



WESTOVER HILLS

neighborhood association

Monthly Meeting Minutes – April 11, 2023
Location – Westover Hills United Methodist Church

VP Tom Tichenor opened the meeting at 7pm.

Guest Reports

Police Department UpdateLt. Andorfer

Lt Andorfer reported 2 types of crimes in the neighborhood. 1) Individuals walk through the streets at 3-4 am and pop car door handles looking for unlocked cars to rob. His advice: lock car doors and leave nothing in plain view. 2) Catalytic converters. Thieves are targeting vehicles with high clearance. Midas of Richmond is helping fight theft of coverters by color coding converters with paint by city area. The color marking seems to be discouraging thieves.

Hondas and Kias are being targeted because they are easier to start without a key. Recommendation: use old-school steering lock. Several residents reported hearing gun shots at night from direction of Westtower and Bliley. Difficult to identify the source and follow up since it happens at night. Contact email for Lt Andorfer: warren.andorfer@va.gov

4th District ReportKristen Nye/Timmy Siverd

Kristen and Timmy Siverd arrived later in the meeting due to a conflicting meeting commitment. Kristen reported that she is planning an informational meeting on the road projects on WH Boulevard and Jahnke Rd to be held in May. City Engineers will present their plans for these two projects. The planned meeting will potentially be supported by WHNA, the WH Elementary School, and Jonathan Young. Kristen reported that the city did not present information on these projects in April because plans are still being developed based on citizen input and are not yet finalized. Timmy Siverd will circulate links to city plans ahead of the May meeting.

Kristen stated that the cities' plans are addressing speeding and safe streets, especially around the elementary school. Kristen has had many meetings with parents looking for safer roads for the school. She invited residents to come to the planned May meeting and listen with an open mind. We need to work together to do what is best for the community to keep neighborhoods safe.

School Board ReportJonathan Young

Jonathan Young was not able to attend due to a conflicting commitment. He sent his regrets.

Neighborhood Updates

MerchantsBruce Gould

Bruce Gould was traveling and provided a written report to be published in the upcoming WH Rag.

City Road ProjectsTom Flynn

Tom Flynn reported on two road projects: one on Westover Hills Blvd and another on Jahnke Rd in front of the WH Elementary School. Kristen Nye reported on these projects late in 2022 and Tom agreed to follow the projects and report back to WHNA to help keep residents informed. Kristen Nye previously reported on the Richmond City plans to install 2 elevated crosswalks in front of the school. Also, bike lanes would be installed and separated from traffic by bollards. Tom expressed his opinion that these would cause more harm than good. Tom spoke with staff members in the Richmond city DPW and also participated in a zoom meeting hosted by the city DPW regarding the projects. Tom brought schematics of the city project plans for Jahnke Rd to Forest Hill and showed these to attendees at the meeting. The plans call for completely re-doing Jahnke road with new curbs and gutters. Bike lanes will be on the west side of the road; 2 lanes, one in each direction with a divider in the middle. Plastic bollards will separate bike lanes from traffic lanes. Parking is lost along Jahnke on the west side. Tom expressed frustration in obtaining detailed information from the city in the form of reports that would have been completed to support the planning process. Tom presented an alternate traffic calming plan for Jahnke Rd that he sketched. In his plan, current traffic-calming barrels in front of the school are changed to a medium with plantings. Curb parking remains. There are no bike lanes in Tom’s plan.

Westover Hills bike lanes plan. The city website implies that this plan is complete but Kristen reported that the plan is still being developed and modified. This is a federally funded project; WHB is not just a city road. As seen on the city website- one of two travel lanes is replaced with a bike lane. The key issue is getting traffic through the Forest Hills intersection in a timely way. Tom would like to have traffic study information.

Tom emphasized that he wants residents to be aware of questions to ask the city engineers when they present their plans. He mentioned Federal guidelines on how to measure intersection operation, including certain levels of delay. Tom suggested traffic delays will pressure drivers to cut through the neighborhood. According to city paperwork there is concern that eliminating a car travel lane could cause intollerable delays and encourage more cutting through. Per city policy- a peak period of 5% of the week should not dictate what happens the rest of the time. Tom would like to see the traffic study to know delays, numbers of accidents, and impact on cut-through traffic.

BeautificationRobert Kelly

Robert reported that his team of volunteers will work on the 3 markers on Westover Hills Blvd on the morning of May 13. Volunteers were encouraged to contact Robert. Dodson Development Co. has offered to help with cleanup and possibly donate money to help with the beautification project.

Yards of the MonthRobert Kelly for Laura Thorup

Yards of the month program is starting NOW! Robert said “don’t take it personally if your yard is not chosen”. There are so many beautiful yards, and awards are the judges preferences. Consider volunteering to help this effort.

Upcoming Events:

May 7- WHNA Homes Tour 1-5pmKatherine Whitehead & Jennie Shaw

if interested in volunteering, reach out to Katherine or Jennie. Tickets may be purchased on WHNA facebook page. There will be a party for volunteers. This is a neighborhood tour for neighbors and guests. The tour is not broadly advertized. The list of homes on the tour will be published. All are on the west side of WH Boulevard.

Reminders:

May 9 – WHNA Monthly Meeting

May 13 - WHNA Picnic 4-7pm (Rain Date May 14)Brienne Zambriczki

June 13 - WHNA Monthly Meeting

June 3 - WHNA Yardsale 8am-12pm.....Louise Freedman

July 4 - Kids Parade and FireworksCarrie Rogers & Will Chapman