

# Upper Rattlesnake Neighborhood Council General Meeting

April 7, 2019 Messiah Lutheran Church

1. **History of Neighborhood Councils**-Jane Kelly, Neighborhood Coordinator  
Started in 1972 with the MT constitutional convention; City of Missoula has a charter, so it has self-governing powers and neighborhood councils are in that charter. She handed out copies of the Charter.
2. **Syringa Bike Skills Park**-Morgan Valliant, Conservation Lands Management  
Half built in summer 2018; funding just for phase I now. There is a 6 foot wide path along Lincoln Hills Dr. They are working with water conservation at the site and allowing grass to establish before opening July 1 or perhaps earlier. Fund raising continues for the rest of the park and a shade shelter. There will be a Porta-let and shelter, to be installed after this year. Rules and regulations will require helmets; site will be closed at night.
3. **Rattlesnake Dam** -Morgan Valliant, Conservation Lands Management  
Missoula Water is working with Trout Unlimited (project leaders) on this 45 acre site to remove the old reservoir and dam. Project is to restore the creek. Currently about 75% of funds are available. Major work in Fall of 2020. There may be some infrastructure removal summer of 2019. They discovered an important wetland – a forested fen – which is right below the dam on east side of creek. City has been in conversation with Northwestern Energy (NWE) since many folks walk around substation; NWE has granted conservation easement across their property. There will be a trailhead at the end of Duncan Drive. A mile long universal trail, flat 8% grade, will be built for walkers only. There will be a formal stream access point. Most of the work will be on the west side; not much will change on the east side, except for existing trail improvement and an interpretative overlook. Fish Wildlife and Parks will determine if fishing can happen in the creek. There will be either no or limited access to the creek for about 5 years due to the need for vegetative establishment.

The creek will be dewatered when the dam/spillway are removed, but water will be diverted into a side channel. These side channels will be important for fish habitat also.

The [recreation plan](#) is posted at the city site and soon the dam removal design (at 65%) will be posted.

4. **Rattlesnake Transportation update**- Dan Doyle, Upper/Lower Rattlesnake Transportation Committee  
This group is open to Upper and Lower Rattlesnake residents. This committee deals with bikes, public transit, cars, trails and the interface. Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, downtown in the city offices, Hal Fraser conference room on Pine St. Minutes of past meetings are available at the Neighborhood Council site. Currently working on “bringing the plans together” based on past transportation studies. This committee gives input on the double roundabouts, the left turn lane from Van Buren to Missoula Ave., pedestrian/bike paths, speed studies, connecting

trails, and the west bound on-ramp to I-90. They are working with City to have an online link for comments about the Rattlesnake long-term transportation plan.

5. **Housing Policy**-Bev Young, URNC leadership team

She presented some details about the developing Missoula Housing Policy which will be presented to City Council in May, 2019.

6. **Leadership Team elections**-Jane Kelly

Kathy Gaskill, Karen Renne & Terry Roach volunteered; Andrea Stierle is running again. Julie Ellison moved that we elect this slate, Bill Ruediger 2nded and the motion was approved unanimously.

7. **Priorities**-Jane Kelly

Each attendee got 4 stickers to show their priorities on the developed list of concerns. The results could be grouped broadly with those of most concern listed at the top of this list:

- Wildfire preparedness
- Urban deer
- Non-motorized transit infrastructure
- No new street lighting in neighborhood
  
- Need ped/bike trail in the “borrow” pit next to Rattlesnake Drive
  
- Safe routes to school
- Speed limits
- Managing human-bear interface

8. **City Councilors:** Bryan Von Lossberg & Heidi West

- City passed 100% clean energy resolution.
- Housing policy may establish a trust fund and there will be a lot of attention to the whole issue in the next few months.
- On Monday, April 8, City Council will address a mill levy for maintenance of conservation lands by Parks & Rec. Discussion of difference between conservation land acquisition (bonds) and maintenance (mill levy)
- Donation of Library land back to city

**Q:** is there an opportunity for more comment on the recreation plan for the dam removal. **A:** There may be, but the official comment period closed earlier.

**Q:** what about street lighting and the dark skies initiative?

**A:** Northwestern Energy is planning on putting in LED lights but the timeframe is unknown. NWE is working on a project with the 4 high schools.

**Q:** has anyone looked at the loss of tax base when we acquire conservation lands?

**A:** perhaps not, but some of the lands are not developable so tax loss would be negligible.

**9. Public Comment on non-agenda items**

- **Wildfire Preparedness** – 3 upcoming free presentations on wildfire preparedness; April 8 UC theater, 6:30-8:30pm; April 17, 6:30-8:30 Best Western Inn; May 8 Target Range School 7-9pm
- **Asa Wise & Deb Fasnacht** of Watershed Education Network (WEN) – looking for volunteers who are willing to get into Rattlesnake Creek to monitor for macroinvertebrates, temperature, and etc. before/during/after dam removal. Waders will be needed but loaners are available. April 13 orientation at WEN Office, 10am- 2pm, 802 E Front St. (behind Pizza Hut)

**10. Announcements** – no additional announcements

**11. Report to City Council** – URNC secretary Bev Young was asked to present a brief summary of the meeting to City Council on April 15, 2019.

**12. Adjournment**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bev Young, URNC Secretary