**Southwestern Hills Neighborhood Association**

**General Meeting – November 8, 2018**

The Southwestern Hill General Meeting, hosted at Brody Middle School, was called to order at 6:30PM by George Davis. The meeting was attended by 103 neighbors. Southwestern Hill’s Board members were introduced: George Davis, Darlene Blake, Jon Shelness, Penny Harrison, Joe Harrison, Steve Sarcone and Nick VanPatten.

Guest speakers and presenters included; Councilman Josh Mandelbaum, Councilwoman Connie Boesen, Councilman Joe Gatto, City Manager Scott Sanders, City Engineers-Steve Nabor and Dave Kamp, Police Liaison Officer-Lance Ripperger and Jenny Richmond of Parks and Recreation.

 3rd Ward Councilman, Josh Mandelbaum gave an overview of the three phases of the Fleur Drive reconstruction project. 1.75 miles of Fleur Drive will be reconstructed on both sides of the street from McKinley Ave. to George Flagg Parkway. Sidewalks will be added on both sides of the street when allowable. Phase one-spring to fall 2019, includes northbound lanes from Watrous to George Flagg. Phase two-spring to fall 2020, includes southbound lanes from George Flagg to Watrous. Phase three-2020-2021, includes northbound and southbound lanes from McKinley to Watrous. He is working with staff for traffic flow issues during construction periods. He also feels sidewalks are badly needed on the southside.

At Large Councilwoman, Connie Boesen added comments regarding sidewalks and safety features for both pedestrians and bus stops. It is recommended that 5’ sidewalks be added whenever possible. She is going to address the planters and height of plants that may obstruct vision of oncoming traffic.

4th Ward Councilman, Joe Gatto expressed concerns about sidewalks and costs. He favors sidewalks on both sides of Fleur, if feasible. Some areas of Fleur cannot support sidewalks on both sides. He also has concerns if car “merging lanes” are removed. He feels car congestion adds to safety issues. He has received many calls on these issues.

City Engineers, Steve Nabor and Dave Kemp did a great job providing informational maps and features about the Fleur project. They along with City Manager, Scott Sanders addressed all questions from the neighbors and gave important facts about the project.

Many neighborhood questions were addressed with a wide range of comments. Everyone is concerned about the street project, traffic safety, bus stops and sidewalks.

Most of the neighbors do not want reduced traffic lanes from 12’ to 11’. Council members and staff stated lane size would not be reduced and would be 24’ from curb to curb which includes a one-foot concrete gutter. Designated turning lanes would remain.

 Neighbors have concerns regarding the removal of merging lanes on Bell Ave. This area of concern needs to be more specific regarding emergency vehicles.

A large majority of the neighbors wanted sidewalks on both sides of Fleur Drive. Many had concerns about this issue and how it would be achieved. Many felt sidewalks to bus stops is an absolute need. This led to discussion about sidewalks on other neighborhood streets.

Several property owners on Fleur Drive have concerns about the impact on their properties and their responsibility regarding the added sidewalks. They questioned the predicted pedestrian volume. If sidewalks are only added on one side of the street, what determines the side?

The Fleur Drive and sidewalk issue dominated most of the meeting time.

SWHNA bylaw updates were approved by all members present.

Four neighbors were elected to the Southwestern Hills Neighborhood Board for the two year term of 2019 and 2020. Elected were; Heather Carman, Penny Harrison, Jon Shelness and Joe Harrison. They join the other elected board members.

Jenny Richmond was introduced as Des Moines Parks and Recreation liaison for the Southwestern Hills Neighborhood Association.

Police neighborhood officer, Sgt. Lance Ripperger gave an overview of crime in the area. It was low, but he wanted all neighbors to make police reports on all crime. Some is not reported regarding car vandalism, if nothing seems to be missing. It is very important to always make a police report. He emphasized to lock cars and keep valuables out of site. Garage door openers and registration information is always an item taken. Keep neighbors and police informed of any activities.

Many presenters stayed and talked with neighbors, in the hall, after the meeting was adjourned. Many thanks to all, neighbors and presenters, who attended the neighborhood meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Carman, for Board Secretary, Ginny Renda