

City of Missoula

Joint Moose Can Gully and South 39th Neighborhoods General Meeting

June 26, 2019 6:00 PM

Playfair Park Shelter

MCG Present: Janet Van Dyke, Betsy Weber, Carol Garlington, Ariel Cornelius

South 39th Present: Jeff Stevens, Paul Kitzer, David Touchette

Attendees gathered at 6:PM for a welcome and barbeque.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:14 PM by Jeff Stevens, South 39th Leadership Team Chair.

1. History of Neighborhood Councils

Neighborhood Coordinator Jane Kelly presented a history of Neighborhood Councils, which began in 1972 when the Montana State Constitution was rewritten. Provisions for transparency and citizen involvement in local government led to the formation of 20 Neighborhood Councils in Missoula, each with a leadership team of 5-7 members. Councils are supported by the Office of Neighborhoods.

2. Code Compliance – Charmell Owens, Missoula Code Compliance Coordinator, Development Services, 406-552-6630

Charmell discussed the role of the Development Services Office in working with the PD (Police Department) to respond to code violations. The PD is not able to do surveillance for code violations and relies on residents phoning or emailing complaints.

Responses for various code violations were described:

- Snow removal – resident is given notice of one day to comply, after which a snow removal service is called to remove snow and resident billed. Residents who anticipate a long absence over winter months are advised to set up a plan for snow removal prior to departure.
- Hazardous vegetation – defined as vegetation (noxious or other) over 24" high due to fire hazard. Resident is given 10 days to comply, after which a mowing service is contacted and resident billed.
- RV/trailer street parking over 5 days – vehicle is tagged and resident given notice of need to move vehicle. Follow up actions occur if RV/trailer is not moved.
- Cars parked indefinitely (5 days and more) – residents were advised to call Annie Nordby at the Police Department. Police procedure is to tag unmoved vehicle 3 times before towing and eventually putting up for auction if not claimed.
- Transients camping or living in trailers is prohibited by a new ordinance. PD should be notified.
- Several residents reported seeing apparently homeless people sleeping on berms or in vegetation behind the Walmart on Hwy 93. One resident was told by PD that this is a civil issue with Walmart property and PD would not respond. Charmell reiterated that these issues need to be called in to Development Services and her department will make sure PD responds.

- Dogs barking – complaints are fielded by Animal Control. A “bark log” of how long a dog is barking and multiple witnesses are required.
- Bob Morin inquired about urban deer issues. There are currently no codes about management of urban deer, but Charmell has recommended that City Council look at these issues.
- A resident inquired about tall weeds along Hillview Way. Charmell reported that a company contracted to mow this area has gone out of business and there has been a lapse in planned service. This is expected to resume.
- A resident inquired about codes for homes with lack of siding for 5 years. Charmell responded that there are no ordinances for unfinished building projects, but these can be reported to Development Services. Complaints will be referred to the permits department where building permits can be closed. A process is required to reopen a permit.
- Kevin Slobar inquired about hazards related to the lack of sidewalks on Gharrett. Charmell responded that this can be reported to Monty Sipe. Tara Osendorf (Missoula Transportation Planner) responded that these complaints can be referred to her office. 406-552-6672
- A resident inquired about safety issues related to missing lights in parks and behind Walmart on Hwy 93. These issues can be reported to Development Services. Charmell agreed to move these issues up the chain of command.
- A resident inquired about unposted speed limits on Missoula streets. A neighbor replied that speed limits are 25 in city limits unless posted otherwise. Police can be contacted for specific questions.

3. Pedestrian Facility Master Plan – Tara Osendorf, Missoula Transportation Planner

Tara discussed the federally mandated program she coordinates to oversee pedestrian sidewalks and trails in Missoula. Her office assesses needs for sidewalk construction/replacement and prioritizes needs on a rating system.

She presented the “Pedestrian Facilities Masterplan”. The greatest sidewalk priority is currently Franklin to the Fort and West Side Neighborhoods, where sidewalks are missing or old.

Tara estimated the cost of sidewalk construction at \$69/per linear foot. Residents are responsible for the costs after subsidies are applied. The City Council has had discussions about making sidewalks more affordable for residents.

4. MCPS Elementary School Boundary Study – Mark Thane, Superintendent

Mark presented the process used to decide recent school construction and boundaries for individual K-5 schools.

Earlier, a Community Steering Community specified that K-5 school capacity be limited to 500 students. Following this a demographic study found that, with the growth in Linda Vista/Maloney Ranch, there was greater need for a Linda Vista school (Jeanette Rankin) than to replace the outmoded Cold Springs school.

45 public meetings occurred to work out a plan for boundaries for school districts based on walkability and bikeability to schools. This has impacted both South 39th and Moose Can Gully neighborhoods when former Cold Spring students were reassigned to either Jeanette Rankin, Russell or Chief Charlo schools. Boundaries were finalized at a meeting 6/25/19 and the final map was not available.

MCPS plans to retain the Cold Springs property for potential future use. Discussions are occurring to lease the vacant Cold Springs property to investors who will do upgrades to possibly house non-profits and a childcare business. The playground will be maintained.

A resident inquired about “connector streets” in the school boundaries map that did not exist. Mark responded by saying that MCPS owns 20 acres above and west of Shadows Keep for possible future development. A map created earlier anticipated streets that were never built, but very few students are currently affected in this area. Future development along Hillview Way could change that number.

5. Update of Hillview Crossing project -- Jeff Stevens

Jeff Stevens reported that he continues to participate in City Council Committee meetings about this project. There have been ongoing concerns which have sidelined the project for eleven meetings. Concerns include traffic (single outlet onto Hillview Way), steepness of slope (affecting drainage and soil stability) and Home Owner Association taking responsibility for streets, a drainage system, lighting. Joe Gorsch recommended that South 39th neighbors watch developer actions closely for the exemptions they plan to use, possible issues with traffic and schools, and developer requests for public financing.

6. Bylaws Revision

Proposed bylaws revisions had been posted on-line for both Moose Can Gully and South 39th Neighborhood Councils and copies were available at the meeting. Proposed revisions were described by Jane Kelly.

- Moose Can Gully Neighborhood: John Nugent moved that the revised bylaws be approved. Tim Casey seconded. Approved unanimously.
- South 39th Neighborhood: Judy Nakamura moved that the revised bylaws be approved. Jeff Stevens seconded. Approved unanimously

7. Neighborhood Priorities Questionnaire

Jane reported that both neighborhood Leadership Teams are seeking more detail about neighbor concerns. Broad topics (street maintenance, homelessness, urban deer etc.) previously listed do not give enough specifics to understand issues. Neighbors are encouraged to go on-line using the link: <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/formcenter/neighborhoods-6/moose-can-gullysouth-39th-street-priori-249> to describe their concerns. Those with bar code scanners on their smart phones were offered the option to scan the code printed on the agenda to access the questionnaire.



8. Election of Leadership Team members:

- Moose Can Gully – Ariel Cornelius’ term has expired and she is not running for reelection. Janet Van Dyke agreed to continue to a new term. John Nugent and Diana Burnich were nominated as new Leadership Team members.
- Carol Garlington moved to accept all three new Leadership Team nominees. The motion was seconded. Unanimously approved.
- South 39th Street – With expiring terms, David Touchette, Jeff Stevens and Paul Kilzer agreed to run for reelection. Also, Dave Bell, Ruth Burke and Rosemary Hubbard were nominated, moved and seconded as Leadership Team members.
- Paul Kilzer moved to accept the new nominees. Seconded by Jeff Stevens. Unanimously approved.

9. Q&A with City Council Members

Jesse Ramos of Ward 4 was the only Council member present.

- Questions about Hillview Crossing were deferred due to City Council’s need to act as judge in deciding issues rather than expressing opinion. Issues currently delayed in committee are expected to be revisited in the fall.
- Tim Casey commented that Hillview Way construction projects would hopefully offset road and sidewalk costs from the few neighbors currently living there.
- A neighbor expressed concern about affordable housing initiatives—would this pressure development (as with Hillview Crossing) by “easing zoning requirements” to encourage infill.
- Paul Kilzer asked for advice on how a neighborhood council could best function to get their views to City Council. Paul noted that we are collecting concerns from neighbors but do not have the sense that expressed concerns are seen by City Council. Jesse Ramos responded that email reporting is available, but City Council members are bombarded by email. He recommended that neighbors come to a City Council meeting as a group to present an idea. Meetings occur Monday evenings at 7PM and there is a public comment period in each. John Nugent noted that he had just moved from another city with neighborhood councils and witnessed other cities putting more stock in neighborhood council opinions. He suggested that City Council take the initiative to ask neighborhood councils for recommendations on issues concerning them. This was reiterated by Judy Nakamura who noted that that neighborhoods have to ask to be listened to.

Jesse Ramos responded that he appreciated the feedback. He suggested that neighborhood councils come as a group to City Council meetings with an agenda item. This way they get more attention by making their presence known, or as the “squeaky wheel.”

Jeff Stevens requested that “Hillview Crossing Recommendation” be put on our next Leadership Team agenda.

- Chris Kilzer asked Jesse Ramos to be aware of transient issues by the Walmart on Hwy 93. Seeing transients near her backyard was “unnerving.” Jesse responded by saying that transient issues are multifaceted—Missoula aims to be a compassionate city, but there are issues of mental illness, addiction and cost of housing in Missoula. Neighbors should not feel unsafe. The challenge is determining what is most helpful. He acknowledged her concerns and said they are city-wide.
- Jesse Ramos commented on the need for more police officers per shift. Currently there is a minimum 5 officers on duty per shift. Officers request this minimum be increased to 10 per shift. A new budget from the mayor was just approved and Jesse is in favor of increasing police

officer numbers. Annexation of the airport area properties has increased their workload considerable.

- A neighbor inquired about the reasoning behind annexation of the airport area properties. Jesse Ramos responded that it was believed that citizens there had been using city services but not paying their fair share. He did not believe the financial benefits of annexation cover the cost of providing services to this large new area.
- A neighbor asked if there were police officers available for hire. Jesse responded that there are candidates available, but retention is an issue. An increase in staffing is expected to improve retention.

10. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items:

- Judy Nakamura noted that, in response to a presentation during the 2018 General Meeting, her Home Owners Association is interested in participating in the Neighborhood Watch Program. She requested follow-up information. Jane Kelly responded that this program meets quarterly in City Hall chambers.

There being no further comments, meeting was adjourned at 7:59PM by Jeff Stevens.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Betsy Weber