



NORMAL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP
4649 Hawley Boulevard San Diego, CA. 92116

Meeting Minutes – June 12th, 2018

Board Attendance (x means “present”):

X	Gary Weber (C)	X	Linda Case	X	Mark Lawler
	Vacancy	X	Ralph Enriquez (VC)		Scott Kessler
X	Jim Baross		Alison Flynn (in at 6:29)	X	Marty Graham
X	Caroline McKeown (T)	X	Dan Soderberg (in at 6:12)	X	Michael Chandler
X	Rose Kelly	X	Thomas Lovell	X	Adam Deutsch (S)

C=Chair; VC= Vice Chair; T= Treasurer; S=Secretary

Administration Items

6:00 Call to Order - Start of NHCPG Meeting

1. Introduction of planning group members.
2. Agenda Modifications/Setting *(Note that items may be addressed out of Agenda’s order)*.
3. Approval of previous meeting minutes – Adam D. M/S: Jim/Linda. All Approved.
4. Treasurer’s Report – Caroline M. \$2341.71, which doesn’t include \$500 for operating expenses. This year, in response to a vote in May, we’re using the \$500 operational expense for an AV system for this meeting.

Public Comment

5. Non-agenda public comment may be limited to two minutes per person:
 - a. Jim commented that SDPD was here, but couldn't stay, and they talked about the fatal crash at Adams and Cherokee last week. He suggests might need to do more to calm traffic on the Ave.

Reports

6. Government Representatives
 - a. None were in attendance.
7. Community Groups
 - a. **Adams Avenue Business Association:** Art Along Adams was, by all accounts, a huge success, having more attendance than previous years. The Adams Ave. Street Fair is currently being planned.
 - b. **Adams Avenue Rec. Council:** A quorum wasn't present, so there was no meeting. They've been letting the grass die in preparation for installing new desert-scape.
 - c. **NH Urban Arts:** Chris Ward's office paid for the new mural on the Adams Ave.

Rec Center. They might also fund a mural on the West side of the building. Norma also reported that utility boxes will be repainted soon, with more submissions than boxes we have to paint. Those should be done before the street fair.

- d. **El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association:** Ralph reported a recent event focused on development on the Blvd, featuring comments from Assemblymember Todd Gloria, Councilmembers Ward and Gomez, and a panel discussion with a number of community participants, focused on the possibilities for growth on El Cajon Blvd, community improvement, and vision for the transit corridor. The event was the first in a 3 part series.
8. **Social Media** & other communications, Adam & Caroline: lots of posts and conversation about Adams Ave. Books closing, and the fatal accident on Adams Ave. and Cherokee.
9. **Naomi Siodmok from the Planning Department:** Announcement: "We are holding workshops for the Parks Master Plan," to which Gary asks "Who is 'we'?" and the answer is the City of San Diego Parks Planners (Planning Dept, Parks and Rec, etc.). Timelines and information are at <https://cityofsandiegoparksplan.com/en>

The board is curious about zoning on El Cajon Blvd. We want details about the zoning, and the density that's permitted, and Naomi says Development Services can answer bigger questions about Zoning. Naomi suggested we can't change zoning until we have a Community Plan revision, but Adam summarized a detailed exchange he's had with Naomi recently, boiling down to how The Communities Plan doesn't need to change to address conflicts with zoning in the municipal code; in short, the municipal code doesn't accurately reflect the Communities Plan for El Cajon Blvd, and those conflicts should be corrected in the code, not the plan.

Rose doesn't want a storage unit in Normal Heights (under construction at 3350 El Cajon Blvd.) to be used for North Park's boom.

Ralph asked about how to change the municipal code to speak to our existing plan.

Naomi suggested we can use our own money to get studies done on our zones. Also, though there are certain limits on development, our Communities Plan allows for variances depending on Planning Group approval.

Gary wants to know if someone in Development Services can make it to our meeting. We're a community trying to get higher density, and one might suspect that someone in the city would be interested in that desire. Caroline wants to know the process by which we might review and approve projects, so we can make it know, and attract developers. There are exceptions, but Naomi has to check on that process.

Caroline asked how we can let developers know that we are a community that will embrace density along the transit corridor and that we are a planning group that will approve variances for mixed-use high-density transit oriented development along the boulevard. Ralph noted that he would mention it on the boulevard developers tour but we want to do something now before our long-awaited plan update.

Naomi will contact us with how to get notices about applications for development in the area.

Chair Report

10. Proposed July 3rd Meeting Format: Do we want to take the sign-in sheets from the special meeting, and make break-out groups? Each group would have a Board Member facilitator to focus on the conversation, then report out. The board seems to like that idea.

Caroline reported about those who showed interests in various projects at the May 22nd special meeting.

We can get pizza, and have the 3 highest groups meet at that meeting.

There's also a \$5000 grant program to look into.

Action Items

11. **Filling vacancy seat on the NHCPG board:** Those in attendance who were qualified to fill the seat were asked if they were interested. Zephen Specht was the only interested person, and gave a bit of their background. **M/S: Ralph/Linda** to elect him to the board. **Vote was unanimous.**

12. **Define a process for addressing the topics of interest as reflected in the sign up results from the May 22nd meeting:**

Caroline reviewed the items that have the most interest. **M/S:Caroline/Michael:** to have the meeting in the break-out format previously discussed, and provide pizza, with an adjusted agenda for Action Items and Government Rep reports. **Vote was Unanimous, Alison abstained since she missed the conversation.**

13. **40th and ECB Parcel disposition:** We sent letters of our resolution to city officials in Nov. and January, with no response. Now, the City Heights CDC is looking to take that parcel over for 100% affordable housing. Ralph wants a new resolution that renews our interest, and to make that parcel a mixed-use development. **M/S:Ralph/Jim:** To send a new resolution about our desire for mixed-use with ground-level commercial space and the use for the site to include affordable and market housing, referencing our previous communications, which we will draft.

Vote was unanimous.

14. **Traffic in high-accident locations (committee can deal with at next meeting), & Meade Ave.:** Immediate issue is the status of the Georgia-Meade Bikeways. The frustration remains that SANDAG is doing something *to* us, not *with* us. We still want clear itemized costs for various elements, that they haven't provided yet. Gary motioned to "Communicate our desire for the cost of items in the project, and communicate with planning group and residents on the street," but that wasn't seconded, leading to variations and more discussion.

Marty raised points about how SANDAG and the city are not following the city's own traffic calming manual, which includes communicating with residents impacted by projects. **M/S:Ralph/Jim: We would like the city to follow the established traffic calming measures and poll the residents on the corners with proposed traffic circles.** The letter was approved, and sent.

Marty specifically voiced that she recuses herself from any vote on this matter, then expressed that residents on Meade support bike lanes, but the traffic circles are a point of contention, and Bike SD stated in SANDAG comments about how dangerous merges are between bikes and cars on streets. Some residents who would be impacted by this project have moved (presumably before their ability to park and their property values are impacted), and others are concerned.

Jim joined the conversation, stating his expertise on bicycle transportation, and reviewed the opportunities SANDAG has offered. Jim also wants to ask them where they're at now.

Gary and Jim debated how money is/could be spent in the community, and Gary just wants to know the details, and talk about options with the money considered.

Caroline feels like we've been ignored on this conversation in the steps so far, and this motion might be futile.

Thomas is in favor of anything that slows cars down, as he feels unsafe at times while walking his dog.

Alison expressed concern about how they haven't responded to other traffic calming measures on other projects, like the island-y obstructions on Madison in North Park; Jim clarified that those aren't circles. Caroline suggests that while those aren't circular, they rise up from the ground at the same height as the traffic circles, and both structures have nothing being constructed within them: the similarity is one of aesthetics and construction. Jim repeated asked Caroline if she knows what a circle is, to which Caroline McKeown, Ph.D. in Molecular Biology, replied that she does, in fact, know what a circle is.

Marty again expressed concern that residents, especially those on the corners where traffic circles are proposed, have, and that they should be in communication with SANDAG, according to city rules. Jim then asked, if Marty recused herself, then why was she still in the conversation, and Michael clarified that she recused herself from a vote, but not the conversation. Jim suggested she should be recused because she has a financial stake in the project as a home owner on Meade; Marty suggested Jim might recuse himself from the conversation, as he was a consultant on the SANDAG project and an active bike advocate. Jim said he does not have a financial stake in this project, and that he can see where

homeowners on corners getting traffic circles would lose some value. Marty told Jim that SANDAG says her house will not be affected and she believes them. Marty also introduced neighbors Jeff Hamblin (34th St.) and Denise Arneson (38th) who came in support but did not speak.

The city has suspended Maintenance Assessment Districts recently, so we couldn't get one at the moment if we wanted to have them landscaped proposed traffic circles.

Ralph called for a **Vote: All yes, Marty is abstaining because she lives there, and Michael is abstaining because he has no idea what the hell is going on with this.** (After all, it's been a long and convoluted process considering how little input and dialogue we've had with SANDAG about the main artery in our neighborhood.)

M/S:Jim/Caroline: Ask SANDAG to bring their plans to date to us. Ralph called for a vote: All approved.

15. **Parks Master Plan:** Naomi is not an expert and cannot speak to the plan in detail at this time. Jim was at a CPC Meeting with the consultant firm on the project, and he thinks that we need to get our voices into this conversation. Gary wants to make our own Parks Master Plan for NH in the next 6 months. Jim encourages we take their online survey (<https://publicinput.com/SDparks>), and express that we want more stuff and are angry in this 'hood. Jim suggests we apply for that \$5000 grant to get a landscape expert to make a plan for us.

M/S:Jim/Thomas: Ask the AABA to apply for a grant/funding source for us to get a landscape architect to help us create our own Normal Heights Parks plan. **Vote: all in favor, except Caroline who abstained because she is familiar with this particular granting agency and does not think this project would be eligible.** We modified to change "the grant" to "a funding source."

16. **Adams Elementary Joint Use action:** Gary wants them to buy more land to put for use by the school. We'll give that to the Parks committee at the July 3rd. Gary's gonna push for it anyway, on his own. There's been no progress or communication from San Diego Unified School District about removing construction equipment from the Joint Use Park on School Street.

Marty wants the city auditor or grand jury to investigate the process for Joint Use agreements in the area. Ralph hears that the grand jury seems to have time to do that, and Jim asks if Marty wants to draft a request. She's willing to share contact information for people to use to make requests. Jim also thinks that our plans should be shared with the CPC.

No motion necessary.

17. **Joint NHCPG/NHCA handout:** Ralph gave background on this project. A quick brochure that gives a page the Cover, AABA/ECB, NHCA, NHCPG, Rec Council, and Broader City Resources. No vote was taken.

Information Items

18. Historical Review: Nothing doing at the properties that were reviewed (4656 34th St., 3531-3539 Adams Ave., 3554 Sydney Pl., 3314 Collier Ave., 3841 Madison Ave.)

Discussion Items

19. **Normal Heights History:** If you have any old photos of Normal Heights (homes, sites, events, etc.) please send those to Normalheightshistory@gmail.com, to help with historic review and general neighborhood knowledge and history.
20. **Gateway Markers:** Gary wants to make sure that when people are looking at the new water/cell Tower on Meade, that Normal Heights is included so that the community is represented on our own boarder.

7:50pm Adjournment

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 Vice Chair, Ralph Enriquez, at enriquez.ralph@gmail.com or 619- 471-4597, or the City of San Diego Associate Planner, Naomi Siodmok at NSiodmok@sandiego.gov or 619-446-5064.

Past Agendas and Minutes are available at

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/normalheights/agendas.shtml>

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