



Emerson-Garfield Steering Committee and Neighborhood Council

Wednesday, December 9th, 2015

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. after a half hour of mingling and sharing dinner. There were 24 voting members present, twice the minimum, and the roster recorded 4 guests. The November, 2015 minutes were approved without any changes, with no objections and only one abstention.

Roland Lamarche, the Chair of the [Community Assembly](#) (CA), talked about how Spokane targeted neighborhoods with the greatest need. As a result, there were more impactful projects which were funded. George Dahl gave a presentation about the Neighborhood Sidewalk Program. Tim Musser, the neighborhood's representative on the program's committee, also provided input about how the sidewalk maintenance is often overlooked by landlords in low-income neighborhoods.

According to municipal code, the repair of sidewalks is the responsibility of the adjacent homeowners. Neighborhoods have collectively received about \$700,000 per year to help fight poverty with home improvement projects, and approximately \$500,000 of that has been used for sidewalk repair. The choice of who qualifies for the [Community Development Block Grants](#) (CDBG) funding is done by census, and changes each year. It is not uncommon for individuals with a dangerous sidewalk and with a low income to have wealthier neighbors in their area which can disqualify them from CDBG funding.

The proposal by the committee is to remove the area qualifications for sidewalk funding, and allow households to individually qualify if they earn less than \$36,150 (if a one-person household). The higher an owner's income, compared to the median income of their zone, the higher the share of the cost they would be responsible for. Priority would be given to the disabled, the elderly and the lower income.

The typical cost of a repair ranges between \$1,600 on the low-end and \$3,000 on the high-end, with the higher expenses usually being associated with larger tree roots.

With the cost being shared by the owner, there may be a disincentive for requesting that their entire sidewalk be repaired, and if only the damaged portions were repaired, the funding may be distributed across many more properties. You can email George Dahl (gdahl@spokanecity.org) with questions.

Jay Cousins also reported that the CA will meet on the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

Within days of the November, 2015 neighborhood council meeting, it was announced that the Cedar Street sidewalk project would be funded by red-light income. It was proposed that the \$11,010 of funding be reallocated to the asphalt walking path project in Emerson Park. The council voted unanimously to approve that motion. The council members discussed possible projects to consider in the future.

The council also voted 13 vs 4 to not meet in January, 2016, pushing the next meeting to February 10th.

Karl Boldt reported that Faith Bible Church is still very eager to host the cleanup project next October.

On December 28th, at 5:45 p.m., West Central Community Center will be hosting a training session on the Neighborhood Notification process when anyone files for a building permit.

Laura Schlangen reported on the [Corbin Senior Activity Center](#). The Spokane Magic Club fundraiser was well attended and netted the Center almost \$300. A Christmas party will take place on December 11th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.