

East Lancaster Neighborhood Association
 Minutes - November 7, 2019, 7:00 pm
 Swegle Elementary School, 1751 Aguilas Ct NE, Salem

Board Chairs/Members Present		Others Present	
x	Susann Kaltwasser, Chair	x	Chris Hoy, Ward 6 City Councilor
	Sue Fowler, Co-Chair	x	Norm Wright, Dir., City of Salem Community Dev.
x	Mary Sarabia, Vice-Chair	x	Krishna Namburi, City of Salem Community Dev.
x	Chesta Bauer, Secretary	x	Bob Weber, President, Blanchet High School
x	Dave Steiner, Member-at-large	x	Nelson Morales, Compliance Officer, City of Salem
	Clark Hazlett, Member-at-large		
	Lori Lazo, Member-at-large		
x	Fred Wright, Member-at-large		

Neighbors Present: Chuck Westbrook, Mike Sim, Lynette Horton, Patricia Mick, Paul Wilson, Lisa Brunner, Mike & Dahlia Sobieski, Louise Pressnell, W. Horton,

Introductions/Approval of Minutes: The meeting was opened by Co-chair Susann Kaltwasser at 7:00 pm. The minutes of the October 2019 meeting will be reviewed and voted upon at the December meeting in order to give the board time to read them.

Police Officer Report: The Salem police officer had to report to a situation and wasn't able to stay for the meeting.

Revenue to Fund Essential City Services (fee proposal): Norm Wright and Krisna Namburi made a presentation regarding the two new proposed revenue sources to fund increased police and fire services and to provide funds for sustaining city operational costs to support continuing city services. These new revenues are needed because the City budget is showing a deficit of funds which without additional revenues could lead to significant decreases in staff and services when the new fiscal year begins in July 2020. More information on both of these proposals can be accessed at: <https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/revenue-to-fund-essential-city-services.aspx> or by contacting Courtney Knox Busch at 503-540-2426.

The first proposal was the operations fee that would be added to City of Salem utility bills. This fee would support continuation of existing library, park maintenance, police, fire, emergency and social services, and other essential services. Norm said that Salem has less police officers now than they had 10 years ago and during that time the crime rate has increased by 22%; the fire department has had to close two stations; library hours have been reduced; there are less compliance officers than there were 12 years ago. These are all areas that require additional funds to provide these needed services for city residents. The growth of revenues supporting these services has not kept up with the growth of the population which has increased by 9% over the past 10 years. The fee is proposed to be \$8/month for single family residences, \$6.40/month per unit for multi-family residential accounts, and \$38.56/month for public, commercial and institutional accounts. Those who qualify for utility relief will not pay the fee. A first reading of this proposal to implement the operations fee was passed by the City Council by a vote of 6 to 3. A second reading and final vote will be at a meeting later in November. If passed, the operations fee will be shown on the February 2020 bill. If not passed, the city will begin planning for laying off both police and fire personnel and cutting other needed city services.

The second proposal is for an employee-paid payroll tax which would tax a percent of total wages paid to all employees employed by private and public sectors, including those who live outside of the Salem city limits. This would help to fund services used by the approximately 60,000 employees who commute to Salem and use its services without paying for them. Non-wage income would not be taxed and this tax also would not apply to retired people. The proposal uses a tiered rate structure with most workers paying a rate of 0.39% on income earned within the City limits; employees earning the minimum wage would be exempt, and those earning a wage up to \$15.00/hour would pay a lower rate of 0.266%. The employee-paid tax will be referred to voters in the May 2020 election.

There was considerable discussion about each of the revenue proposals and most people wanted to know why the City can't fund these services with existing revenues. Norm explained that past laws, Measures 15 and 50, imposed a cap on the amount of property taxes that can be placed on a residence. The limited property taxes have not kept revenue growth rising as fast as the cost of providing needed services for the city. In addition, because Salem is the capital city, there is a lot of public owned property within the city limits that cannot be taxed. The State does pay a certain amount for this but it is not enough to match the growth of revenue needed. This results in the city not being able to keep up with inflation and the needs of a growing population. Comments included that the general population will pay for any increases in taxes and fees because they will be passed on to consumers. Also why not raise the taxes of multi-family property owners because they pay less taxes than individual property owners. That could raise the rents for tenants so that would not lower the costs for these individuals. There was a question about why the operations fee was put on the utility bill and Norm said that was because there was already a billing system to collect funds so there is no extra cost to collect the fee. There were questions about new developments and the cost of providing services for them and who pays for these costs. Norm explained that every development is charged a systems development fee which is paid by the developer to pay for additional infrastructure and other amenities needed. For instance, the cost of new homes includes about 10% in development fees which pays for parks, streets, stormwater improvements, etc.

Norm & Krisna also discussed the proposed revised multi-family design standards which would modify some of the design requirements for these developments in order to encourage more multi-family construction. More information on this can be accessed at www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/Updating-multifamily-housing-design-requirements.aspx or by contacting Eunice Kim at ekim@cityofsalem.net or 503-540-2308. Norm started by saying these standards need to be updated to accommodate the increased need for multi-family residences in the future. It is estimated that Salem's population will increase by 60,000 people in the next 20 years. The rising cost of housing has led to a short supply of affordable housing in Salem and there is a need to find more creative ways to increase these units. The proposal has gone through an extensive review process including working with community groups and neighborhood associations. It will now go to the November 19th Planning Commission meeting. Once the Planning Commission hears the proposal, takes comments, makes changes, etc., it will then go to the City Council for review. There will also be a hearing to get public comment. Susann said that she is bothered by the proposed approval process which allows City staff to approve a project that meets all standards with no public notice. Since this proposal allows 3 to 4-unit developments to be excluded from the definition of multiple family development, it allows these types of units to be placed into areas zoned for single family residences without any notice to the residents. Also, larger developments can be approved without the surrounding neighbors having any say in the design or in the effect on the neighborhood. There were questions regarding the additional population and its effect on things such as freeway off/on ramps. A question was asked if these could be increased. The response was that Salem is maxed out on these ramps since highway design does not allow ramps closer than 1 mile apart. Susann mentioned that we had a transportation study presentation at our NA meeting earlier in the year and we heard about the proposed street improvements that are planned for the future. Also the comprehensive City of Salem plan update (<https://www.cityofsalem.net/our-salem>) is still under consideration and it will guide future planning for where growth will go, road improvements, zone changes, etc. Neighborhood Associations will get a presentation on the plan when it is ready.

Code Enforcement Report: Nelson discussed the property that has been the subject of numerous complaints located on Swallow Court. It was determined to be a property of interest based on the concerns at the residence including suspected drug dealing, trash and junk on the property, transients living in tents in the backyard, parking, and inhabited vehicles. Nelson contacted the Salem police POP team to accompany him to the property. The POP team inspects nuisance houses where complaints have been verified. There are three officers in the team and the officer that Nelson worked with was Officer McDermitt. There were citations issued and Nelson feels like many of the issues have been resolved for now. The tents are gone, people living in a trailer are no longer there, the yard has been cleaned up. A welfare check was made on the elderly woman who owns the house and she seemed to be OK but has health issues. Nelson said he checks the property regularly but if there are more issues, neighbors should call him with evidence or witnesses. Fred Wright mentioned people living in RVs on Weathers Street and possible dealing drugs by the look of the number of people coming and going from one of the RVs. Nelson said he should get license plates numbers, videos of people coming and going, etc., so he will have evidence of possible illegal activities. There was a question about nutria coming into people's yards from pipes and creeks. Nelson said to call wildlife about the issue. There were 133 cases in the ELNA area in the last four months. Most issues concerned parking, trash and abandoned vehicles. No stolen vehicles were recovered in the ELNA area the last four months. Most of the complaints came in as citizen calls but there has been a rise in complaints coming through the web. He prefers that people use the web to report complaints since the staff has been reduced by two people due to budget constraints and complaints go to voice mail.

Neighborhood Concerns - Blanchet School Lights: Bob Weber and Nelson Morales responded to complaints from neighbors about the intensity of the football field lights located on the Market Street side of the Blanchet campus. These are new lights installed when the new football field was built. There is a 10:00 pm curfew for the lights and a five foot candle limit. Nelson said he checked the lights when first installed and they were out of compliance with the five foot candle limit but when he subsequently rechecked them they were in compliance. Neighbors (Lisa Brunner and Mike and Dahlia Sobieski) had several complaints about the lights: the lights were not turned off by 10:00 pm the first and second nights they were on, the lights are too bright and shine right through curtains, people are parking on Market Street to watch the games. Bob said that these games started at 7:30 pm and there will be no more night games this year. In the future games will start at 7:00 pm so that lights can be turned off by 10:00 pm. The soccer games will start at 6:00 pm and be over by 8:00 pm. The field can be rented out to other schools or organizations but it will be required that if the lights are needed, they will be turned off by 9:00 pm. There was a question about changing the way the lights faced. Bob said the light poles can't be changed and will continue to have a north/south orientation. He also said that the City does not allow a fence higher than four feet along Market Street but he will have slats put in the fence so the view will be blocked. Susann said she will talk to Eunice Kim about the fence standards and see what the requirements are. She also suggested checking out other schools to see what their lights are like. There was a question about the gate on Sunnyview and whether it will be locked. Bob said it would. Another question was about loud music at a dance at Blanchet and the bass was too loud. Bob said he would check into it, however, he also mentioned that noise from school activities is exempt from noise ordinances. Bob said that Blanchet High School is committed to working with its neighbors to resolve their issues as best as possible.

City Councilor Report - Chris Hoy:

- The City Council approved the appointment of Vanessa Nordyke to replace Sally Cook for the Ward 7 City Councilor position.
- The East Park Estates development was approved. There was no new information on the soil contamination issue.
- The City Council will review and vote on raising the garbage rates by \$1.25 this year and another \$1.25 next year at its November 12th meeting.

- The City Council will conduct a first reading on amending the Salem city ordinances to establish a Tourism Promotion Area in downtown Salem which will include the motels/hotels in the area and increase the occupancy tax.
- Sit/lie proposed city ordinance: This is still being considered by the City Council. There was discussion at the ELNA meeting concerning this issue: We need to know how the sit/lie ordinance will impact neighborhoods since people may be pushed into the neighborhoods if this ordinance is approved. The ordinance doesn't allow anyone to sit or lie on sidewalks or on landscaping anywhere in the city. Also people won't have any place to store their belongings or their tents, cardboard boxes, etc, that they use at night. There are about 2,000 homeless people with about one-half of those being children and only about only 500 beds available for overnight. Chris said he would like to convene a meeting of the east side neighborhood association boards to talk about the issues. Apparently, several neighborhood associations have made resolutions opposing the ordinance, also. There needs to be more discussion of problems and solutions before passing the ordinance. There was a motion made by Dave Steiner and seconded by Mary Sarabia stating that the ELNA board opposes the proposed sit/lie ordinance as it is currently written until there is a plan on how the homeless will be able to meet their basic needs while the ban is in effect and there is recognition that the sit/lie ban on all city streets may result in pushing these individuals into the neighborhoods without any plans to meet their needs there either. The motion includes a recommendation to continue to work on the recommendations made by the Homeless Committee and then go out to the Neighborhood Associations to discuss the issues more thoroughly. The motion was passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

- **Land Use:**

- East Park Estates Update: The construction on the development of the East Park Estates property has begun. The work on bringing water from Caplinger to the development is underway.
- Greencrest realignment: The developer wants to connect Greencrest Street from Auburn Road to State Street. This could result in traffic going on Greencrest from State Street to Center Street, then on to Royalty Drive to Swegle which connects to Market Street. That could result in more traffic on Market Street. There will be a hearing on this later in November.
- New codes for multi-family developments in single family zones: Based on our previous discussions, there was a motion made by Fred Wright and seconded by Mary Sarabia to authorize Susann to submit testimony to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed revised design standards that cover the requirements for multi-family residences. We discussed including in the testimony our opposition to the ability of City staff to be able to approve a project without public notice if the project meets all standards. Our comments around this included notifying the applicable neighborhood associations and the neighbors of proposed multi-family developments about the proposed plans of the development and allowing for comments from these entities before the staff review and approval is completed. The motion was approved unanimously.
- 4696 Center Street - update: We oppose this apartment development based on the density and the transportation issues which will affect the neighborhood. Patricia Mick said she would like to provide testimony to the Planning Commission when this project is on their agenda. We also discussed at this time Patricia's desire to be on the board. There was a motion made by Dave Steiner and seconded by Fred Wright to approve Patricia Mick's application to be on the Board of Directors for ELNA. The motion was approved unanimously. It was agreed by the Board that Patricia can make comments about the proposed 4696 Center Street multi-family development bordering her residence in a manufactured home park providing that Patricia mentions that she is now a member of the ELNA board, however, any comments she makes at the Planning Commission meeting will be from her own personal opinion rather than comments that were discussed and approved by the ELNA board. There was discussion

about the type of soil the development will be on. This soil has a clay composition and it holds water which can result in increased flooding in the area.

- **Traffic:**

- Future plans for State Street Expansion: The County is proposing to expand State Street to five lanes from Lancaster Drive to Cordon Road. Per a prior discussion, Susann is going to write a letter to Marion County opposing the expansion of State Street to five lanes and suggesting that it be expanded to three lanes with two travel lanes and a middle turning lane, similar to Sunnyview Road.
- Fisher Road extension: This project ran into problems with the timer mechanism for the lights & it took two weeks to correct the issue. It is projected to be open by the end of November. Mary said that the sidewalks on both sides of Market Street are torn up and both sides are blocked so she can't get into Fred Meyer. This construction should be compliant with ADA requirements and she should call Aaron Edelman at 503-588-7363 with her complaint.

- **Neighborhood Concerns:** A complaint was made regarding the speed of traffic on 45th Street and on Market Street, especially since Swegle School sits on the corner of 45th and Market. It was noted that the speed limit on Market Street is 30 mph and on 45th is 35 mph. Susann said we have asked about lowering the speed limits several times with no avail. There were also complaints about parents picking up children after school and blocking driveways and parking in bike lanes. We have also discussed this with our police officer several times. We could look into getting a speed reader to help with the speeding and we could talk to the principal of Swegle to see if she can do something about the parking situation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm.