

WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF AUGUST 13, 2019

ATTENDANCE

Neighbors: Steve Bieri, Karen Carlberg (Chair), Rick Clapp (Vice-Chair), Corey Clarke, David Duhaime, Dwight Emerson, Karen Jurasin (Communications Director), Susan Mensching, LaVerne Truman

City staff: Annica Eagle (Community Programs Coordinator), Colin Quinn-Hurst (Planning), Gabby Ryan (Community Programs Coordinator)

Guests: Cathi Lamoreux (WSU/Spokane County Master Gardeners), Hilary Nickerson (Water Steward Specialist, City of Spokane Water Department), Carol Weltz (SNAP)

MINUTES

Minutes were approved for the meeting of June 11, 2019.

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY REPORT, Paul Bundy, West Hills CA Representative

Paul was absent. Karen C had read the minutes for the CA meetings of July and August. There appeared to be nothing relevant to West Hills at the July meeting. There were a few relevant items in the August minutes, and Karen asked for clarification from Annica, included here: Inga Note presented an update to the Spokane Municipal Code for arterial streets, which had not been updated since the west plains area was annexed by the city; specific arterial changes for the west plains area were not included. Lori Kinnear talked about criteria for choosing which streets to pave, including usage, road condition, arterial vs residential, and connection to street grid. Specific streets for paving have not been selected yet. Lori also talked about increasing urban density, including infill around Centers and Corridors, proximity to transit, and transition zones between multi-family and single-family residences.

SNAP, Carol Weltz, Director of Community Action

Carol told us about SNAP (Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners). For over 50 years SNAP has been empowering our low-income neighbors to transition from crisis to stability through education and caring for immediate needs that help them to exit poverty. Education includes money management and other financial counseling. Help during crises includes rides to medical appointments, vehicle emissions repairs, home repairs and weatherization, foreclosure prevention, and energy conservation and assistance. In 2018 SNAP helped over 45,000 people, saved 240 homes from

foreclosure, transitioned 351 people from homelessness to permanent housing, and much more. Funding sources include federal, state, local, foundations, and donations. Carol's handout is posted on Nextdoor and provides much more information.

SPOKANE SCAPE, Hilary Nickerson, Water Steward Specialist, City of Spokane Water Department

Hilary told us about the Spokane Scape program, which encourages residents to replace lawn with mulched areas with drought tolerant shrubs and perennials, for the purpose of reducing water use. The water department gives a rebate of \$0.50 per square foot up to \$500. The city provides a guidebook that includes information on design, turf removal, irrigation, lists of drought tolerant plants, and lists of certified professionals who can help. There is a class on how to do it. See SpokaneScape.org or contact Hilary at hnickerson@spokanecity.org.

GARDEN FOR THE HEALTH OF IT, Cathi Lamoreux, WSU/Spokane County Master Gardeners

Cathi talked about the benefits of connecting with nature for our psychological and spiritual health. There are physiological changes in our brain and hormones that reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and many illnesses. She cited specific studies that demonstrated physiological changes after being outdoors. We can disengage from the daily routine and use all of our senses to experience the natural environment. Besides going outdoors, we can have houseplants, flowers, and herbs in our houses, and open up windows and blinds to let the sun in.

OPEN FORUM

Colin mentioned a survey about our transportation along Highway 2. Please take the survey if you use the highway. Go to <https://engage.wsdot.wa.gov/west-plains-subarea-transportation-management-plan/surveys/>

Colin answered questions about the Sunset Bridge. City engineers still are studying ways to improve safety and prolong its use.

LaVerne suggested that the new West Hills sign should be moved farther east, maybe near Assembly Street.

There was some interest in pursuing changes at the Sunset Boulevard - Government Way intersection. At our June 11 meeting Alex Mann recommended that we start by

choosing a name for the project; a few names were suggested. We could partner with other neighborhoods, including Grandview-Thorpe. We decided to schedule a meeting, separate from our regular West Hills meetings, sometime in September to continue discussion.