

Hello everyone,

Here's the latest news from Lowell:

Notes

- As of this update, City staff have added the entire Council to the mailing list. Councilmembers: this update started on October 28, 2020, and I send it biweekly. It is meant to keep everyone apprised on developments regarding Section 17, but I also include notes on the status of our new visitor center project, our public program reopening status, and other issues such as the recent westside problems with loud traffic.
- Our IT tells me an email glitch at Google resulted in only about 30 of 51 recipients on this list getting the January 6 update. You can read all the previous updates at <http://www.lowell.edu/local-updates>, as well as get current information and documents re Section 17 and our capital projects. I would particularly commend to you our Trustee Lowell Putnam's letter on the history of the section since Percival Lowell's time.

Section 17

- We are working with Bob Holmes and Ana Ma on revised Section 17 bill language and report language. We will provide all text for Council, interested organizations, and community members *before* the bill is introduced; we expect that will not happen for several weeks due to the need for the new Administration's committees to be approved and get up and running. We are also working with City staff to arrange a presentation about Section 17 to Council at one of its Tuesday meetings. Once that is scheduled, I'll let everyone know when it will be.

Astronomy Discovery Center

- No change from the last update. We continue to work on an agreement with the Flag Mesa HOA for emergency egress from Mars Hill via their road to our south. This morning was a textbook example of why we want to be able to get off Mars Hill via some other route than MH Road: an abandoned Jeep and, as I understand it, a cinder truck were stuck at the hairpin for a while. When this happens, if those of us who live up here, staff, a visitor, or a Flag resident hiking Section 17 have a medical emergency, there is no way for EMTs or FFD to get up here to help. This was already a serious worry with our 105,000 visitors before Covid shut us down, and it will become even more so when we reopen and then eventually open the Astronomy Discovery Center.

Lowell operational status

- I am cautiously optimistic that with superspreader season over, I am seeing some early encouraging trends in the AZ Covid data. However, the present situation is merely *mostly* appalling rather than *completely* appalling, so we are remaining closed except for our small, outdoor telescope viewing programs of 10 or fewer cohabiting/co-traveling people. We do not plan any expansion of programs until we reach CDC Phase 2. I keep my fingers crossed we will be collectively responsible and maybe get there by Spring Break or a bit thereafter.
- We continue to retain Southwest Protective Services at the Mars Hill overlook, with no incidents reported lately. I have occasionally seen sporty cars roaring up and down and doing U-turns on the steepest part of MH Road above the hairpin; we notify FPD if these

citizens are persistent, but we know FPD is aware of the problem and have appreciated their help. Overall, problems have been much reduced during the colder weather.

I hope everyone's been enjoying a bit of snow on the ground, and the possibility of more this weekend.

Best regards,

Jeff Hall
Director
Lowell Observatory