

Morningside Neighborhood Association

September 8, 2021 Meeting

MINUTES

Note: *Outdoor, in-person meeting held at Morningside Park. Quorum was present (See Attendance Sheet.)*

Call to Order - Meeting was called to order by MNA Chair Pamela Schmidling at 6:30 PM.

Introductions – were foregone because guests and visitors had already introduced themselves to each Board member prior to call to order.

Minutes – to July meeting at new Salem Police Station – were approved.

Police Report – SPD Officer Jason Darner opened his report with follow-up on question about new crime report data program mentioned at July meeting. Citing first day of school today, Officer Darner advised us of School speed zone warning lights and revised school schedules at all 61 schools in Salem. Lights will also flash on non-school days when free meals are being served at schools. Next Citizens’ Police Academy has been postponed until April of 2022. SCRAM – home camera imagery sharing program is working very well to help SPD investigate crimes and complaints. There has been an increase in mail (and package) thefts; SPD “sting” operation is catching several offenders (usually 2 or three same individuals committing thefts in local neighborhoods. Officer Darner mentioned SPD is now on several online social media, incase people are interested in their activities and statistics. There was some discussion of continued sleeping loitering after-hours activity and garbage dumping at Clark Creek Park. There was some discussion of the intersection monitoring cameras and ticketing program and contract between SPD and private monitoring agency. Finally, Sue Reid mentioned that the security cameras at Morningside Church have recorded transients’ strange activities; but there have been no break-ins.

Guest Speaker – Our State Representative Deb Patterson gave us a report on the last Legislative session – all committee meetings hearings were virtually conducted, and only Chamber voting was in-person; and the upcoming Short Session will likely be the same. She announced an upcoming virtual meeting on Congressional districting. Representative Patterson cited several committees she is working on, and some important bills she has worked on – most importantly SB 844 concerning Pharmacy affordability, and other initiatives – including State Constitution amendment making health care a basic right. Support for health care staffing and home rent assistance (for both tenants and landlords were also mentioned. Some other achievements were steering of funding to Homeless assistance thru grants to several non-profits, help for

small businesses, wildfire recovery, and other foundations. She is participating in the Rail Caucus aiming to improve and expand Rail transportation in the State. Alan M. asked about ongoing Redistricting, she said the process is about to begin and information on that will be available only through Oregon Legislature Information System (OLIS). Trevor Phillips thanked Representative Patterson for her part in funding Navigation center for Homeless population, and asked about progress on funding for Sobering Centers as well; and she said it is something the State Emergency Board will be looking into.

City Council Report – Councilor Trevor Phillips said the Council recently conducted its first “Hybrid” meetings – which – at 51 minutes – are said to have been the shortest ever. In person meetings and other functions including Library opening are delayed by statewide surge in Covid-19 cases. Councilor Phillips gave a brief update on the current situation at Salem Hospital – noting a few mild “breakthrough” cases have occurred, and endorsed booster shots – though not yet sure how it will be executed. He answered question about worksite outbreak “hotspots” including at Salem Hospital at which % infections is same as general public. He cited success of the State Fair “Vaccine Shot Booth” at which 200 vaccinations were issued per day. Clearance by FDA of Pfizer Vaccine for pre-teens will soon be followed by such for Moderna, as the vaccines are very similar.

Committee Reports –

Traffic – Alan Meyer reported on new application for another flashing light crosswalk on Commercial Street – this one between intersections with Harris and Oakhill. Initial reaction to this is that it is unnecessary, as there are crossings nearby signaled intersections at Madrona and Browning. Also, this would interfere with southbound traffic left turn access to busy nearby coffee venue and to Oak Towers strip mall. Board recommended MNA not support the proposal as is for the reasons he mentioned, even though Neighborhood on west side of Commercial supports it.

Parks – Muriel Meyer reported she will be applying for Salem Parks Improvement Fund (SPIF) grant, and recommended applying for one to extend trail construction at the new Fairview Park; Board also recommended application for grant to add two picnic tables at Morningside Park.

CERT – Pamela Schmidling reported the cache at Morningside Church to be moved to more visible (for monitoring) site on the property, and will be re-painted; and asked Sue Reid for “color chip” for suitable match to Church colors.

Liquor License Applications – Pamela Schmidling reported none received since last meeting.

Transit – Bob Krebs reported we now have Sunday bus service from 8AM to 8PM (last bus leaves station at 8PM). Service is hourly on most routes. There is still no holiday bus service.

Communication – Pamela Schmidling reported she is seeking a new committee chair to replace Richard R. who recently resigned from the Board.

Land Use – (Board Member Councilor Trevor Phillips departed meeting before report and discussion ensued.) Geoffrey James reported that a committee of Alan Meyer, Alan Tocchini, and his self are analyzing the application to City Planning for residential development of the Meyer Farm Property. Alan M. is focusing on traffic impacts, Alan T. on tree protection and tree removal, and Geoffrey on land use issues. He emailed a compendium of observations and concerns to date by the committee. The compendium included input from a former MNA Board member and relative of Meyer family who – due to the ongoing litigation between pro-sell and pro-preserve factions of the family – wished to remain remote from MNA’s positions on the matter. Geoffrey J. said that there is a group of neighbors calling themselves Friends of Meyer Farm that is very-opposed to the development and its potential impacts on livability in the area. Board voted to have our committee draft letter to City for Chair Schmidling’s signature explaining MNA’s concerns and positions on the matter. Meyer, Tocchini and James will do this in the next week or two.

Next Meeting – Pamela Schmidling asked if anyone knew of a place where MNA can hold future meetings. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife office on Fairview Industrial Way is now not available due to Covid restrictions. Sue Reid – MNA Board representative for Morningside Methodist Church said she would see if meetings could be held there. This is uncertain right now, because of the church Bishop's policy concerning Covid precautions.

Good of the Order – Meyer, Tocchini and James will complete write-up on the Meyer Farm matter by next meeting.

Adjourn – Chair Pamela Schmidling adjourned the meeting at 7:50PM.