

SESNA meeting minutes for July 27, 2021

Attendance - Board Members: Shannon Priem, Bill Smaldone, Jeff Leach, Marcia Hoak, David Thompson, Celese Liyanage

Neighbors: Dave Macmillan, Susan Singleton, Victoria Hayes, Jane Kasharina, Barbara Pollack, Katherine Pollack

City Staff: Irma Dowd

City Councilor: Tom Andersen

The meeting began at 7:05 with a round of introductions.

Minutes of May and June SESNA meetings approved unanimously.

Neighbors' Concerns:

1. Neighbors near the corner of State and Ferry Streets noted the frequent presence of a mentally disturbed homeless man who had done some minor property damage. After discussion, it was decided that the best course of action was to report damage or dangerous behavior to the police and to get additional neighbors to do the same.
2. Problems with speeding and questions about how to respond. It was suggested that SESNA might ask for an electronic speed indicator from the city to be placed on streets that are particularly problematic. No immediate action was called for.
3. One neighbor asked how to get rid of broken tree branches. She was encouraged to use her green bin and ask neighbors for space in theirs if necessary.
4. A neighbor questioned if there were rules against people emptying water from above ground pools on neighbors' property rather than into the street. We suggested she call Community Enforcement to inquire about the regulations.

Tom Andersen's Remarks

1. **City Council has decided to create a car-free zone and bike path on Winter and Union Streets** on Saturday's between 9:00-3:00 from August through October. This will allow easy bike and pedestrian access to the Salem Saturday Market. Tom supported a "hard" or full closure, a position which the main proponent of the measure, Councilor Stapleton, accepted.
2. **Geer Park:** A new master plan is in the works. Councilor Andersen has pushed for substantially fewer parking spaces to bring the plan more in line with the City's Climate Action Plan, which encourages less auto use.
3. **Climate Action Task Force:** Councilor Andersen reports that the group has very broad community representation. Rob Robinette is the City's main contact person.
4. **Proud Boy Demonstrations:** The Salem Police arrested three Proud Boys for their actions in front of Salem's Planned Parenthood facility. The police are also enforcing City regulations regarding the need for permits to hold rallies in the Riverfront Park.

5. **State Street Plan:** Not much progress on implementation has occurred.
6. **Homeless Issues:** The City and its various social service partners is creating 550 new spaces for homeless individuals as it clears large homeless camps from Market Street, Cascade Gateway Park and Wallace Marine Park. In addition, it is spending over \$8 million to purchase facilities (old motels, etc.) that could be used as transitional housing and it is building tiny houses on parcels it has made available at low cost to service providers. These measures are a step forward but are far from adequate given the scale of the problem. Salem is also creating a **mobile response unit** based on the CAHOOTS model used in Eugene as a means of responding to social service needs without initial resort to police.
7. **Downtown viability:** Council is working hard to promote new housing downtown. Hundreds of new apartments have recently come onto the market and new ones are in the works, e.g., on the site of the old Nordstrom building, along with new retail development.
8. At the August meeting, Councilor Andersen will talk about the proposed **Salem Streetcar System**.

Old Business

- The **Capital Park Church Sidewalk Sale** on July 24 was a big success. David Thompson read an upbeat summation of the events (music, sales, and so on) of the day and the good turnout. All agreed that we should participate again next year.
- There was a general feeling that the **leafletting** for this meeting was a success since it attracted six new people. **There was broad agreement to do it again for the August meeting.**

Suggestions of topics for future meetings:

- Marcia proposed inviting Community Enforcement; Bill suggested a presentation on how SESNA and other NAs could help implement the City's Climate Action Plan. Also, he proposed a presentation on the condition of Cascade Gateway Park in the wake of the dismantling of the homeless camp.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.