

July 10, 2018 Meeting Minutes

SouthWest Association of Neighbors (SWAN)

Candalaria School Cafeteria

Attendees:

Becky Miner, Carol Grimwood, Judy O'Malia, Allison Houck, Garey Price, Irma Dowd, Sally Cook, John Lattimer, Toni Whitler, Florence Bajaj, Kristi Bowman, Michael Doherty, Jennifer Kellar, Daryl Thomas, Thomas Gorski, Claire Nettleton, Eunice Overhulser, Jeanine Stice, Jan Leinbach, Pete Ryan, Julie Curtis, Ted Burney, Christine Speak, Connie Jory, Joan Smith, Ron Steiner, Brandon Riggle, Judy & Bob Martin, Kenny Crabtree, Tim Herpel, Philip Willette, Laura Mack, Rob Romanek, Sarah Romanek, Kenny Crabtree, Don & Betty Orwick, Doug Knights, Bill Dixon, Louis Leatherman, Jennifer Carley, Pat Norman, Jeff Jorgensen, Eileen Adicho

Meeting started at 6:40 pm

Previous meeting minutes approved.

-Pat Norman with Just Walk requested from SWAN's communication funds to purchase design work for header cards to be placed on Cherriots buses. Would include SWAN's logo. Requested \$235 but might be less. Motion passed to allow for up to \$235 of SWAN's communication funds. Just Walk started six years ago, walks every week. About 50 people participate, volunteer run. They hope to expand into the whole City, participation was at the highest when Just Walk had a paid coordinator on staff.

-Councilor, Sally Cook expressed City Manager, Steve Powers thanks to City staff for long hours worked during water advisory. Councilor Cook recommended "Sweet Mountain Water" by Fred Mauldin, City Library has a copy. Briefly explained how P.A.C (powder activated carbon) works and has been doing great in cleaning our drinking water. City had borrowed some equipment from other jurisdictions, has made sure to clean all equipment and has returned them. Some items were donated to the City. Neighbors can continue to visit City of Salem's website for latest water quality results; city tests for more contaminants in its drinking water than most other jurisdictions. Councilor showed the group the Wonder Maps that are currently about some neighborhoods but she would really like each neighborhood to have a walking map.

-Michael Doherty, neighbor spoke to the group about safety concerns on Sunridge Drive S. & Madrona. Michael said he has been asking the City for the past 15 years to fix the arterial street but it is residential. Spoke with Tony Martin, P.E, Assistant Traffic Engineer from Public Works, City of Salem but he said there is not much that can be done to make this intersection safer and that he is aware of the problem, has been an issue for many years. Michael asked about goggle bumps and speed bumps but these would only work temporarily and would disrupt the neighbors. Speeding boxes wouldn't work because they are solar and this area provides mostly shade. Board took a motion and voted to write a letter of support for Michael to submit to council.

-Jennifer Kellar, Parks Supervisor. Toni Whitler, Park Planner. Fircrest Park rehab update. City took feedback from neighbors at April park meeting. Jennifer and Toni met with the park equipment manufacturer and brought pictures to show planned play equipment. Neighbors gave their thanks to staff for working hard and with the community to purchase the playground equipment. Play equipment will be installed in one day and will order the equipment on 7/11/18. Equipment will be delivered in September. Parks increased the budget to better accommodate the neighbors preference in toys for the parks. Toni advised the board to apply for a SPIF grant. John asked about a dog water fountain at the park. Toni said it would cost about \$8,000 to install. Price for the new play equipment and rehab project will cost the City between \$40,000 and \$50,000.

- Bill Dixon. See attached.

-Doug Knights. See attached. Board motioned and voted to write a letter of support for Bill and Doug.

-Tom Gorski, neighbor.expressed his opposition on improving Salem Heights due to he believes that by improving the street it will attract more drivers and more construction in the area. He would like to see speed bumps added, the majority of the neighbors expressed that they don't agree with Tom and want to see Salem Heights safer for their families.

-Garey Price, Board member asked the board for letter to submit to ODOT to perform a safety assessment of River Rd. and Robert's Crossing at county line. Board motioned and voted to allow Garey to draft a letter for Becky to sign.

Meeting adjourned shortly after 8:30 p.m.

SAFETY FIRST FOR SALEM HEIGHTS AVENUE

Public infrastructure should be adequate to serve current requirements and new development. Salem Heights Avenue does neither. We need action to make Salem Heights safe for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles – NOW.

Salem Heights is a tree-lined lane that serves approximately 150 homes. It also serves a wooded 9-acre plot that is a prime site for potential residential development.

Any development will need Salem Heights as a collector street – a link between neighborhood roads and main thoroughfares. The city calls Salem Heights a collector but acknowledges that it isn't:

- Too-narrow traffic lanes.
- No sidewalks, only a dirt shoulder – in places less than 2 feet wide.
- No bike lanes and no safe way to ride on the street.
- No curbs.
- Hilly with poor visibility.
- Inadequate lighting and drainage.

Those drawbacks make Salem Heights unsafe for current users, let alone new development. That is why Salem Heights neighbors opposed a development proposal in 2017 that would have added 37 homes to the area.

Their overwhelming concern was the danger posed by adding more traffic to an already unsafe street. Yet city staff approved the development application, with Salem Heights as the designated collector street, in spite of the acknowledged risks.

The proposed development fell apart over issues unrelated to safety. But the danger remains. It is time to make things right. That can be done while protecting the character of the Salem Heights neighborhood.

The first step is to put the street in the city's capital improvement plan for upgrading in the next five years.

Until that happens, the city should prohibit any new development along Salem Heights Avenue.

Approximately 140 neighborhood residents have signed petitions supporting this position.

**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR SAFETY FIRST
ON SALEM HEIGHTS AVENUE SOUTH**

Whereas Salem Heights Avenue South (SHAS) is a tree-lined lane that serves as a collector street for approximately 150 homes;

Whereas SHAS also serves a 9-acre plot of undeveloped land that can support development of at least 37 additional homes, with an estimated 345 additional vehicle trips per day;

Whereas the City of Salem acknowledges that SHAS does not currently meet the criteria for a safe collector street because of:

- Too-narrow traffic lanes,
- No sidewalks, only a dirt shoulder – in places less than 2 feet wide,
- No bike lanes and no safe way to ride on the street,
- No curbs,
- Hilly with poor visibility,
- Inadequate lighting and drainage;

Whereas a core principle of the City's public works system is that infrastructure should be adequate to serve current requirements as well as new development;

Whereas there are neighborhood-friendly options for improving SHAS for vehicle safety, for accommodating walkers and cyclists, and for tree preservation;

Whereas major improvements to SHAS are included in the *Salem Transportation System Plan*, Street System Element and Pedestrian System Element, but are not funded;

Whereas we need decisive action to make SHAS safe for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;

Therefore we, the neighbors who use the street on a daily basis, support the following:

That the Salem City Council allocate full funding for upgrading Salem Heights Avenue South to a safe collector street in the next five years.

And that, until the upgrading is completed, the City Council prohibit any new development along Salem Heights Avenue South.

TESTIMONY TO SWAN, JULY 10, 2018

Presented by Bill Dixon

Madam Chair and Members of the Association,

My name is Bill Dixon, and I live at 608 Salem Heights Avenue South. I am here tonight to seek your support for safety improvements on Salem Heights.

Salem Heights is a tree-lined lane that serves approximately 150 homes. It also serves a wooded 9-acre plot that is a prime site for potential residential development.

Any development will need Salem Heights as a collector street – a link between neighborhood roads and main thoroughfares. The city calls Salem Heights a collector but acknowledges that it isn't:

- Too-narrow traffic lanes.
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Those drawbacks make Salem Heights unsafe for current users, let alone new development. That is why Salem Heights neighbors opposed a development proposal in 2017 that would have added 37 homes to the area.

Their overwhelming concern was the danger posed by adding more traffic to an already unsafe street. Yet city staff approved the development application, with Salem Heights as the designated collector street, in spite of the acknowledged risks.

The proposed development fell apart over issues unrelated to safety. But the danger remains. It is time to make things right.

I want to emphasize that the road can be made significantly safer while protecting the character of the Salem Heights neighborhood. There are good examples of this balance nearby on Crestview Drive South.

The first step toward a safer Salem Heights is to put the street in the city's capital improvement plan for upgrading in the next five years.

Until that happens, the city should prohibit any new development along Salem Heights Avenue.

Approximately 130 neighborhood residents have signed petitions supporting this position. I urge the association to support it as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this important issue with you.