern seconded the motion and all voted yes

Committee reports

- a. Land-use

Lucky Fortune Restaurant - The restaurant is being reconstructed after a fire and it will be similar in design, but will have more windows. She found no concerns so will submit comments of support.

4963 Center St. Apartments - The proposed apartment complex was approved by the staff. We submitted comments opposing infill of the wetlands and possible landslide on the north section. Staff acknowledged the concerns but said the Division of State Lands decided wetlands issues, and the applicant will need to submit a landslide study to Public Works prior to issuing permits. The question was do we want to appeal the decision or not. Bev Quiring said the wetlands must stay. Susann said wetlands are decided by DSL, not the city, but she needed to do more research. It was suggested that we appeal as a holding place for that investigation. Sue made a motion that ELNA appeal and Mary Sarabia seconded the motion. All voted yes

b. Mural

The committee has not met. Susann needs to secure the funds for the mural, but we all agreed that the intersection of Tierra and Weathers by the park would be a good location.

Someone noted that the cottages by Swegle school are now being built.

Neighborhood concerns

Pat Mick was worried about the sewage overflow in the neighborhood where raw sewage was leaked due to excess rain. She wondered if there was any treatment done of the overflow area. She asked if we could get someone to come to ELNA to talk about the situation.

Mary Sarabia shared about her bad experience on the bus. The driver had stopped suddenly throwing her out of her wheelchair and she injured her knee. She is seeing a doctor now to see if her kneecap was broken. She tried to report the incident, but got no response from Cherriots. She also had a traffic accident on Center Street by Nancy Jo's, where a car hit her wheelchair. She ask the business if they had a camera that might have captured the incident, but she found out that that area is in the county so she needs to report it to them. Oregon health plan won't pay for her injuries.

Next Meeting Possible Topics

Neighborhood Watch

Information on the sewer system

Public hearing changes being proposed for City Council

Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM