

Washington Park East Neighborhood Association

June 11, 2019

Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Tim McHugh, Bill Tracy, Lance Musselman, Lee Berkey

Board Members Not Present:

Jacquelyn Mabry

The Board meeting was brought order by Tim at 6:45 p.m. at St. John's

Approval of agenda.

Introduction of Board members.

The minutes for the May 14, 2019 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Board members and speakers were introduced.

Denver PD: Matt Grimsley, CRO

Officer Grimsley urged neighbors to join Neighborhood Watch and receive crime data for the neighborhood. He also urged people not to report unless someone is doing something suspicious, like looking in cars or garages. Unlocked cars continue to be the major cause of theft, as well as construction trucks.

Dispatch officers are being trained to triage calls for assistance, meaning longer wait times for less serious issues. Next Door is used by the DPD to list scheduled events but do not use to contact the DPD for service.

Questions from the audience included traffic problems at the intersections of Virginia and Marion, and Downing and Bayaud.

Presenters:

Beth McCann, Denver District Attorney

Ms. McCann reminded the audience that her office is responsible for prosecuting violations of state law, not municipal offenses, which are the responsibility of the City Attorney. Her Office has 90 attorneys and a total of 240 staff including investigators and support staff.

New programs and initiatives since her election include a Juvenile Justice Unit, a diversion program for juveniles which uses approaches that integrate behavioral health, mental health and addiction components into the juvenile justice system. Denver now has a Drug Court and a DUI Sobriety Court, while prosecutions of felony DUI charges (fourth and subsequent) are increasing.

New is a Young Adult Diversion Program, and McCann has initiated a Human Trafficking program with its own prosecutor, investigator and victim advocate.

Another program that is being expanded is the Co-Responder, which puts a mental health specialist in the car with the officer to respond to cases that need their attention.

The Turn Over A New Leaf allows people with low level marijuana convictions for violations that are now legal to get those records expunged.

Paul Kashmann, City Councilman

Paul traced the police staffing problems back to the recession, when the department could not hire new recruits or replacements, and is now reaching full staffing of 1600 officers.

The basketball court in the park will be finished this summer, and the old playground by the boat house will be the subject of public meetings to decide what will be put in there. The brick pillars at Arizona and Franklin need tuck pointing, but who is responsible for maintenance is not clear. One of them is on private property and the other is in the park.

The trolley station at Marion and Downing will receive a full and historically correct restoration. A bid request was put out but got no response, so maintenance workers gave it a fresh coat of paint. The bidding process will get back on track soon.

Discussion about the South Marion Parkway bicycle lane began at this point and continued after the Treasurer's Report.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill Tracy provided a report on revenues and expenses for the past month. The balance of the WPENA bank account is \$12303.87. The report was accepted.

Adam Melzer and Amy Kenreich, Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Group.

The subject of this presentation was to discuss proposals for expansion of the bicycle lane on S. Marion Parkway, which is important because it connects the Cherry Creek Trail with Washington Park. A meeting in May at the Boat House presented the plans under discussion by the city, and another meeting is planned for August.

Five different plans are currently in play for the stretch from Virginia to Downing. Alternatives include protected bike paths in the traffic lane as well as options similar to the bike lane on South Broadway, where parking is relocated away from the curb and defined by plastic pillars.

Discussion was extensive and passionate. Approximately 40 neighborhood residents participated in a dialogue with the representative from the city.

There were a lot of issues and questions:

- Marion Parkway is on the list of historic parkways and must be preserved;
- This is the design phase; check plans at denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/bicycling-in-denver/infrastructure/protected-bike-lanes.html.
- Fifty nine percent of people asked would ride a bicycle if safe and comfortable bike lanes connected destinations;
- Steele parent drop off points for students
 - Parents routinely park in bicycle lanes and load or unload children;
 - How will children and elderly get out of the car if the bicycles are between the car and the curb?
- How will this be enforced?
 - By the school?
 - By the police?
- Are scooters included in the planning?
- How will the stakeholder Commission Members be chosen?
- Will the city study traffic patterns at times when school is starting and ending as well as on weekends, when traffic patterns are different?

Committee Reports:

Due to the length of the discussion about the bicycle lanes, most committee reports were skipped.

Park/FANS: Tim McHugh, Chair

Next meeting tomorrow night.

INC: Tim McHugh and Susan Payne, INC Representatives

The INC is looking at the issue of common consumption areas, legislation and rulemaking that would allow people to carry their alcoholic beverages within a clearly marked area, such as a building with multiple restaurants and bars.

A subcommittee is considering whether to support a combined luxury and affordable housing project near Sloans Lake.

Old Business:

Future Speakers:

July: Hope Mellinger, Denver Psilocybin Initiative to Decriminalize Denver

August: No meeting.

September: Anna Dewitt/Tay Anderson, candidates, Denver School Board, OR

Councilperson Robin Kneich, proposed ordinances to update zoning/building codes to allow tiny home villages, guide on supportive projects for improving neighborhood engagement.

Happy Hour:

Croquet in the Park, Wednesday, June 19th.

New Business:

Fourth of July event at Washington Park:

The event continues this year, co-sponsored by West Washington Park Neighborhood Association. We need volunteers to help with set up, take down and other duties.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 by Tim McHugh.

Lance Musselman

Secretary

Washington Park East Neighborhood Association