

Normal Heights Community Planning Group

Normal Heights United Methodist Church, 4650 Mansfield St

NOTE ALTERNATIVE MEETING LOCATION DUE TO POLLING STATION AT COMMUNITY CENTER

Tuesday, June 3, 2008 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

A G E N D A

Welcome & Introductions – (though not required, please sign-in on our attendance sheet)

Donation Opportunity – Buttons available for \$1 donation; “above the norm – Normal Heights” supporting the Normal Heights web site at www.normalheights.org .

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Public Comment (non-agenda items only, limit of 3 minutes per speaker)

Reports from Government Representatives or others may occur:

- 3rd City Council District Office – Monica Pelaez,
- City Planning and Community Investment Dept. – Max Stalheim
- 76th Assembly District Office -- Melanie Cohn
- Updates from other Normal Heights or Mid City organizations
 - Adams Ave. Business Association – Jim Schneider, Director
 - Adams Ave. Recreation Council –
 - Friends of Normal Heights Canyons – Kevin Johnston

Information Items

1. I-15 Rapid Transit – committee is focusing on four different ideas for providing bus rapid transit stops along I-15 at University, El Cajon and possibly Adams Ave. Display of each idea will be provided.
2. Gang Prevention – information from Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention.
3. Pedestrian Master Plan Project - Maureen Gardiner (the city's project manager) and Sherry Ryan (the Alta consulting team project manager) will provide an overview of the project and to invite community members to participate in a Normal Heights public workshop.
4. Community Planners Committee – Vice Chair attended.
5. Community Plan Update Guidelines and Procedures – Planning Group members are invited to form a subcommittee to assist the City of San Diego in the development of the guidelines and procedures for Community Plan Updates. Specifically, this Subcommittee will provide advice and assistance in the formation of the Community Plan Update Manual - an administrative document outlining the process and procedures for Community Planning Groups to utilize during the updates of their respective Community Plans. The City of San Diego has indicated an overall plan to update the majority of the 42 recognized community plans in groups beginning next year. Community Plan updates require close coordination of City Staff personnel and members of the Community Planning Groups. With much of the process and procedures still in the formative stages, this subcommittee will provide the Community Planning Groups an excellent opportunity to incorporate ideas and recommendations into this process at the earliest stages. The first meeting was

held Tuesday, May 27th for discussion of expectations and goals with City of SD personnel. Landry Watson, Chair, Ocean Beach Planning Board.

6. Funding source for NH projects? Ron Roberts gave Kensington \$35K toward rehabbing their neon sign, gave Greater North Park CPG \$35K toward building their web site, two years ago gave the Normal Heights Cultural Council \$3000 for Centennial banners. Maybe it's time for Normal Heights to ask for some funds?
7. Safe Routes to School Grant Process - On April 25, 2008, a call for Cycle 2 federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects was announced. The application submittal deadline is July 18, 2008. Program Guidelines and a download-able Application are posted on the Safe Routes to School website at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm Submit three (3) hard copies of completed application(s) to Caltrans District Local Assistance Engineer by that deadline. To find out who they are and their mailing address, go to: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/dlae.htm.

If you have program-related questions, contact
Joyce Parks, DLA Safe Routes to School Coordinator
(916) 653-6920 joyce_parks@dot.ca.gov

or

Luis Z. Medina, Lead Associate Program Coordinator
State of California Department of Transportation
D-11 Local Assistance MS132
4050 Taylor Street, San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 278-3735 Luis_Zmedina@dot.ca.gov

Action Items

1. Project Review –
 - a. No projects were received for review.
2. Community Gardens on public property? Does the NHCPG generally stand in approval of establishment of community garden operations on public property including designated or potential park space?
3. Review, discussion and potential prioritization of projects on our “comprehensive” list.

Committee Reports (All subcommittee meetings as scheduled are open to the public)

Housing –

1. Housing – (Holly Ritter) – printed report will be read.
2. Community Needs – (Morris Dye)
3. Facilities – Community Garden question as action item above
4. Transportation (Morris Dye, Jim Baross) – I-15 Mid-City BRT Working Group continues reviewing potential projects. Next meeting in June at Metro Community Center 3910 University Ave.
5. Bylaws (position vacant) –
6. Canyons (Jeff Underwood) –
7. Library –
8. City Heights PAC – (Rudy Burlin)

New Business for the next meeting
Adjournment

Normal Heights Community Planning Group

MINUTES

Tuesday May 6, 2008

6:00PM

NH Community Center

4649 Hawley Blvd

Call to Order by Chair Jim Baross at 6:03

Members present: Nancy Wolfing, Richard Rios, Dino Serafini, Earlene Thom, Kevin Johnston, Jeff Parsons, Rudy Burlin, Susan Redelings, Morris Dye, Holly Ritter and Jim Baross, Morris Dye

Members absent: Kerry Sheldon, Jeff Underwood.

Guests: Gary Weber, Monica Palaez, Art Harrison, Bob Kaiser, Maxx Stalheim, Todd Gloria, Linda Miller, Roy Miller, Cheryl Robinson, Ron May.

Welcome and introductions

Minutes of April 1st meeting approved with one correction: Holly Ritter seconded motion of support for 34th Street project (Action Item No. 1)

Public Comment (non-agenda items only, limit of 3 minutes per speaker):

Todd Gloria- introduced himself as candidate for Council District 3.

Housing Committee report taken out-of-order: (more information/explanation on Item 5 from April 1st meeting regarding the City's plans the revamp Historical Resources Guidelines)

Ron May, representing the Neighborhood Historical Coalition. A city-wide organization, NHC was formed in response to concerns over the demolition of potentially significant historic resources in the city and to improve the quality of historical surveys conducted in the city. The Mills Act historical designation, which provides property tax incentives for restoration of historical properties, is the primary tool for historical preservation in San Diego. A property owner needs official designation before a Mills Act contract may be executed for a property. The process in San Diego is onerous and difficult - many applications are turned down. Also, the city has been sitting on many applications for over 2 years now. The city has initiated discussion intended to lead to revisions in the way the Mills Act program is implemented in San Diego. One proposal is that only blighted areas would be eligible. Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO) has filed suit to enjoin the implementation of any changes in the city's current historical preservation program until the full public review process is complete. The problem is that illegal demolitions are happening now. Houses old enough to be subject to review are either demo'ed without a permit, or are given a demolition permit in error. NHC is seeking to revise the review process. Six criteria are used to evaluate whether a home is

designated: including the importance/significance of the designer, the original owner, the type of architecture, quality/uniqueness of design, architecture is indicative of a style. The owner needs to build a strong case for designation. A few homes in Normal Heights are currently designated. A meeting, held on April 18 to discuss the review process, filled the council chambers. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for May or June. Holly has been designated to keep the Planning Group informed.

Reports from Government Agencies/Representatives

Maxx Stalheim introduced himself as the Senior Planner from DSG assigned to the Mid-City CPG's. He plans to attend the NHCPG meetings at least quarterly and whenever a Process 4 or 5 project is presented to the Group. Mr. Stalheim invited new NHCPG members to attend the next Community Orientation Workshop (COW) – it is mandatory the every Group member attend a 4-hr. COW, which are also open to the public. It was asked why DSG could not send out the project maps. Mr. Stalheim would see that maps are provided to the Group upon request.

3rd City Council District Office – Monica Pelaez:

The budget season is underway and on May 5 the Council will be discussing public safety issues: police, fire and homeland security.

76th Assembly District Office – No representatives in attendance

Member's Comments

Kevin Johnston announced a meeting of Friends of the Canyon on May 14th at 7:00 at Café Cabaret. Seventeen or more took part in the recent Canyon Clean-up event. They will work on the Eugene Place Canyon next. San Diego River Days is scheduled for May 17. There will be Trolley rides through Mission Valley, a trip to Serra Mesa and the proposed Normal Heights canyon trail site.

Information Items

1. City Council Candidates Forum on Mid-City transit/mobility issues – Jim attended.
2. Grand Jury report on the City's Development Services Group – highlighted the concern that project review staff is hard-pressed to keep up with review schedule.
3. Community Planners Council (CPC) March meeting: not able to attend last meeting – conflicted with the SR-15 Centerline meeting.
4. San Diego Capital Collaborative – Jim met with Barry Schultz of SDCC (he is also the chair of the Planning Commission). Jim provided information about Normal Heights. SDCC will create a community "dossier" that will be offered to developers and others interested in investing in the neighborhood.
5. Community planning group training workshop – the COW - is scheduled for May 17th at 8:15 am

Action Items –

1. 4846–4850 West Mountain View Project:

Ray Robertson of Kappa Surveying and Roy Millar (owner) presented a condominium conversion proposal for three existing units on West Mountain View.

The project was submitted and has received one review by DSG. Under the Transit Area code, the project requires 4 parking spaces – 6 off-street spaces are provided.

Jim noted that the paved area in front, on West Mountain View, is large enough to fit two vehicles, but only one space is actually designated on the plan. Could something be done to prevent two cars from parking in front, such as removing concrete or planting additional landscaping? Jim also asked about where trash collection takes place (in alley) and recommended placing address numbers in the alley as well as on West Mtn. View.

Rudy asked about lighting in alley. Applicant indicated nothing specific was planned, but lighting could be added to the rear unit.

Susan asked if there were any comments from neighbors and if public notice had been posted (it was).

Kevin asked about landscape plan approval (in process) and status of homeowner's association. Applicant stated that C, C & R's are required the State.

Chair: Call for motion to approve with conditions:

1. Determine if parking in front can be restricted to one vehicle;
2. Suitable lighting installed to illuminate the alley;
3. Affix address numbers facing the alley.

Rudy so moved, Kevin seconded; Earlene and Morris abstained, otherwise motion passed unanimously.

2. Verizon Wireless Permit Renewal

Shelley Kilbourne, representing the applicant seeking renewal of 10-year permit to maintain a cellular phone tower north of Adams Ave. and east of Bonnie Court (the renewal is actually considered a new permit) is requesting the Group's input and recommendations toward resolving an issue with the Planning Department over Planning's requirement to provide landscaping/screening of the tower.

Planning asked for more street trees (no specific number, type or location was given). It was pointed out by applicant that there is little room for trees or other landscaping on-site and, in any case, these would not accomplish the desired screening of the tower – existing street trees on Adams Ave. do not provide any screening. There was a concern by the Group that street trees would obscure the new Neighborhood Centennial sign in that location. Group asked if any complaints had been registered about the tower (none reported by the applicant). Applicant advised that the tower had been inadvertently placed in the City ROW

and they were working with Real Property to resolve that issue, which has no bearing on the current permit application.

The Group is not convinced that landscaping would serve a screening function.

Chair called for a motion. Rudy moved that if the City imposes landscaping requirements on the permit, any trees planted as part of an approved landscape plan be planted in locations that do not and will not obscure existing street signage including the Centennial sign; otherwise the Group has no objections to the permit. Seconded by Jeff; 7 approved; Susan opposed; Jim, Morris and Earlene abstained; motion passed.

5. Normal Heights Neighborhood Needs Assessment

Jim recapped the process to date: the Sub-Committee headed by Morris was assigned to review the list of needs; pull together the qualifying projects and prioritize them for submittal to the city for inclusion in the Mid-City Financing Plan Update. The meeting took place on April 10th, 4:30 at the NH Starbucks. Morris submitted the final list to Jim who e-mailed it to the city.

Cheryl Robinson of the Facilities Finance Section brought a copy of the list and is available to answer questions regarding the city's Development Impact Fee (DIF) program and the Needs Assessment process. Ms. Robinson stated that NH's priorities "are not the same as other communities".

Following amendments/clarifications to the list were proposed:

First Priority Category: Clarify that "mini" parks, per se, are really not our highest priority. The record should state: "whereas a second neighborhood park in Normal Heights the community's highest priority, it is recognized that finding the land required for a full-service park is not very likely in near term. The opportunity to develop park-spaces on lot-sized parcels as they become available, with a particular emphasis on mini-parks specifically in conjunction with the Urban Trails project, also noted in the First Priority, shall be supported as an acceptable interim alternative to reduce the overall park deficiency in NH until the site for a real park is acquired".

Second Priority: Add countdown pedestrian indicators to the requested traffic signals on Adams Ave and East. Mountain View.

Clarification of Item No. 3 (the statement that 34th Street Neighborhood Park location (in the current Mid-City Finance Plan) is unrealistic) to the effect: "the indicated location is not official city policy and does not impose a procedural constraint upon the siting of a new neighborhood park anywhere in Normal Heights."

Morris thanked the participants on the sub-committee and summarized all the needs that had been submitted for consideration in the prioritization process, including those not making "the final cut" and the operations, management and code compliance items that, while not eligible for funding restricted to capital facilities-only projects and programs, are nonetheless important and need to be brought to the city's attention on a continual basis.

Next steps:

Cheryl indicated that after one remaining community submits their list of needs, City staff will estimate cost of identified project needs as stated in the Community Plans. The information will be compiled into a final Financing Plan in June to be presented to the Finance and Housing Committee. Then on to the full Council with a recommendation for an appropriate DIF increase.

Jim asked who is it that actually decides who, or what gets funding? Do Council members?

Cheryl: they do have input. Initially, however, the Departments meet in a rather involved process, to propose projects and identify funding sources, including city's share of the obligation, making up the final recommended package that goes forward.

Jim called for a motion. Susan moved to accept the sub-committee's list of needs with the amendments and clarifications as outlined above; Nancy seconded; motion approved unanimously.

Committee Reports:

1. Housing – Historical Preservation was discussed at the top of the Agenda.
2. Community Needs – covered in Action Item #5
3. Facilities – nothing to report
4. Transportation – Jim attends and participates in the I-15/BRT Corridor meetings. Next meeting is May 20. Normal Heights was selected to be included in the City-wide Pedestrian Plan. Gary Weber reminded the Group that Sandy Johnson was instrumental in obtaining a \$10,000 grant to prepare a Mobility Plan for Normal Heights a few back and that that document should be folded into the proposed Pedestrian Plan effort to “put the pieces together”.
5. Bylaws – we desperately need a chairperson to review the bylaws when returned from the City Attorney's office.

Jim also mentioned that he met with Robert Rael about the possibility of allowing updates to the NHCPG page on NormalHeights.org.

Gary also reminded the Group that June 3rd was Election Day; therefore the NHCPG would need to meet in another location.

Adjourned at 8:05