

RCHHC Meeting Minutes 09/09/2026, 7pm

Attendees:

Steve Rasmussen	Sally Grau
Philip & Isley Aschliman	Claire Siegel
Michael Broadwell	Tim Yanasak
Devin Chapman	Sue Jensen
Lew Gelfond	Laura Yanasak
Sandy Broadwell	

A. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: Steve Rasmussen, RCHHC Chair

Attendees went around the group giving their names and where they live.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: from 07/09/2026 meeting

C. OLD BUSINESS

1. Traffic Calming & A.R.T. Transit Plan:

Philip shared that the City, for developing the traffic calming policy, is using a consultant and public input. Philip asked if anyone attended the public input and it was mentioned that Victoria did attend. Philip said he is in the Focus Group and including stakeholders. Philip asked if anyone had read the current policy and it is a long process. There were 2 petition drives for Sulphur Springs, meeting with the Fire department, there are many criteria and after 3 years the only solution offered was speed cushions. Other solutions in the toolbox might be to paint the street differently to bring focus for drivers to the road. Landscaping, bumpouts at the crosswalks, changing where street parking is located are other options.

Sue asked if there is an option for new stop signs. Sally said that the stop signs do not really slow down drivers- they tend to speed up after the stop sign.

Steve mentioned he got an email about new speed bumps and will share with the group. See the email [here](#).

Philip shared the City transit plan. The proposed changes to the bus routes/transit network have been put on hold indefinitely. Philip encourages people to show an interest in transit since he feels this was tabled because of the City elections and will come back after the election. He feels that any change will disenfranchise some people. Philip shared a book written by Jared Walker, the consultant engaged by the city. Jared's book and youtube videos are resources to learn about transit. (See <https://humantransit.org/book>.) Steve feels the North Carolina DOT puts transit investment in a small portion of the budget. Philip said there are 2 plans- one with our current budget in mind and a "growth" plan.

Sandy shared there was an operation report where the council is considering 3 configurations of the bus routes. She said that the City will likely not throw more money to transit. The consultant presented 2 options- 1) Coverage model- to reach most areas of the city, but because of the budget restraints, frequency might be reduced. 2) Corridor focus- cut back on transit routes and focus on major corridors where most people live and need access to work and shopping. Make these routes more frequent. The council said they are uncomfortable taking away transit from the people that need it the most. There was a proposal to cut a couple routes to make the South Asheville routes more efficient. Also a proposal to support bus transit to the airport. There was push back from the public about reducing bus lines and as Philip pointed out that this is an election year and the transit decision is tabled.

Sally shared that she was at the City Council meeting where they were discussing this and the comment portion of the meeting was heartfelt. Sally was impacted by the public statements that people were basically pleading to keep their livelihoods. Sally felt that they cut routes thoughtlessly and shared that one of the plans cut the bus to Grove Park Inn and this route serves the staff that support the Inn and the support staff have no other means for transporting to their job.

Sandy added that the council asked staff to go back and rework the plans.

Philip pointed out that the book referenced above can show how bus transit can be flexible and be changed overnight and make a change back if it does not work out.

1. **Announcement:** From Five Points Neighborhood – Film Screening Benefit for Save the Woods

- 1) Issue an invitation for a film screening to benefit “Save the woods”. Benefit film screening “First they came for my College”. September 15 at the Fine Arts Theatre downtown.
- 2) Weaver Park- The city just completed a terrible renovation by taking a perfect playground and replacing it with a play structure that not all can play on. Along with this, they renovated the little league ball field to the wrong dimensions. \$800,000 later we have a ball field we can't use and a play area that children with disabilities can't use. Sally offered her experience with the pool renovation to assist in advocating for a hopefully better solution. September 30 is the next public meeting and Sally will provide a flyer to share with our group, So if you have kids, you have kids in the north asheville little league, or kids that used to go to this playground and don't want to go anymore, come the public meeting to share your thoughts.

2. Discussion of the General Election 2026: Early Voting is beginning October 15 each Monday through Saturday. Also, Sunday October 25. The election is November 3rd. More voting sites were added for early voting.

Steve talked about the C.A.N. candidate forum which included mayoral candidate, Kim Roney. Esther was not able to attend. Esther met with C.A.N. previously discussing the state of the City.

C.A.N. members had an opportunity to submit questions and one was regarding transparency. Steve suggested reviewing the WLOS video on Youtube and Mountain Xpress article (see below) about the answers. Another question was about reviving the boards and commissions. Candidates agreed that the citizen-led Realignment Working Group's recommendations will be followed to reinstate boards and commissions.

* Mayor/City Council candidate forum hosted August 26 by the Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods:

WLOS-TV's complete recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/y7be-KErIgU?si=uR3ILRsXeNKraYbr>

Mountain Xpress's Sept. 2 cover story:

<https://mountainx.com/issues/vote-seekers-candidates-pitch-their-plans-for-wncs-future/>

Sandy shared that there is another city council candidate forum sponsored by Asheville on Bikes, Mountain True and Strong Towns at the Highwire brewery in the RAD. October 14th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

* Sample ballot for 2026 General Election:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12J3GbPCFMDbJL2ZJTqHZc61REQJZ5JCi/view?usp=sharing>

* Sign up to be a (paid) pollworker. Steve described the duties for a pollworker.

<https://www.buncombenc.gov/203/Employment-and-Poll-Worker-Opportunities>

* Where, how, when to register, vote, request a mailed ballot, etc.:

<https://www.buncombenc.gov/199/Election-Services>

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. C.A.N. Committee

Report on the August 26 candidate forum (combined with C. 2., above)

2. Plan on a Page Committee

No meeting was held. Committee members should refer to [this email](#) sent Sept. 1.

3. School Committee

4. Park Committee

Weaver Park news & Malvern Hills Park update (Sally Grau) See above. Also Sally gave an update on the Malvern Hills Pool. She was informed they are on track for a May- Memorial Day weekend- 2028 opening of the pool. There is work on the roof and gutters. The glass on the building has been broken and Sally thought it might be vandalism and she was hoping that with the evidence that there is work going on, the vandalism would stop, but sadly it might not have.

Also Sally spoke of the Carrier Park renovations. It will have 60 million dollars invested- mostly FEMA funds. The final plans do not include a splash pad and in Sally's opinion that would be a great site for a splash pad since oftentimes the one downtown is not functioning. The renovations don't include any exciting amenities for families with small children. A new amphitheater and upgrade the bathrooms. The goal is 2030 and Sally understands that it will be

done in phases. Sally would like to organize a movement to get more family friendly activities included in the park renovations.

Members shared ideas to include in the renovations for Carrier.

NEW BUSINESS

The next Porch Fest is October 10 from noon to 8 pm- More information to follow. Any ideas, let Devin know. If any bands want to host, let Devin know. Any ideas about food would be welcome.

Sandy discussed the Buncombe County Pedestrian Plan. This includes the unincorporated parts of Buncombe county, for example Leicester, Emma, Candler, Swannanoa, etc. Top 10 Priorities have been identified along with prior public input.

Sandy also included a report on the MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian committee. Has not kicked off yet but most of the members have been named. Representatives from Buncombe County, Henderson County, Madison County and Haywood County. Buncombe County reps include executive director of Asheville on Bikes, the executive director of Go Local Asheville, the widowed fiancée of the bicyclist that was killed and a member of the Active Weaverville committee. Sandy felt this was a strong representation for Buncombe County walking community and bicyclists.

In addition, Sandy talked about the pollinator garden in Malvern Hills Park that is in a state of habitat rehabilitation. Sandy is a board member for Bee City Asheville and provided handouts. Check out RCHHC web site for a copy. The garden looks a little scary right now- a lot of plants are cut down, invasives have been removed and new plantings for native plants are planned. Looking for mulch donations. Steve suggested contacting the Peace Garden director.

Clair announced a yard sale at 163 Sulphur Springs

Sally offered yard signs for Esther Mannheimer, if you would like one, let her know.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Next meeting is November 11th, probably at Firestorm Bookstore, since the weather might prevent outdoor meeting spaces.