

Normal Heights Community Planning Group

MINUTES

Tuesday February 3, 2009
6:00PM
Normal Heights Community Center

Call to Order by Chair Jim Baross at 6:07

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

Members absent: none

Guests: Conni Musser, Bob Keiser, Gary Weber, Dion Akers, Steve Mahony, Mark Rowland, Bank Dawson, Suzanne Ledebouer, Dean Thomas, Rosanna Harrison.

Welcome and introductions

Minutes of January meeting: Morris moved for approval, Susan second, unanimously approved

Reports from Elective Officials:

Third District Councilman Todd Gloria – Representative Dion Akers passed out inaugural edition of the Councilman’s newsletter: “ District 3 Dialogue”. Mr. Akers briefly addressed the water shortage issue and the current status of the City’s water conservation effort: City departments have achieved nearly a 10% reduction from last year.

Mr. Akers has also spoken with Jim regarding bike paths and with Art on other issues. SDPD was commended for the reduction in crime rate achieved with fewer resources and budget support. Dion will get back to Conni Musser with an answer to her question regarding palm tree trimming.

Assembly Speaker Pro-tem Lori Saldana – Melanie Cohn, representative, passed out the Saldana Sun. There is little progress to report on the State budget negotiations to close the \$40 billion dollar deficit.

San Diego Police Department - Community Relations Officer Dean Thomas.

(dmthomas@pd.sandiego.gov, phone 619-516-3009), announced the start-up of a new program in the College Area, similar to a neighborhood patrol. The neighborhood awareness patrol is all-volunteer, with no expense to the City. The program will operate a neighborhood network structure modeled on the Talmadge patrol - focusing on problem areas. Officer Thomas is applying for a MetLife grant through the San Diego Police Foundation to help with funding, such as replacing the old “crime

Stopper” signs. The program can be brought to Normal Heights next, if there is interest. A community meeting is scheduled for Feb. 23rd 6:30 at the Rolando Library. Dean announced the removal of an informal BMX course off of Mountain View and Eugene Place was accomplished recently.

Update on Neighborhood and Mid-City Organizations

The neighbor-meeting-neighbor dinner is scheduled for Wednesday the 18th at 7:00 pm here in the Community Center. Pasta is on the menu with entertainment by Jim Earp. All community organizations have been invited.

Normal Heights Friends of the Canyons met with the Ellison place property owners about the proposed Mission Valley trail on Jan 24th. A range of issues were discussed including fire safety concerns and liability.

Information Items

1. Community Planning Committee
 - a) Jim noted that a continuing disagreement exists between the Planning Staff and the City Attorney’s office regarding the Indemnification Ordinance. Recent revisions generally favor the CPG board members. There is still a question whether the indemnity protection extends to non-board members, as when serving on a committee or other official capacity designated by a board president. In order to be covered by the IO, a member must have attended a Community Orientation Workshop. In the near future the COW Handbook will be available for review online. Jim asked planning staff about NHCPG’s COW attendance status and was told that we didn’t have a stellar record in that area.
 - b) The CPC decided on three priorities for the General Plan:
 - Community capital improvement plan updates
 - Addressing Climate change
 - Parks Master Plan update
 - c) Bylaws: we were advised to use the current form until final approval of the revised bylaws
2. Jim has grant application information from Caltrans
3. Holly reported on leash-free status at Ward Canyon Neighborhood Park: The Park and Recreation Council had given its verbal agreement to the leash-free plan. City staff – Deborah Jones, still in favor – said approval was a long process involving a \$5,000 deposit (by whom?) ultimately ending with a City Council decision. A committee has been formed to promote the plan. Contact Holly if interested in helping.
4. Mid-City Moves community bike ride: information as provided in the Agenda.
5. An Oil & Auto Waste collection event has been scheduled for Saturday morning Feb. 28 in Balboa Park.

Action Item – No projects.

Board Elections

Elections will be held next month to fill three current openings and possibly re-elect six members whose terms are due to expire:

- Jeff Parsons
- Richard Rios
- Holly Ritter
- Dino Serafini
- Earlene Thom
- Art Harrison

Secretary submitted a member attendance report: no members are currently in an adverse attendance status. Secretary also reported that only four potential general members are eligible to be elected to the Board, conditional upon submittal of a General Member application and attending the March meeting. Of these four, two individuals have indicated their willingness to serve on the Board.

Jim: Since there so few willing and eligible individuals, we might consider amending the Bylaws to loosen the eligibility requirements.

Art: If Bylaws are to be amended, we should consider other provisions that we might have issues with.

Discussion ensued over the eligibility requirements (completing a General Membership application) to be able to cast votes in Board elections. Even though it's in the Bylaws, the requirement has never been invoked to deny the vote to those in attendance. In the interest of remaining in compliance with Council Policy 600-24 and the Bylaws, applications will be available at the March meeting so individuals may establish their eligibility to vote *prior* to the elections as provided in the Bylaws.

Reduction of eligibility for Board membership could be a future agenda item and consider other Bylaw changes as might be appropriate.

City Heights PAC

Larry attended the last PAC meeting. Art withdrew his candidacy for NHCPG representative. Jim called for motion Art moved that Larry be named as the Normal Heights representative, Holly seconded; unanimously approved. Larry accepted the commission.

Committee Reports:

1. Housing – Nancy reported no meetings of Historic Preservation Coalition. Two properties were identified as warranting a further look but an investigation revealed no violations.

2. Community Needs – nothing to report
3. Transportation – Morris and Jim met with Dion Akers regarding bike corridors through the neighborhood. Morris asked Dion to check with Caltrans whether there has been any thought to address the dysfunctional configuration of the SR-15/Adams Ave south bound on & off ramp. Jim indicated that there may be an opportunity to make changes if the Adams Ave. transit station is the selected alternative for the SR-15 Centerline project.
4. Kevin Johnston announced the next meeting of Friends of the Canyon next Wednesday the 11th at 7:00 at Café Cabaret. Also extra flyers available to pass out for the Community Dinner on Feb. 18, no RSVP required.

New Business

Susan and Nancy attended the Code Enforcement training offered by the City - very interesting - brought back information flyers which include a particularly good diagram of examples of parking violations on private property and in the right of way. Nancy passed around a screen-shot of the Neighborhood Code Compliance website <http://www.sandiego.gov/nccd/> which provides a good overview of the department and noted further that there are fewer than 50 Code Enforcement officers city-wide. Other types of violations were discussed as well as priority of enforcement. Art stating the “broken window principle” and remarked that there are no violations that are not significant and that there can be no improvement without enforcement.

Jim offered to add anyone who so wished to be placed on his e-mail list for notification of other such training opportunities.

Art asked if the Group has any purview over Section 8 housing. Nancy believed that approval of such housing is under control of Housing and Urban Development and the San Diego Housing Commission. Morris agreed that those units were outside our range of review.

Next meeting is March 3rd in the Community Center

Adjourned at 7:20