

## **Larkspur Board Meeting Minutes -March 21, 2022**

Attendees: Sue, Molly McDowell, Marty Decker, Diane Berry, Kristin Wills, Kat Rola, Morgan Schmidt, Kelsie Greer

Meeting Began: 6:01 pm

### **Public comments:**

Liz- Concerned about what is happening downtown on Wall Street with Worrell Park. Own business "Handle with Care". Concerned that the City council is taking the park designation away to make way for a parking lot and just wanted to bring it to everyone's attention.

Sue: There was email correspondence with neighbors that are concerned about camping on the vacant property on 15th. They submitted letters to the owners of the property and there was some correspondence with the Neighborhood Association board about the process. Believe some sort of resolution is underway.

### **New business:**

**Makayla Oliver (City of Bend) - discussion on improving outreach and involvement in the Larkspur neighborhood.** Mikayla is the community relations manager at the City of Bend. Role is to work with the 13 neighborhood associations (NAs). Last year the city council determined that they wanted to assess the NA system. Currently the city gives \$100,000 to neighborhood associations every year, split between the 13. Recognize that there are underrepresented groups in the city that are not being reached. How do we get those perspectives (business owners, people who don't have time to come to meetings, etc) reflected? Is there something that is working/ not working? Could the money be spent in different ways that could better support the neighborhood associations, etc. Neighborhood Leadership Alliance (NLA) met back in October and brainstormed on some of the above questions. This came up because there has been a lot of turnover in the last couple of years, due to a lot of factors. From that conversation we came out with five assumed barriers and sent that out in an email for input.

There is a survey out on Facebook to get input on how the community views neighborhood associations. The questions were created from input from the NLA.

- **Q: What are barriers to engagement?:**

Sue: We see a jump in engagement when there is an issue going on that might affect the neighborhood. General sense I have is that it is just not very interesting to go to these meetings, particularly because there is not currently a social element. People are not necessarily sure what the NAs do.

Kat: Think that the word “membership” scares people off because people might think that they need to pay or do something to be involved. There also seems to be a disconnect that people think that we are representing the city council when really we are meant to represent our neighbors to the city.

Anne: People might think that if they are a member, then they might be asked to do something. To volunteer, take more of my time, etc.

Liz: I think with the development that is happening on the East side of town, we should really be more concerned about how the city and county affects our lives here. We need to find a way to make the NA more interesting so we can garner more support.

Erin (neighbor): Hard to find the time. Also correct that when there are hot button issues more people will listen and pay attention.

Kelsie: Was there a “hayday” for the neighborhood associations when they functioned really well? Mikayla- they were once a part of the city and then during the recession they were removed from the city and they became independent which allowed them to do more in terms of political advocacy. Sue- Larkspur actually went awol for a while, they reformed and then did not have enough support for a while and then started up again in 2013. Mikayla- in 2018 we got the leadership alliance to have an organized way for the neighborhood associations to talk to the City Council.

Marty- Wonder if the new social networks give people a place to voice their opinions and they don't want to go to an old fashioned meeting.

Sue: hosting meetings online has actually improved the ability for people to attend the meeting and comment. It was rare for people to show up when they were in person at Larkspur.

- **Q: What has your neighborhood association done to encourage diverse representation of your board and membership? Want to make sure that all voices in a neighborhood are heard (renters, business owners, retirees, etc).**

Sue- Recent effort to include renters in mailings is a good effort.

Diane- Have been posting meeting notices on the website, facebook, in our newsletter.

Sue- talked about posting on nextdoor.

Makayla- groups can have an account on nextdoor but cant see the threads.

Kelsie: Could potentially submit to online newspaper calendars

Makayla: Does Larkspur reach out to new neighbors at all?

Sue: We worked on an effort to try to get info when people move into the neighborhood but we never came up with a reliable way to do that. Would be wonderful if there was someone from the city that could help with that.

Makayla- There is a new tool on the mailing lists, there is a column on the end that says home solds in the last 30 days. Could send welcome to the neighborhood cards. Only reaching property owners but not specifically renters.

## **Q: The neighborhood association's biggest ongoing challenge?**

Sue: Relevance. My approach is to not advocate for specific positions if they are controversial, meaning not to advocate for something that maybe many of our people don't agree with. So we try to help people know the ways to get their voices heard.

Sue: Turnover makes it difficult to have any continuity. Could do more to educate people.

Making some headway on issues where for a long time we were just spinning our wheels. Have an engaged board right now which is making a difference.

Kristin- in Bend is that a city #? Yes, and we can use it too.

## **Old business:** Reports on relevant topics

- **Minutes/Budget** (Kelsie) - last month's minutes were approved. Some things are coming up, we need to spend money by the end of June. Mailers will be going out and that will be around \$2600. We send out mailers for our general meetings, one in the Fall and Spring. Supposed to go to property owners and renters.
- **NLA** (Morgan)- Went over some odds and ends for logistics on how the NLA runs. Putting together a handbook for NLA reps. Confusion around how alternates work to committees that are appointed. Mikayla has hired a survey company to host the next NA survey for the community. Still conversation around the shelter code amendments.
- **Land Use** (Kat)- Land Use committee meeting hot topics was the Thornberg resort. Has been trying to build several golf courses and housing. Wants to buy 400 acres of state-owned public land. It is out of the city, a county issue.
- **Transportation** (Diane)- Wilson street project is underway and the detour is going to be

there through May. It is street preservation season- happens every year. Most efforts are on Mt. Washington drive this year. Also we are going to be having a launch of the pedestrian program shortly, these are low dollar projects so not a great fit for the Pettigrew project.

- **Pettigrew-** have been in communication with the city, a number of ideas suggested, one of the things Robin suggested to Molly was temporarily making Pettigrew one way. Then lanes not used for traffic could be used for pedestrians. We thought it was worth exploring. Janet is going to attend the April meeting to give us some solutions that they have come up with. Put our idea in an email to Janet and Robin. Kat suggested a bike symbol in the middle of the road, raised walking trails, etc. Double lines down the road to prevent passing, permanent radar signs. Another option when they do present these ideas, Molly can create a survey to send out to neighbors to get feedback on some of the options. Until we can get on the list for funded projects. Sue- haven't heard any issues with the neighborhood cut through because of the detour on Wilson.
- **Communications/membership** (Kristin/Marty) - Email from a member who wanted to do a community garden in that area. Could be good to learn more about how the parks department runs. How do we advocate for what is in the park? Sue: In the past, right upfront in the discussion/ planning phases of new parks they have pulled us in. Membership- subscriber list, had 300+ opens.
- **Web page** (Molly)- interesting that the NA is the micro view that we have but all these other things that we are interested in that maybe we have a place where we could be sharing that information. Could have a couple of new pages. Mailchimp does not like Gmail, has to come from a nonpublic domain email address, would be good to find a shell email account so does not have to use Marty's personal email.
- **Continuing topics**
  - Neighborhood Cleanup/Bend beautification project-
  - Pettigrew improvements - possible neighbor survey?
  - Spring general meeting: possible dates and topics; should it be a live meeting? - Fire department coming in to talk about evacuation. We will put out a survey for input on topics.
  - Local's night with the board at Bevel? - Will do a board meetup first then put it out to the neighborhood.

- List of businesses in the neighborhood - how can we connect?

Adjourn- 7:45pm

**Next month:**

- Meeting date: April 18; Janet Hruby will be talking about options for Pettigrew to improve pedestrian safety

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**Goals for 2022:**

- Work on possible solutions for transportation safety issues on Pettigrew ●  
Connect with local businesses
- Neighborhood cleanup activity
- Figure out a way to have more contact and connection with the community.