

DRAFT

WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 10, 2019

ATTENDANCE

Neighbors: Paul Bundy (Community Assembly Representative), Karen Carlberg (Chair), Barb Clapp, Rick Clapp (Vice-Chair), Dwight Emerson, Mike Gifford (Treasurer), Susan Mensching, Tom Miller, Lisa Saddler (Executive Director, Ascenda), LaVerne Truman

City staff: Annie Deasy (Community Programs Coordinator), Kelly Mongan (Police), Colin Quinn-Hurst (Planning)

Guests: Jeffrey Bell (Interim President, Empire Health Foundation), Dwight Hume (Land Use Solutions and Entitlement), Jayne Kubasak (Board of Directors, Ascenda), Barry Saddler (Board of Directors, Ascenda)

INTRODUCTION: ANNIE DEASY

Annie is our new Office of Neighborhood Services liaison. She has worked for the city since 2006 in a couple of other departments until moving to Neighborhood and Planning Services just recently.

She passed out handouts on the 2019-2020 Snow Response Plan. This can be found online at <https://my.spokanecity.org/news/stories/2019/11/15/citys-official-snow-season-begins-heres-the-plan/>

MINUTES

Minutes for the meeting of October 8, 2019 were approved.

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY REPORT: Paul Bundy, West Hills CA Representative

November meeting: City Council member Karen Stratton discussed housing the homeless. A presentation on the 2020 census emphasized that it will be done online for most people. Kathy Lang (a West Hills resident) was approved for a second 3 yr term on the Design Review Board. Heather Trautman has resigned as Director of Neighborhood and Planning Services; Louis Meuler is the interim director until a permanent director is hired.

December meeting: The Community Assembly Budget Committee needs new members and a new chair; please volunteer if interested. A report on the 2019 Community Engagement Grants explained how funds were spent. Training for the 2020 grant proposals will be on February 10. Colleen Gardner was given an award for her years of volunteering for the Community Assembly.

WHNC ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT: Mike Gifford, Treasurer

The West Hills checking account has \$173. This money is from a yard sale done many years ago; only a little was spent at the time.

TRAFFIC CALMING PROPOSAL APPROVED: Susan Mensching

The 2019 West Hills traffic calming project was approved. Two improvements will be made to Government Way between Sunset Boulevard and G Street: Two permanent flashing speed signs will be installed, one northbound and one southbound. Bike share signs will be installed. Colin clarified that there also will be bike lanes painted on the street showing where cyclists and motorists are supposed to be. It takes about two years for traffic calming projects to be completed.

Susan said that the city removed a tree that was blocking the view of traffic at the intersection of W 5th Avenue and Government Way. The tree was on city property.

Thanks to Susan for her persistence in getting these improvements made.

ASCENDA PROPERTY: Land use amendment and zoning change

For the third time in three years, the owner of the Ascenda property is requesting a change in land use and zoning to allow the construction of new residence buildings at 3004 W 8th Avenue. The change in zoning will allow a higher density of residential housing. The request was aborted the previous two years because the property owner, at the time, was not prepared to complete the process. Now the property has been purchased by Empire Health Foundation, and they are ready to proceed with constructing five new buildings, each with eight apartment residences on two floors, after the zoning change has been approved. Eventually the existing buildings will be demolished, then replaced with more new buildings.

To review the background, see minutes for these five West Hills meetings: December 2017 (<http://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-WHNC-General-Meeting-December-1.pdf>), December 2018 (<http://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WH-Minutes-December-2018.pdf>), February 2019 (<http://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/WH-Minutes-February-2019.pdf>), April 2019 (<http://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/WH-Minutes-April-2019.pdf>), and September 2019 (<http://westhills.spokaneneighborhoods.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/WH-Minutes-2019.09.25.pdf>).

Dwight Hume (Land Use Solutions and Entitlement) is a land use consultant who was hired by the owners of the Ascenda property, each of the three years, to shepherd the request for a change in land use and zoning through the city's process. One required step is to inform the neighborhood council about the proposed change so that the neighborhood council, or individual neighbors, can submit comments. Review and approval or disapproval of requests takes about one year because there are multiple steps and multiple layers of review.

Jeff Bell (Interim President, Empire Health Foundation) told us about EHF. It was formed about 10 yr ago when Deaconess Hospital and Valley Hospital were sold to a for-profit corporation based in Tennessee. State law required that proceeds of the sale go to a foundation for serving the public good; EHF was formed for this purpose. Since then, EHF has acquired additional funds, so that its current assets are around \$100 million. The mission of EHF is to advance health equity in eastern

Washington; this can include health care, housing, nutrition, and so forth. EHF has served children, the foster system, families, the elderly, rural populations, tribes, and others. Ascenda's mission of helping people overcome addiction fits the EHF mission well.

Lisa Saddler (Executive Director, Ascenda), Jayne Kubasak (Board of Directors, Ascenda), and Jeff explained that the EHF purchase of the Ascenda property will allow the program to continue, thrive, and expand. This is particularly important because Ascenda is the only program in Spokane that accepts whole families, because the program has been so successful, and because the program currently cannot accommodate all the people who could benefit from it.

Susan and LaVerne asked about accountability. Lisa and Jane responded that residents are required to obey all the rules, and if they do not they are required to leave.

Lisa said that everyone is invited to attend Ascenda meetings every Monday at 5:00 p.m. Jeff distributed an EHF brochure.

ELECTION OF WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL OFFICERS FOR 2020-2021

Chair: Karen Carlberg

Vice Chair: Mike Gifford

Secretary: need a volunteer

Treasurer: Rick Clapp

Communications Director: Karen Jurasin

Community Assembly Representative: Paul Bundy

Alternate Community Assembly Representative: Mike Gifford

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD POLICE OFFICER

Kelly Mongan has replaced Tim Ottmar as the neighborhood police officer for the P7 district, which includes West Hills, Browne's Addition, Cliff/Cannon, Comstock, Grandview/Thorpe, Latah/Hangman, Manito, and Peaceful Valley. Kelly has been with Spokane Police for 1.5 yr, and was with the Coeur d'Alene Police for 3.5 yr before that. He considers community policing his specialty, so he is very happy to have this position.

Kelly's office is at the COPS Shop at 1304 W 3rd Avenue. We may contact him at kmongan@spokanepolice.org or 509-625-3383. He said the COPS Shop always needs volunteers.

Kelly shared some data on recent crime in our neighborhood. Overall, crime has been decreasing citywide and in West Hills. Areas in our neighborhood with the most crime are around the intersections of Sunset and Rustle, and around Sunset and Government Way. The most common crimes are suspicious activity, disturbance, and domestic dispute.

Kelly gave us tips for avoiding theft: Always lock your car. Do not leave your vehicle unattended with the keys in it. Do not leave valuables in your car. If you're away from home, ask a neighbor to take in packages that are delivered to your porch. Install a video camera on your porch and share videos of suspicious activity with the police.

He gave us a flyer on Crime Check, which will be distributed on Nextdoor.