

**MINUTES OF THE COMBINED UPPER AND LOWER RATTLESNAKE
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS**
APRIL 21, 2011
RATTLESNAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

The meeting was noticed by postcards, neighborhood liaison electronic noticing and signboards supplied by Doug Grimm.

6:30p – 7:00p The Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council held Leadership Team and Community Forum representative elections. Elected were:

Mick Owens – Co-chair Leadership Team
Emily Plant – Co-chair Leadership Team
Susan Snetsinger – Community Forum representative and Leadership Team
Bob Luceno – Leadership Team
Doug Grimm – Leadership Team
Rhonda Holle - Leadership Team

Ice cream sandwiches were served.

7:00 – 8:30 Joint meeting with Upper and Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council members and guests.

Comments not on the agenda were asked for.

* Jeanne Joclyn passed out handouts regarding her efforts to “Save Prescott School.”

* It was pointed out that numerous garbage cans were left out very early in the morning due to new pickup times. Councilman Jason Weiner said he would look into it. Bears and garbage have been a frequent problem situation, sometimes leading to removal of the bears. Harold Hoem suggested that the Leadership Team contact Jamie Jonkel of Fish Wildlife and Parks to give a future presentation.

* Scott Reid, Operations Manager for the School District, urged people to get their ballots on the upcoming levy election in the mail. Jason Weiner also asked people to get out and vote.

Transportation. Harold Hoem acted as the moderator. He gave an update on the Transportation Summit Study, which was discussed at length at a previous joint neighborhood council meeting. He mentioned that they were trying to keep the momentum going to achieve safer transportation along our major corridors for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. He stressed that this is not about increasing capacities of the roadway, but was about providing a safer transportation environment. Referencing *The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*, he mentioned the community benefits of sidewalks and noted that the city is responsible for safe travel and does have the authority to order in sidewalks.

Hoem summarized numerous comments that had been submitted as a result of the Transportation Study. A summary was handed out to the attendees. There were many comments about bicycle/vehicle interactions. He said that we had all seen unpredictable behavior by bicyclists, drivers and pedestrians. Several comments dealt with the narrow nature of the roads, considering the width of buses and trucks and the unplowed shoulders in the winter. A full list of comments will be made available shortly.

Doug Harby, Project Manager for Public Works, gave a presentation regarding Van Buren Street. He said this last winter had produced 57 freeze-thaw cycles, far more than normal, and raised havoc with the road surface. He said that work would be under way next week to mill and re-surface Van Buren. Preliminary studies have been done to do a real re-make of that roadway and sidewalk area. He discussed the complexities involved in elevation, drainage and existing utilities. Regarding the width of roads, Harby acknowledged that buses would prefer 14 feet instead of ten feet, and the width of the vehicle and mirrors do take up almost the entire ten-foot width of the roadway. (Carol Elsen from Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council Leadership Team asked how long since the street had been resurfaced. Answer: at least 25 years.)

Doug also discussed how work was progressing on the west side of Lolo Street and expected work to be done on the south side of the street soon. This has involved lots of discussions regarding easements. The bridge over Rattlesnake Creek was brought up by several citizens who were concerned about safety, speeds, unmarked center lines and drivers crossing into oncoming lanes. It was pointed out by several people what a complicated place that was for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians, especially with the proximity to Missoula Avenue, a one-way street, on which bicyclists are allowed to ride either direction.

Doug also discussed potholes, as noted above, and bulbouts. It was pointed out to him that the bulbouts near the school had received universal criticism since they were put in. He said they were re-thinking these and trying to come up with another way to make crossing safer.

Scott Reid from the School District discussed the area around the soccer fields and said that the school recognized the dangerous conditions on the south side of the soccer fields. They were trying to find ways to improve parking. The school had tried to accommodate neighbors by carefully scheduling events. They were considering a pathway on the east side of the soccer fields. Scott Reid had discussed this project with Harold Hoem earlier, as it was part of a feasibility study.

Doug Harby described work done on a feasibility study that considered the area around the soccer fields as well as Rattlesnake Drive up to Tamarack Street. This study was done as part of a large grant project from the Community Forum. Caroline Lonski, Don Sims and Mary Louise Zapp-Knapp had worked on this. Hoem mentioned that earlier public comment had suggested studying the east side of Rattlesnake Drive rather than the west side covered by the feasibility study. It was mentioned that any work done by the schools could affect the numbers and costs of this project. Also, a crossing was considered at the 90 degree turn on Rattlesnake near the Cornerstone Subdivision.

Additional Comments: Carol Elsen praised Doug Harby for work he had done on maps, often on his own time. Doug Harby thanked the Transportation Summit for all the work they had done, which is a big help for the city and in moving projects forward. Jan Hoem said that the Lower Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council installation of an electric speed monitor improved safety on Van Buren. Doug Harby said discussions on funding sources and assistance was a top city priority. Emily Plant wondered why there was a 45 mph speed limit (too high) by Cornerstone. Harold said they could ask the city to revisit that.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35.