

West Central Neighborhood Association

Board Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2025, 6:00pm

Call to Order - 6:00pm

- Attendees: Joel Sauer, Kelly Benton, George Taylor, Connie Mettler, Al Hofer, Jon Paul Pepen, Guests: Shelley Rothgeb, Tom Cain, Dodd Kattman, Phil Labrash
- Absent: Anita Kuker, Bethany Pruitt

Note: With Bethany's absence, notes were compiled using AI and edited by Kelly for clarity.

Traffic Calming

- Phil Labrash, Traffic Engineer for the Fort Wayne Department of Public Works
 - Traffic engineering oversees traffic signals, manages over 30,000 street lights, pavement markings, and street signs
 - Responsible for development reviews, site access compliance, and neighborhood traffic calming
 - Uses Complete Streets principles
 - The City's traffic calming program traditionally focused on signage, pavement markings, and crosswalk artwork, but is beginning to incorporate physical infrastructure
- The Problems with Washington and Jefferson
 - Washington and Jefferson classified as major east-west arterial routes, seeing 17,000–28,000 vehicles/day - down some since removing a lane on Jefferson downtown plus since Covid
 - Neighborhood experiences excessive noise from speeding and drag racing vehicles
 - Accidents primarily occur during off-peak hours when traffic is light and drivers speed around curves
 - Arterial road classification of Washington and Jefferson limits traffic calming; calls for shifting city and driver expectations
- Upcoming Jefferson reconstruction project
 - Removal of old trolley tracks, brick pavers, and rebuilding with new base and asphalt
 - Seems to be some confusion about the timing of the project - Phil will look into it
 - Opportunity identified to implement substantial traffic calming during reconstruction, including piano key crosswalks and increased curb exposure.
 - Need for community advocacy and official neighborhood input to influence city projects
 - Over 90% of homes along Jefferson have lead water lines; replacement recommended during major road rebuilds

- Phil Labrash will take our concerns to the city and look into the Jefferson reconstruction project

Connected Neighborhoods Initiative / Southwest Central Collaborative

- The group had their kickoff meeting last week - 4 neighborhood representatives were in attendance
- The group brainstormed ideas and issues with our area, specifically related to pedestrian/bike safety and other issues like that
- Dan Baisden will take that information and create a public survey
- He set up a schedule of engagement events where the city will have a table to gather public feedback
- There will be a mailer sent out before the end of August to residents in these neighborhoods - listing engagement events and a link to the online survey
- Survey will also be on Engage Fort Wayne
- Kicking off the engagement events with the West Central ArtsFest - the City will set up a tent and table one or both days of ArtsFest; residents are encouraged to stop by and provide their thoughts
- No next steps needed at this time - the group will meet again in late September or early October

Jersey Barriers

- Word is, the West Central HPC is unanimously opposed to our proposed art project
 - They discussed ways to minimize the visual impact instead of highlight them
 - The Board will wait to hear from them formally

Movie Night

- Saturday, October 4 at 7:30pm at Moody Park
- Other members of the Southwest Central Collaborative will be invited to our movie night - could see an increase in attendance
- Kelly asked to increase the budget by \$100 to rent a generator - approved
- Discussed renting a porta potty, but will defer this to next year after we see what this year's numbers look like

Concluded - 7:20pm