

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2019

Meeting called to order by President Ann Forrest at 7:01 PM. Eleven people attending.

North Precinct Advisory Council meeting highlights: There was a program on how to deal with an active shooter situation (“Get out and then call 911. Or hide. Or fight. But leave first and THEN call”). And afterwards get therapy.

The main bulk of the November meeting was taken up with relaunching our disaster preparedness block captains program. Ann had a fancy laminated new map of our neighborhood she purchased from Kroll Maps downtown that shows every single address and street (even a few that don’t exist, like through the green belt). We tried a block captain program a few years ago by dividing all the blocks in the neighborhood but made a tactical error in putting an entire block in one group rather than just all the houses along a particular street. This is what some neighbors have done, especially along NE 107th Street, with great success. We talked about the “Preparedness Pyramid” (though referred to as a triangle) with your home and family on the bottom, the next layer up being your neighbors, then the community, and finally the city on top. The emergency communications HUB in the park is on the community level. We can’t realistically expect help from the city for two weeks after a major disaster, so it’s best to be prepared at home with enough water, food, and essential medicines to get your family through two weeks on their own. This is what we would like to convey, at least initially to folks, hopefully via the block captain system. A good time to have the neighbors come over for a meeting is a weekday night, right after work, and one neighborhood near Aurora has a “Drinks on the Driveway” event where they just set up shop in their driveway starting at 5:30 PM when the weather is nice and folks drift in and get to know each other. Bright yellow “OK/Get Help” signs are available from the city, and every household should have one to indicate their status after an event. We might try to get yard signs that could be distributed that say “We’re prepared. Are you?” with contact information so we could help them get started on their street. Initial neighborhood meet-ups should be with a minimum of hand-outs to not overwhelm first-time participants. We narrowed the bullet points down to three essentials: food, water and medicine (alas, the city’s newest hand-outs attempt to put EVERYTHING in one pamphlet which is just too much to absorb starting out). Volunteers can walk up their streets, knock on doors, collect contact info and hand out “OK/Get Help” signs along with some tips, and a “save the date” for a neighborhood meet up in someone’s house (presumably within line of sight of everyone else’s house on that block), probably after the holidays in January. Then send reminders two weeks beforehand. Start off slow and easy at your first meeting (“2 weeks for help from the city, check on immediate neighbors,” etc) and in later meetings have more information. Schedule another meeting six weeks or so later and say you will follow up and ask each person then “What have you done to prepare since last time?” to encourage participation.

A summary of the Re-visioning Northgate meeting is the mall is undergoing a metamorphosis even as we speak, with the center part (where Macy’s was) being demolished but the north and south ends of the mall still open. It won’t ever be a mall in the same way again with acres of parking surrounding it, but rather an entire complex featuring two hotels, four office buildings, residential units (by 2023), maybe a

grocery store, and the hockey arena going in on the southeast corner of the block. Parking will be underground or in garages. With the link light rail station opening in 2021, traffic in the area is going to soar, with everyone in north Seattle and Snohomish county arriving to take advantage of the 14 minute train ride to downtown during rush hour. Metro and Sound Transit are already making advance plans on how they reroute some service to the light rail station by then.

We hope to start distributing the new Welcome Wagon packets to some new residents on 21st Avenue NE very soon now (just waiting for them to move in). A Powerpoint version will also be available on the blog to download.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM. Next meeting is December 17th.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council