

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2019

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by President Ann Forrest. Eighteen people present.

Guest speaker Ed Deal, founder of the Urban Raptor Conservancy did a presentation. The Seattle Cooper's Hawk Project started in 2003 and is an all-volunteer self-funded organization. In 2019 they identified 56 nest-building pairs in the city of Seattle, an average of 1 pair for every 1.5 square miles. Of those, 37 were in parks, 14 on private residences, 3 in cemeteries, and 2 at the UW. The raptors tend to prefer big leaf maple trees (the most common in Seattle), but in Victory Heights they use the many Douglas Firs and White Pines, and 15 other tree species throughout the city. 80% of last year's nest got reused, with 20% being new. There were 174 fledglings in 2019, double the number of 8 years ago! It's unknown whether it's an actual population increase or humans are just getting better at finding them. 280 birds have been banded, and it is interesting to see how far in the area they get (they generally don't migrate). Sometimes the results are skewed though when birds wander too close to Sea-Tac airport, get captured and relocated to the Skagit Valley, and someone thinks, "Wow, that bird traveled far!" only to realize it was via a human-operated bus! Some future questions include what will be the ultimate urban nesting density? How do Cooper's Hawks and Barred Owls (natural enemies) partition the habitation? What's the impact of climate change? One big problem for raptors is the use of rat poison. Poisoned rats eaten by birds cause the birds to die too (as well as other rat-eating mammals). Rats are a problem but be judicious in using poison to eliminate them.

In news from the Lake City Neighborhood Alliance, the pedestrian-bike bridge over I-5 that will connect North Seattle College with the new Northgate Link Light Rail station starts construction in late 2019. The light rail station opens in 2021. Next spring, the Lake City Way repaving project will begin, which includes crosswalk improvements at NE 82nd St, NE 95th St, NE 135th St and NE 137th St.

The community council needs some volunteers to step up. For one thing, our vice-president Monica Harris is stepping down, if someone is interested in filling that seat (probably the easiest job on the council). Also want to find people for the following committees: Community Building (identifying and distributing welcome aboard packets to new residents, designing promotional material (logo, banners, signs, etc); Safety Committee (looking into improving NE 104th Way, replacing the wood fence along the park, attending North Precinct Advisory Council meetings, looking into unhoused people living near the creek); and the Disaster Preparedness Committee (how to move forward now that we have the HUB). Please contact victoryheights.seattle@gmail.com if you are interesting in helping.

Upcoming events: Earthquake Ready Preparedness, a two-part course Oct 8 and 22nd at Ann Forrest's house. And Gingerbread House Decorating on Dec 7 & 15 at the co-op preschool. Buy a \$5 house, and one for the kids at Rhyther, and you get to decorate it.

The next meeting is Tuesday, October 15th.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM. Then we ate pie.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council