



WESTOVER HILLS

neighborhood
association

Monthly Meeting Minutes – September 12, 2023

Location – Westover Hills United Methodist Church Sanctuary

Opening

Welcome Fran Eckenrode and Tom Tichenor
Tom opened the meeting at 7:05 pm and thanked Kristen and Timmy for their work to organize a very nice event for Neighbor's Night Out.

Guest Reports

Police Department Update Lt. Andorfer

Lt Andorfer updated recent crime stats for our neighborhood. Only 2 crimes were reported including a shoplifting at CVS and 1 auto larceny. This compares to 3 major crimes last year. Two car types are still at-risk for theft including Kia & Hyundai. Lt. Andorfer recommended to put a visible deterrent on your car. Best option is a steering wheel lock. Non-visible deterrents do not prevent thieves from breaking the window and tearing your car apart. Richmond Police Dept gave away 500 locks. If you want one, reach out and see if there are any left. They cost only \$30-40. Kristen Nye had 2 with her at the meeting. A car thief was recently arrested on Stoney Pt Parkway. Four other thieves were identified. They lived all over the city. Car thefts have dropped since these arrests. One 16 yr old was linked to many other crimes including firearms and violent felonies.

Lt Andorfer let us know about a "Coffee with Cop" event on Oct 4 at Tablespoons from 10-noon. Promotional info will be coming.

4th District Report Kristen Nye/Timmy Siverd

Kristen asked about storm damage and asked that neighbors let her know of problems. 5100 block of King William sidewalk replacement is ongoing. Sidewalks will be bigger to be ADA compliant. Call 311 to report sidewalk replacement. There are concern for plantings that are disturbed. Kristen will pass on notifications for upcoming sidewalk work. They try to notify 7 days prior but it was pointed out that signs say no parking. Kristen will look into better communication.

STR's and ADU's. City council in process of considering of considering legislation on these. An ADU is like in-law suite. Can be separate from house: a renovated basement with kitchen, above a garage, etc. Right now If you want to make an ADU there is a cumbersome process to get a special use permit. Legislation being considered is to allow people to create ADU's within specified limits.

An ADU can only take up certain amount of lot space. The city wants the ADU process to be less difficult because the city has a housing shortage and rents are high. This legislation would create more housing within existing housing. ADU's must comply with regular building codes and still must be permitted. May be no more than 1/3 of square footage of main residence. An incidence was mentioned of a small trailer brought in as short term rental. This is not legal. An ADU cannot be mobile. Must be a permanent structure. The proposed new rules go to planning next week and, if approved, goes to council for approval.

STR's short term rentals. The legislation will address some problems with STR's. STR's must be your primary residence to run a short term rental out of your house. STR is 30 days. Spirit of new rules is to keep these requirements. There are fewer than 5 B&B's in area and no reported problems. Tightening legislation is to help with enforcement. Must be registering STR with city and pay lodging tax to city. Must be an owner-occupied property and property must be permitted.

Bike lanes. City and WHNA (and other partners) had a meeting in May and survey at same time. Folks in transit dept have taken input and are working on final design. Question: Can we see results from city survey? Kristen will follow up. The ongoing neighborhood survey is separate from city and WHNA.

The City passed a financing tool for developers to renovate buildings in energy efficient ways. The BoA developers will use this financing tool. There will be a publicized event on this.

A Liter pick up is scheduled this sat at 8:30 at Roanoke and Dunston near Reedy Creek.

School Board ReportJonathan Young

Jon reported several "wins" for student, which are wins for the neighborhood. One of Jon's objectives is to have yr round schools. Richmond now has 3 elementary schools going year round. 200 days a yr in place of 180. Another win: effective January, 5 secondary schools are piloting an initiative to limit access to cell phones during day. Another win is about school choice: Maggie Walker and some other schools require admissions. Want to increase access to these schools by increasing seats.

There was a question regarding students not having access to warnings that come on cell phones for weather, violence, etc. Jon response: the every-day threat is bullying and rumors on social media. Limiting phone access is a trade-off.

Jon commented that police are achieving some results for student safety. The same evening as the Altria graduation shooting, an arrest was made at Geo. Wythe High School where a number of students had threatened to shoot another student.

WHUMC Report Erin Thomas/Nicole Timms

Nicole sent regrets.

Neighbor Reports

Tip O' the Season Market. November 11.....Bruce Gould

Bruce is traveling; Fran read his report. Last year, Bruce heard about this Market about a week before it was to happen so was not able to involve the WHNA. (He personally volunteered with set up). Anne Purser, the owner of Muse Me Decor is planning the fourth annual "Tip O' the Season Market" on November 11. WHNA will be a co-sponsor. The Market will be held in the parking lot of Muse Me/O'Toole's and the Truist/Church front and back parking lots.

Last year 28 artists/makers set up outside and Muse Me has 30 artists that show inside on a daily basis. Also last year there was a vendor selling marshmallow treats, s'mores, brownies and frothy hot chocolate drinks. There was face painting for the kids and a popcorn machine.

Please consider volunteering to help set up/take down. In particular, Ann could use some help with logistics, advertising and volunteers to help artists set up/take down. Bruce says

he will coordinate the neighborhood volunteer effort. (A reminder: Ann was an "In-kind"
donor to the House Tour)

Community in schools opportunity.....Fran Eckenrode

Attendance has become a significant problem for schools post-covid. Attendance is a problem for some students at WHES and can significantly effect their learning. The attendance team at WHES will be doing monthly incentives for students with perfect and improving attendance. The incentive this month is popsicles during recess every Friday in September. We are hoping you all might want to come by and help pass out popsicles to students. Support would be most needed in the afternoon, especially on the last two Fridays, and the recess times are as follows:

11:00AM -11:40AM - Kindergarten

12:00PM - 12:40PM - 1st Grade

12:30PM - 1:10PM - 3rd Grade

1:15PM - 1:55PM - 4th Grade

1:50PM - 2:30PM - 2nd Grade

2:40PM - 3:10PM - 5th Grade

Dates that support is needed: 9/15, 9/22, 9/29. To help, contact Fran or Hannah Martin, the Community in Schools coordinator for WHES. hmartin@cisofrichmond.org

Neighborhood Watch.....Dave Morgerson

Dave is our neighborhood watch liason. He completed Richmond Citizens Police Academy, which has a section on neighborhood watch. The Academy advises not to patrol neighborhoods. One org structure is to have a neighborhood lead and block captains and a phone tree. Dave would like the neighbors to let him know what they would like from Neighborhood Watch. There was a discussion of how important it is for everyone to look out for their block. Be good and mindful neighbors but mind their own business.

River City Half Marathon in 2024.....John Lugbill

Jon is executive director of Sports Backers. He reported on a new Richmond River City Half Marathon on March 9, 2024. The event starts and stops at University of Richmond. The race will go down Forest Hill Ave, under the train trestle, onto New Kent Rd, on Riverside to Blvd Bridge, through Douglasdale and Windsor Farms. At 8:25 first runner will be in neighborhood Electronic signs will be used to close the bridge for that time. About 2500 runners are expected the first year. Jon also reminded us that the Richmond Marathon is Nov 11.

Update: Bike Lane Survey Report.....Mark Bouziane

Mark provided an interim report for the Bike Lane Survey being conducted by a group of concerned citizens in Westover Hills. Mark's report is to inform association members of survey results at the time of the meeting. As surveys are still being returned and tabulated, Mark did not take questions. He was available at the end of the meeting to receive written questions.

Adjourn