

Old Town San Diego
Community Planning Group

Thurston Coe, Chairperson
2836 Juan Street
San Diego, California, 92110

May 13, 2015

MINUTES v.1

Whaley House this meeting to order at 3:30 pm

- **Members Present:** Chuck Ambers; Thurston Coe; Patricia Fillet; Geoffrey Mogilner; Randi Perez; Richard Stegner; David Swarens; David Thornton; Robert Zink
- **Members Absent:** Ann Dahlkamp; Vickie Durham; Fred Grand; Bruce Johnson;
- **Guests:** Molly Chase, City of San Diego (mchase@sandiego.gov, 619.236.6633); Lynn Adams, Desendants of Early San Diego (760.749.5279); John Choi, City of San Diego (619.533.5493); Luis Schaaz, City of San Diego (619.533.7492); Gloria Andrade, Resident (gloriaandrade@gmail.com); Chris Kallstrand, Arborist (949.482.5152); Monica Munoz, City of San Diego (858.573.5080); Lee Steiner, Elder (619.280.5353); Jesus Garcia, City of San Diego (619.533.5410); Catherine C. Santos, City of San Diego (619.533.5243); Jazlyn Jacobo, 7th Generation San Diegan; Linda Jacobo, Decendants of Early San Diego (linda92117@yahoo.com); Mike Arnold, City of San Diego (858.573.5023); Vikie White, City of San Diego Planning (619.533.3945); Elder Barnes, Mormon Battalion (861.599.3801); Amee Hayes, SOHO (amie.hayes@soho.sd.org); Alana Coons, SOHO;

1. **Non-Agenda Public Comments:** None

2. **Modifications:** Changing Action item to information item for Pepper Tree

DS: we did take action, and in order to reconsider we need to take a motion. Failure to provide any further information from the City point of view before voting is not recommended. **Vicky:** asked if PF could read April meeting notes on Pepper Tree Issue (see 6c and motion from April, 2015 meeting minutes) you can hear the information today and then vote next month. **GM:** Is there any member that wants to reconsider the motion? **Richard Stegner** recommended to hold off on reconsidering based on what we hear in this meeting's information update and let's hear what we need and make a more educated decision.

RS: I'd like to make a motion to reconsider for next month to change from action to information item **PF:** Seconded.

Vickie White: there's continuing construction. **DS:** We are all disappointed that this hasn't moved quick enough. And, now this is becoming our problem due to the late notice of Pepper Tree removal from a small number to a large number, announced by the City only in the last several months. **RZ:** let's take a vote. **Alana:** let's put this on the table to not to remove the trees.

Meeting Minutes: *No April Meeting Minutes*

Treasurer's report: None

Action Items:

6a) Elections for Officer members

GM asked if the proposed officer members to provide a statement: Chuck, Patricia, and Thurston provided brief appeal on why they should be re-elected.

RS: Motioned Vicky Durham to continue to be Treasurer. GM Seconded.

GM: Motioned Patricia Fillet to continue to be Secretary. RZ Seconded.

DS: Motioned Chuck Ambers to continue to be Vice-Chair. RZ: Seconded.

GM: Motioned Thurston Coe to continue as Chair. DS: Seconded

Vicky Durham, 10 yes votes and 4 absent; Patricia Fillet, 10 yes votes and 4 absent; Chuck Ambers, 10 yes votes and 4 absent; Thurston Coe 10 yes votes and 4 absent

b) Vote to approve or not approve the removal of the Calif. Pepper trees along Juan St. Changing from Action item to information item once we hear the City side. (see Modifications to Agenda #2, above) 8 yes votes; 1 no vote; 5 absent

c) Consider signing a draft resolution or writing a letter to the San Diego City Council pertaining to the One Paseo Project: Jeff Powers Provided summary to the entire group. Referendum against One Paseo with 60, 000 signatures. Went to 38 of 40 planning groups. 4 planning groups are affected by the scope of this project. The planning group should be able to decide instead of the city, because they live in the community and are familiar with the projects, allowed. We need to make sure the process is unbiased. The planning commission rejected with a list of conditions. This is more about the process. Tyler: I represent the developer. I just want to share that this project did follow the process, working with the surrounding communities. The Carmel Valley group motioned approval with changes. (copy given to TC). I participated in two meetings that lasted five hours each, with at least 300 people at each meeting. Concerns were voiced and heard at council it was 7-2. General plan was updated 6 years ago. Density is an issue – what you need is more within the community and communities will be able to do that with having all the amenities nearby. GM: I'm confused. You're proposing the 3x density, how can you be following the current planning district ordinance? Tyler: Kilroy bought the property and it's currently zoned for two office towers. The community wanted mix use development. Where we wound up – to implement the PDO. The zoning created is part in partial for the City of Villages plan of The City's view. DS: Thank you for presenting this and why Old town should consider. Because we don't like particular decisions, but because of an older plan update and you focused best on what the project can do, and I appreciate the information you've shared.

BC: The issue for the planning group: Are the city council for the PDO? and this sets a bad precedence, specifically. I'm glad the referendum was approved and I think this planning group should follow the other groups. The community has a right to be beautiful. We've heard City Villages from the City and fierce opposition to the plan, but the City Villages plan was never adopted. Again Balboa Park, example voted against. Council needs to make a decision Sunday or put on a ballot. So this is where it stands for the Community Planning groups and citizens can support. If they do it there, they'll do it here. GM: I don't agree high density, and the City of Villages, I don't care for that.

GM: I would like to Motion and see the draft resolution on page 3. RZ Seconded.

RS: Who is this being sent to? **Thurston:** Yes, to be sent to City Council and Mayor. (see draft letter to be read at Public Meeting on May 18th and continued to May 21st). 10 yes votes; 4 absent.

7a) An Update on the Juan St. Project by Wayne, Monica, et, al.

Senior Civil Engineer: Updates. Brief history: part of the construction contract, we had to have an arborist. We found 27 trees to be impacted. When we presented this to the community, we heard your recommendations. This happened over a few months. We've had internal meetings with different departments. We had the arborist make his recommendations and assumptions at this point, we even wanted to approach this a different way and to proceed forward, with today's presentation.

John Choi: past several weeks we took into account to preserve the trees, many suggestions were note feasible. We did make two revisions: 1. Method: which trees to survive or not. We were going to make assumptions based on what we saw. Because of the timeframe, we were going to assess the trees and sidewalk, determine, then come back and rebuild the infrastructure, and it's not the most conservative approach.

New approach: sacrifice time. We will do more careful observation: Remove the sidewalk, do the analysis, and decide which ones will be removed. There will be a three-week impact to the project.

#2 revision: as you know, the pepper trees, we are not allowed to replant based on City policy. We had extensive meetings with management, etc..., as of last Friday, we will be allowed to have an exemption for this project. You can replace trees, but will take longer. I truly believe, at the end of this project the community will be happy with the storm drain system, etc..., we did promise a tree assessment and we have four copies to distribute. We do have the plan for each tree.

Bruce Coons: I appreciate all the work you're doing. But on the Caltrans bldg. don't remove that pepper tree. Then along the golf course, the smaller ones can be removed.

JC: We don't know yet which trees will be affected. The trees you mentioned, those trees may survive and the others may not. We will monitor the trees and construction.

Alana Coons: We ask you to look at, is a different type of sidewalk, maybe the trees could survive with a permeable surface and not concrete.

JC: The city is trying to install "standard" and if you install a non-standard policy, then failure could possibly occur. With the low amount of personnel already, and being short staffed, our departments have taken longer.

David Swarens: I'd like to congratulate you as well. The value of collaborative partnership with the community is admirable. Members of the community could work with you on an on-going basis with a beneficial outcome. Alana's comment on the alternative paving, your comment is what city engineering says. But the other side mentions green street and makes extensive use of green street as a way to be more environmentally friendly and this will help to conserve water, etc...

Geoffrey Mogilner: The pepper trees are getting a bad rap on raising the sidewalk, I'm saying perhaps they are. The Old Town fault goes through Presidio Park, aligned there and that's the general area where the sidewalk is located. This could be from earth activity and this could be what's happening. State Park has grey truncated domes in the state park, with one-foot tiles. I know the State park is cooperative if you ask the source.

BC: on truncated domes: color difference vs. contrast. **City:** we are following the manual.

Richard Stegner: If you replace the trees, what are you replacing? **Arborist:** we are going to replace with 24 in., boxed trees 36 in., was proposed previously. **RS:** It's a younger tree to establish itself, who will be responsible for watering? **JC:** The city will maintain the watering. **Chris the Arborist** will decide. **Chris:** we'll come back afterwards and monitor.

DS: A smaller tree is a more viably economically in the long term. It will develop and need to be cut. The facing the Casa Carrillo, that looks like one that can be worked around, it's maybe 50-60 years old.

*****Martin Schmidt:** Vicky sent me the information and we are doing the entire Sports Arena, for green street and the green street tool box. I was approached by the city council to come up with a solution. We removed the hardscape and retained and protected every single tree. It just didn't make sense to come in and tear them down. I've walked this Juan Street project and I do believe there is a way to resolve, protect, and work around the issue. We are having a Third workshop in 6 weeks and will have a report.

Vickie White: They install root barriers I called San Marcos, but maybe it's something to check out. I don't have background on it.

DS: When you talk about a maintenance program, you look at long-term. **DG** should be considered, since it's easier to maintain and least cost prohibitive.

AC: sounds like parts of our city is working on progressive ways to conserve, what are we doing in our home city? We do want progressivism. I'd like to propose it's something to vote on?

Abi Palasayed: We need to keep in mind: this project is in construction. We are changing the design. Anything more you mention, we need to keep in mind. **DS:** Its not a monolithic design, it's a combination of materials of pavers, poured cement and soil. **City:** keeping in mind to address water drainage/storm drain system in place for a significant part of this

project. Going down the path of changing to permeable surfaces, I'm saying we have a contract, competitively bid on, and changes now will blow the budget.

Ann Fege, Chair from Forest Advisory Board: The arborist report is dated in April, this can go slowly or get those change orders in now and it's doable. We did have this conversation 6 weeks ago. Changes can be made. Let's look further and make a decision.

JC: we can continue to look at new ideas and information, we can continue and be active in it. We have made a determination. AF: only in the last 6 weeks because of the community input.

DS: It took us years to get information on this project and that all the trees will be protected.

Monica Munoz: we've had meetings prior to this, with details and with what color to sidewalks. DS: I'm disputing the details you didn't provide like color, and design for the past two years.

JC: we looked at what different options. AF: did you look at cost for change order? JC: safety and maintenance were the main reasons for the decisions.

MM: Let's not forget we are replacing a storm drain, sidewalk, and many aspects of beautification. This is the only project, Wayne Jarold, and is dedicated solely to this project. There was a successful event during Cinco de Mayo – a couple of the streets to be closed, and we realized to reopen the streets in both directions on Juan St.

AC: what about the pepper trees? MM: there has been endless meetings, management and many staff meetings, and there is a lot of good news we are bringing.

City/AP: to save the pepper trees, now if you want us to go back and to look at the sidewalk, we have to shut down for 60 days. I don't want to say no to this. We are in construction, and get back on track. If you want us to delay and to look at the sidewalk issue.

AC: No no, we have always asked for further information and to look at everything at once, we asked you too look at several things, and you've had 60 days, already.

City/AP: there will be ramifications for delay and we will come back with more information.
JC: We can talk about this further

DS: Permeable sidewalks in your toolbox, you shouldn't discard. Green street programs minimize the toxicity being flushed into the storm drains. Don't discard the public issues.

AF: For this project a change order is needed, the Forestation Plan for the City is to save all the trees. The impression from the planning from several months ago at the meeting, there were some solutions. At this point, you need to make a decision. Now there are more pieces of information, put some cost information when you do the change order.

VW: the issue is not cost, but the root trimming – we need to look at the pulling up the sidewalk, and then examine what needs to be removed.

DS: We were told at the special meeting and previous discussions, the cost and maintenance is the most important aspect, if the City keeps saying this we believe them, or else if not, there is no trust.

JC: If we have to come back, there may be a wait time of 6 months to resolve any further issue.

City/AP: if there is anything outside standard, if you have other ways of others taking over maintenance, or businesses that enter into agreement for maintenance there are things contracts allowed. You have a PDO that limits and that's what you're getting. The other things you mention, if you're willing to tolerate. DG is not ADA compliant.

DS: yes it is. **JC:** even if we install DG, the root barrier is still an issue.

AC: 900-19, the City has a maintenance agreement, there's a policy (See Handout on Public Tree Protection, dated June 13, 2005).

Martin Schmidt: you keep referencing the roots to come up and damage the sidewalk. We're trying to get this 10-year cycle of trees and roots, then digging up; this is a cycle we can break. We are designing and show what's been proven to work. Adequate soil volume, correct irrigation, if you do things correctly, you don't have to worry about sidewalk getting damage. I understand your construction schedule and they're all issues and if you need a way to facilitate this, we can look at it and protect what we can.

JC: I'd like to hear further your suggestions.

DS: someone suggested a focus-centered group, if you can come back and show a collaborative consult in advance of a next meeting. We couldn't do anything a year ago, but we can now and come up with a plan to move forward.

City: yes we can do one meeting up to 4 hours. This should have a strong interaction.

DS: We have had no advance information since the beginning of this discussion and couldn't come up with an agreement to support a partnership with the City and to bring forward as final.

Molly Chase: We are in the most historical part of San Diego and we respect that. I want to go back on the first response. The community was asking the city on how to save the pepper trees. And if you couldn't save the trees, could you replace with similar pepper trees? Martin is looking at those suggestions. We are out of the planning process, we have a contractor and we have a timeline. I urge suggestions so we can move forward.

DS: a continued collaboration is the best way to establish trust and revealing knowledge on a monthly basis hasn't been done to date.

AC: I'm skeptical. Look we were promised by the city to save as many trees as we can, but then this doesn't happen. I hope I'm wrong, but don't trust the city.

RS: What are we going to do now? Are we going to have a working group? We have the trees and sidewalks to further discuss.

Senior engineer: Im asking, is this what the community wants? To look at costs? **AC:** The city has a responsibility to each community to do the right thing.

AF: sidewalk design with modifications may be too late to do. When you dig up the sidewalk, invite the people to view as well to do the best for the tree root issue and to make possible for the existing trees to have the highest likelihood of surviving and you have a witness to the entire process. Let's have this discussion be the learning process for the next fiscal year for a \$3 million in budget funds for sidewalk replacement.

JC: The certified arborist will do that and if you want the planning members to be invited. However, the final call will be a certified arborist.

DS: That's what a focus group would do. We will provide a list of suggestions, Patricia will work with David Swarens and we will follow the process and provide Vicky White via Thurston Coe, Chair a list of what will be needed and as a group we will decide who those representatives will be.

City: Are those trees in front of the Caltrans Bldg, are they part of the 27?

BC: the two eucalyptus trees can be removed.

City: Based on progress, the contractor gave us 4 weeks, the 25th, we were planning to pour curb and gutter, are we to proceed with the sidewalk? **DS:** that is part of the discussion.

AC: The answer is no.

8. Committee Updates: None

Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.

Officially submitted,

Patricia Fillet, Secretary