

COMMUNITY
NORMAL HEIGHTS
PLANNING GROUP

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4649 Hawley Boulevard San Diego, CA. 92116

Meeting Minutes – 10/4/2016

Meeting Beginning Time. 6:00pm by Jim Baross

Board Attendance (x means “present”):

	Gary Weber	x	Nancy Lawler	x	Mark Lawler (in at 6:15)
x	Khalisa Bolling	x	Ralph Enriquez	x	Scott Kessler
x	Jim Baross	x	Ryan Zellers	x	Joseph Fombon (in at 6:07)
x	Caroline McKeown		Dan Soderberg		
x	Marianne Green	x	Earlene Thom	x	Adam Deutsch

Administration Items:

Modifications to Meeting Agenda:

No changes were proposed. However, the slides on the Community Plan should start around 7, or as late as possible.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the 9/6/2016 NHCPG meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. No comments were made in the meeting. Caroline moved to approve the minutes and Maryanne seconded. The approval was unanimous.

Treasurer’s Report:

Current balance is \$1929.74 to date. \$413 was raised through the sale of 9/21/16 pint glasses, and NH stickers at the Adams Ave. Street Fair, for a total of \$2342.74. The reported balance does not include optional funds we have yet to decide how to use that are provided from the city. Ryan moved to accept the report, Maryanne seconds, and everyone approved (Yeah!).

Information & Communication:

Reports from Government Representatives:

1. **Adriana Martinez, Todd Gloria's office:** Diligently attending both this meeting and Uptown Planners this month. She checked on sand piles at the end of 40th near Ward Canyon Park, and has contacted the Development Department, and is facilitating communications to clean those up, and to open up the parking again. The councilman's concern at the moment was that it wasn't permitted.

Also, issues regarding people who are homeless in the neighborhood: Todd Gloria's office is working hard on addressing the issue by trying to get the Housing First Project resources up and running. Homelessness isn't a crime, after all, so police can't do much in response to reports about people merely being present somewhere. The councilman is in touch with Jenny Hall of the SDPD about the issue too.

Todd Gloria is termed out of office, and Chris Ward ([@ChrisWardD3](#)) takes over on 12/12/16, and they are in the process of passing things over to him at the moment. Ward has been made aware and is informed on these issues in our neighborhood and community. We can reach out to him now if we'd like.

When asked if a population of homeless people is being "pushed" from downtown to other neighborhoods, Adriana explained that groups do move and shift on their own for various reasons, but the idea that people are being "pushed" is not true.

Ralph asked about street sweeping, and thinks that streets intersecting with El Cajon Blvd. needs cleaning more than every other month for cleaning (they're currently swept every other month, and don't have posted street sweeping signs). He would also like trash cans on the street for pedestrians to throw stuff away.

Adriana I staying for the iDog Park discussion.

2. **Scott for Adams Ave. Business Association:** Adams Ave. Street Fair was great, and other events are coming up, including the ["Spirit Stroll."](#) They're also cleaning up Adams Ave. after the population of homeless people that's been in the community recently.

Caroline received a complaint that said that the trash post-street fair was really bad for people going to their cars or homes off Adams. Scott replied that they clean up 2-blocks north and 2-block south of the Avenue.

3. **Adams Ave. Rec Council:** Dave Rodger reports that they sold baked goods, and raised close to \$500. Meanwhile, Movies in the Park have recently wrapped up, and a big Thank You to everyone for coming out!
4. **Naomi Siodmock, Planning Department:** Brought copies of the Community Plan for us to review and keep on file for when we discuss it in our meetings.

5. **Caroline for the Normal Heights Urban Art Council:** They have a meeting tomorrow evening at the Rec Center. They're discussing projects about painting murals on the street, on walls, and just about anywhere in the neighborhood.
6. **Friends of Normal Heights Canyon, Alberto:** the group is starting back up, and people are raising awareness with residents along that canyon, with the goal to protect the canyon, and create a trail for people to be able to walk and access that path.

Non-Agenda Public Comment:

7. Earlene: looking into having neighborhoods work together on common issues, and has a survey she'd like people to look at. If you want to participate, she's collecting names and email addresses from those who are interested.
8. Ralph: an update on Meade Bridge over 15. The planters are empty right now, and he got in touch with manager of Park and Rec, and those boxes will hopefully be repaired by January with ornamental pear trees.

Also, The Wilson Middle School remodel is something he's looked into. They're talking about a traffic light at 38th and ECB, but no crosswalk, and he's hoping we can follow up on that. Ryan says that if a signal is going in, there will be a crosswalk, and he might be doing the design.

Also, he's been in touch with Suzanne Ledebor about a 75/25 sidewalk sharing program in Normal Heights and would like to see a similar program again in the neighborhood. Wants to know if there is a way to pair this effort with Meade Bikeway project. Adriana informs us that the sidewalk sharing program is currently at 50/50, with the city paying for half of repair, and residents paying the other half. More information about that can be found at the [City's website](#).

9. Nancy Lawler: This Saturday, the 8th, from 12pm to 4pm there will be showers, food, haircuts, clothing, and hygiene kits provided for those who need them at the New Vision Fellowship Church.

Social Media Update from Caroline:

10. NHCPG Logo Pint Glasses were a huge hit at the Street Fair, and we took a list of people who want more, so perhaps we can order more, or make variations on them specifically to have them for anyone who wants.

Other issues that have come up will be covered today.

As for merchandise: we're all out of glasses, stickers, and everything we had to sell, so hopefully we'll think of items to restock with soon.

Discussion Items:

11. **Ryan on 92116 Day:** we got a bit more than we had originally ordered. The 11 cases we gave to businesses sold out in the first hour. John Winkler was a huge help, and we thank Rosie O'Grady's, Blind Lady Ale House, The Ould Sod, Bine

and Vine, and The Rabbit Hole for participating in the promotion! Scott adds that \$5K was raised for the Bewley Family.

12. **Scott** reports that the Post Office event was a success, too.

13. **Street Fair Update from Caroline:** Thank all the volunteers who showed up. Also, the tent was wonderful to provide shade and invite people to get interested in the neighborhood. There was a lot of anger and frustration about the portables in the Adams Ave. Elementary. School yard. The District said they'll be there for *only* 3 years; Scott confirmed that he heard about a similar timeline. Caroline spoke with the school about putting up information about what the project will look like upon completion to help explain to the community what's going on.

Dave Rodger also confirmed that information and reported that he gets notice and has meetings about it because of the joint use agreement the district has with the Rec Center. [The Adams Rec Council](#) meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the Rec. Center.

14. **iDog Park Updates:** #mulchgate2016: Marty Graham (who wrote about this in the [Reader](#) back in June) has done some investigation into the issue: She looked at the bark at the Miramar Greenery, and they said she didn't recognize the bark in our park as their own, and it's not tumbled and "dog friendly" stuff; she contacted Adriana, and Adriana is going to look into ways to fix it.

The Park and Rec. Department has been contacted, and they don't believe that there is a different bark, because Michelle Chicarelli ordered it personally.

We're reminded that this is a temporary Park, (hence the "i" in "iDog Park"). Adriana reminds us that the conversation and investigation is mostly happening because residents have been approaching City Hall and the council to address these issues. For the 2017 budget, more money has been requested for the larger, permanent Ward Canyon Dog Park. But the bark seems like it's going to stay for now.

There are council meetings and budget meetings people should attend. Dave from the Rec Council also hopes people will join their committee to make sure action is happening. Public meetings need to be attended, according to Adriana. Bob Keiser says that most people who use the iDog Park are from KenTal. Marianne mentions that perhaps soaking the wood would help. Caroline wonders if for a few hundred bucks we could grind the mulch to make it smaller. Marty felt that the city officials were defensive about it at the Rec Council Meeting, and it's helpful that city representatives are present here to inform the public and take comments.

15. **Meade Ave Bikeway Project:** Adam gave updates on communication with Danny Veeh, summarizing details that are outlined here in full. Danny wrote the following to Adam via email:

“At this point in time we have not revised the drawings that were presented at our open house meetings in May. It has taken SANDAG a bit longer to secure an engineering consultant and transition into the final design phase than we anticipated. As a public agency, we have to follow a procurement process when securing our consultants to ensure we are receiving the most qualified services at a fair and reasonable cost to deliver our project designs, and that process can take several months. We are nearing the end of this administrative process and we anticipate that we will be able to start getting back to work on the engineering soon. We want to have updated information to share when we return to the Community Planning Groups, and we plan to have the revised drawings by December. I’ve tried to address your questions below.”

This came in response to the following communication, where Danny Veeh also responded to questions, as marked:

Hello Danny,

I will certainly share with you any comments that come up in the meeting, and thank you for reaching out to those residents. However, beyond those two individuals, others in the community have concerns, which I wish SANDAG would review in the appropriate public forum.

Meanwhile, it is concerning that there is talk of a "final design" when there hasn't been any follow up or response to comments on the *initial* design. The concern is that a point-of-no-return is being reached without the level of input and dialogue that the community needs to understand what is going to be happening to their homes and public spaces. How *final* is the "final design," and what level of dialogue and modification will be possible at that point?

[Veeh, Danny] We define final design phase of the project as the advancement of design from 30%, to 60%, to 90%, and then 100%. What you saw at our open house meetings in May was at a 30% level of design. Based on the feedback that we received during that outreach effort and with future outreach activities we will be continually making changes and revisions as the project moves between each level of design as well as during the construction phase. We

need to conduct a more thorough analysis to answer many of the questions that people want to know especially in regards to parking and aesthetics. To do this we have to look at more finite details in regards to grading, drainage, utilities, landscaping and irrigation, traffic signals, right-of-way, and many more. We plan to develop new drawings in December that show how the 30% plan will be revised to move us toward 60%, and we plan to do outreach to ensure that the public and stakeholders are informed but we cannot start that outreach process until we have a better idea of the finite details I mentioned above, which we will be able to do after we complete the consultant procurement process and get back into the design details in the coming months. Then we will also be continuing the dialog as the project moves between each phase.

It's understandable that schedules are tight, but would you be able to send us a note about what steps are being taken to address the initial concerns that have been shared both at our meetings and at the public forums? Which traffic calming methods are being modified, added or removed? How have priorities shifted since getting the feedback? What new points of view are being considered? What impact are possible changes having on the cost of the project and/or the level of investment in the area between the 805 and the 15?

[Veeh, Danny] All throughout the project area we are looking at retaining as much on-street parking as possible through minor tweaks and design modifications. The priorities remain the same in that we want to provide a safe corridor for people of all abilities to ride bikes for everyday trips. We are looking at adding some traffic calming features and considering modifying some the design features slightly (such as the bend-outs) to both preserve more on-street parking and improve safety for people walking and biking. In terms of the level of investment, we want to add traffic calming in the areas that have the highest traffic speeds and volumes which are between 805 and 15. We have a contingency that can allow for some additional improvements or unforeseen conflicts without jeopardizing the overall budget. Again, it is difficult to list specifics at this point, but we will have more information to share in the coming months.

If answers to these questions cannot be provided, it would be helpful to know exactly why.

Thank you,

Adam Deutsch

(Thus concludes that email exchange.)

Caroline reminds the meeting that we sent a letter back in July, and they haven't returned to our meetings since that's been sent. Caroline thinks that they should be here, and the dialogue should be happening much more actively than it currently is.

Marty has met with SANDAG and other neighbors to discuss issue back in June, and they said that they'd follow up in September, which never happened yet. At any feedback that's been given, it seems that SANDAG takes the comments, but doesn't respond to them, which is giving residents anxiety. They never seem to follow up with constructive responses, and the concern is growing. Marty also reports that Kimley-Horn says they're the design consultant. The City's traffic calming manual doesn't seem to be applied to this project; Marty has asked them to honor that process, which mandates resident review and approval. Marty thinks we need to go above Danny Veeh with communications.

Another resident from Meade and Swift reports that those neighbors living on Swift claim to have gotten a response, and that SANDAG offered to give them head-in parking (which is actually something the City provides, not SANDAG). Those Residents voted against head-in parking, and SANDAG did not change their design at the actual corner of Meade and Swift, and the residents on Swift seem to be satisfied with that.

Ryan says that at 30% the project goes from one planning phase to a specific engineering/design phase. We should request that there has to be substantial community outreach in the scope of the Engineering Contract.

Alberto Foglin (resident) comments he'd like them to consider how the Netherlands plans these things.

A resident from 33rd asked about parking, and suggests less cars is better, and that residents should use their driveways and garages, but Jim cut that comment short. Marty chimed in to say that most houses on Meade don't actually have adequate parking for various historical reasons.

Jim reminds us that "there is no resolution that makes everyone happy."

Khalisa recalled that when they did the sewer project, the parking worked out just fine for her and her neighbors. She hopes that we can consider parking somewhere other than right in front of their house.

Bob Keiser had the exact opposite experience, and when he lost his space for construction for a few weeks, it was "horrendous" for those who might not have the physical capability to walk long distances from a space to their homes.

Adam asked Naomi Siodmok if the project would be compared to the Community Plan by the Planning Department, and some sort of review process might be part of it, and there seems to be a process to hold projects like this up for review against the Community Plan, but it's complicated.

Ralph asked about specific details on lights, but those are all up in the air.

Caroline is totally neutral on the project, but wants to make sure that we facilitate discussion. She reports that one neighbor said the bike plan is for high-speed biking, rather than for, say, children, to be able to bike along that road down to the Y.

Jim says that's not true: he outlined a number of different plan possibilities. He points out that there's too much car traffic to choke Meade that much, so we're considering the smaller bike lanes and traffic calming. He says the intent is not to speed up bike traffic, but to promote safe biking by more people along the corridor.

Nobody from SANDAG was present to be part of the ongoing dialogue about this project, but we hope they'll attend future meetings and discussions.

Action:

16. We have a vacancy on the board. Eligible people have been contacted by the Secretary to fill the position. Alberto Foglin, Bill Conway, Dave Rodger, and Marty Graham all expressed interest, and are present. Jim asked them to speak to introduce themselves. Marty withdrew and put support behind Alberto. Dave also backed out, and endorsed Alberto.

This is filling a seat that is up for reelection in March 2017.

Alberto lives around 34th and Monroe, and has lived here for a couple of years. His interest is to help the community, and is interested in bikeways and parks, and doing the good work. He's especially interested in the River Canyon trail. He does GIS and is an archeologist. Marianne is curious if he has knowledge of CEQA.

Bill has lived on Felton and Adams for about 5 years. Used to be in real estate, and is now a handyman and sculptor. He has knowledge of land issues and has worked on multiple sides of them. He's been a speech writer, and journalist, but most recently he's been an observant rather than a participant. He's starting to work with a group working on housing, and would like to be on the board because he has "experience, interest, and would like to be here."

Jim asked Naomi about election details. She clarifies that we have a board vote, either by hand or ballots.

Caroline asked about who their constituents are. Bill says his are renters, who are in a transitional time in the neighborhood. Based on that, Alberto withdraws his candidacy.

Ryan makes motion to have Bill on the board; Joseph seconds that. The vote is unanimous.

Discussion:

17. **“Normal Heights Community Plan Unwrapped” by Marianne:** Marianne introduced her presentation, explaining that the main concern driving this “review” of the Community Plan is that the County recently made changes to how developers can take advantage of housing density bonuses if they build low-income housing within a certain distance of their primary project, rather than actually *in* a development they’re working on (more details can be [found here](#)). Because Normal Heights falls within a mile to some areas that are under heavy development at the moment, Marianne wants to look at our plan. She is “not opposed to low-income housing,” but would like our community plan to address the new developer guidelines so a disproportionate number of substandard housing isn’t created in Normal Heights, like what happened in the 1970s, when Huffmans were installed all over the areas south of Adams.

Over the course of the presentation, Marianne suggested that maybe Normal Heights might extend down past ECB, south to where the 15 and 805 join. It was pointed out that the last updates we had reduced density both residentially and commercially. Other ideas mentioned include putting a limit on the types of design people could do when renovating their homes and fencing.

Committee & Ad Hoc Group Reports:

18. Community Planning Committee: Jim went to the 50th Anniversary, and got a high-five from the mayor.

19. Properties reviewed for historical significance - **3216 Copley Avenue, 4968 35th Street, 4784 34th Street, 3574 Sydney Place, 3625 -3627 Alexia Place (multiple structures)**. None were deemed historical.

20. Project Review Committee – (none received at this time)

Adjourned at 8:10pm

The Next Meeting is 11/1/16.

Anticipated/Requested Future Agenda Items

Agenda order and timing are approximate and subject to change. This information is available in alternative formats (sign language, oral interpreter, and/or Assistive Listening Device). To request an alternative format, call 619-533-3650 at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting. If you have questions concerning the NHCPG, please express them at the meeting or contact the NHCPG Chair, Jim Baross, at

jimbaross@cox.net or 619-280-6908, or the City of San Diego Associate Planner, Bobby Mordenti at BMordenti@sandiego.gov or 619-446-5064.

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