

Clairemont Community Planning Group

Minutes of the Meeting of
February 18, 2025
Meeting Held at the Cathy Hopper Clairemont Friendship Center
4425 Bannock Ave, San Diego, CA 92117

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| P Matt Wang - Chair P Ian Grooms - Vice Chair P Marc Mytels - Secretary P Tarah Griep Bearbower - Secretary | P Glen Schmidt P Steven Palmer | P Suzanne Smith A Drew Lambert | A Paige Walker A Monte Carroll |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

P – Present A – Absent L-Late

Item 1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Matt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call was taken to determine if a quorum was present. Quorum was established with 7/10 members present.

Item 2. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Issues that are not on the agenda and are within the jurisdiction of the Clairemont Community Planning Group. **NOTE:** 2-minute time limit per speaker.

Public:

- Michael Dwyer: trash collection will proceed as normally scheduled in spite of holiday; proposed trash fee is set at \$500 per year per parcel, set to start in November 2025. Open houses to discuss trash fee proposals are currently being held. More info may be found at cleangreensd.org.
- Max from the office of Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe: 30 Beds are available in Paradise Valley Hospital to help Homeless people with psychiatric conditions. Additional services to steer homeless people to the services they need are available. Two million dollars in grant money is available for community-based organizations; recently the Clairemont Town Council received grant money for public art in Clairemont.
- Mary Engles representing a group of her neighbors: Concerned about the proposed 7-story apartment building at 4220 Balboa Ave. Concerns included fire safety, traffic and ability to get information about the developer.

Item 3. Modifications to the Agenda – Requires 2/3 approval.

- None

Item 4. Reports to Committee

- **Chairperson: Matt**
 - o Publicly thanked Ian and CCPG members for help running January meeting during his paternity leave
- **Clairemont Town Council (CTC): Ian**
 - o SD Blood Bank location in Clairemont, Met City Auditor who discussed his office's operations
- **Vice Chair: Ian**
 - o Encourages City of San Diego to proceed with project #1681, a fully funded road repair and safety project
 - o Thanked Glen for the productive PRS meeting held the previous week
- **Secretary: Tarah/Marc**
 - o (Marc) No Report

- o (Tarah) Announced she will no be seeking another term on the CCPG board
- **Treasurer: Tarah**
 - o Announced she will no be seeking another term on the CCPG board
- **Project Review Subcommittee (PRS): Glen**
 - o The PRS met on Feb 12th and discussed the proposal at 3417 Idlewild way
 - o Next meeting will take place March 12th to discuss easement vacations for the property at 4220 Balboa Ave
- **Sgt. at Arms: Suzanne**
 - o No report
- **Social Media: Marc**
 - o No report

Item 5. Consideration of Meeting Minutes from January 2025 CCPG meeting:

- o Approved: Glen, Ian, Marc, Suzanne and Tarah Abstained: Matt and Steven

Item 6. Council Representative Reports

District 2 Council Report, Carrie Munson, Community Liaison, cmunson@sanidiego.gov

- o SeaWorld fireworks have been drawing noise and environmental concerns. Councilmember Campbell supports reducing the number of firework events but not curtailing them entirely.
- o SeaWorld lawsuit regarding employee pay during COVID has been settled; 8 million dollars will go to the Mission Bay Park committee for Mission Bay improvements (playgrounds, etc.)
- o Mission Bay Float Festival was an unpermitted event; the organizers were fined \$54k
- o Next CTC meeting will discuss smart development in Clairemont, which will include discussions on ADUs
- o CTC meets the first Thursday of each month at the Cathy Hopper Center
- o Clairemont turns 75 years old in October; events will take place in the Clairemont Town Square
- o Clairemont Family Day event will be canceled to make way for the Clairemont 75th anniversary event
- o The opening of the Messina building of the new Mt Etna complex has been delayed, which has caused hardships for several prospective residents. The issues causing the delay have been resolved and the residents are now allowed to move into the building.
- o The proposal to rename the North Clairemont Rec Center is proceeding with a discussion with Mayor Gloria.
- o Questions included:
 - Moratorium on ADU construction stemming from the Encanto neighborhood's Footnote 7 lawsuit
 - A grant for public art grant was awarded for a mural on Balboa Ave near the IHOP restaurant, and for another mural near the Clairemont Trolley station

City of San Diego Planning Department Update, Sean McGee, City of San Diego, SMcGee@sanidiego.gov

- o Sean not present

District City of San Diego Mayor's Office Neighborhood Representative Report, Randy Reyes, Clairemont Community Liaison, RandyReyes@sanidiego.gov

- o Randy not present

City of San Diego Planning Department Update, Megan Covarrubias, City of San Diego, MECovarrubia@sanidiego.gov

- Megan not present

Item 7. Consent Agenda

- None

Item 8. Action Items

- **801: Home Construction at 4317 Idlewild Way**
 - This item was presented to the previous PRS meeting as proposal PRJ-1094438
 - Mr. Chandra presented his proposal to build two single family homes, each home on its own lot. Each home would include an ADU.
 - The project is located inside the northern end of Stevenson Canyon.
 - Detailed maps and renderings of the proposed homes were presented, including an animated sequence detailing travel alongside the proposed homes.
 - Efforts to minimize grading to meet City codes were enacted.
 - Both lots are greater than one acre in size in accordance with City codes
 - Most of the land (9+ acres) associated with the project will not be included in the homes' parcels and will be set aside for open space.
 - Each parcel will have 5 parking spaces and there will be 4 additional guest parking spaces
 - No gate at the entrance to the easement on Idlewild Way will be in place. The circuit boxes maintained by AT&T will remain in place but may be removed in the foreseeable future.
 - Limited public access to Stevenson canyon is available from several locations
 - No significant wildlife was observed during studies of the proposed construction sites.
 - A sewer line easement will be maintained and City personnel will be granted access.
 - Questions and concerns included:
 - Project does not meet guidance specified by the Clairemont Community plan including the preservation of canyonlands
 - A large portion of Clairemont's limited canyonland resources will be destroyed for only 2 homes
 - Public access to Stevenson canyon is dangerous and difficult in the areas not impacted by this proposal; proposal will effectively cut off public access to Stevenson canyon.
 - Overall the proposal is a nice proposal but the location is the source of concern
 - Stevenson Canyon is mentioned 11 times in the Clairemont Community Plan; its importance is comparable to Marian Bear Park and Tecolote Canyon.
 - Biological study did not adequately address the project; study was primarily a geological study
 - Plans presented to the CCPG might not reflect the current state of the project
 - A large fire will provide additional material to burn if more houses are in the area; a canyon operates as a natural fire break.
 - Steep slope of the access road connecting to Idlewild way. This road will be the only access for residents and poses a fire danger.
 - A proposed guest house is not placed in an appropriate location
 - Flooding concerns especially with climate change in mind
 - Narrow access road with a potentially high volume of traffic could be a fire danger and traffic accident danger
 - Rules regarding trespassing vs. public access to the canyon are ambiguous; a fence across the canyon was depicted in a map presented to the CCPG.
 - No promise to allow access for pedestrians to the canyon was clearly given

- Impact to wildlife by construction activities, followed my loss of habitat due to paving, lighting and noise
- Large mature trees will need to be removed; a high price to pay for only 2 homes.
- Proposed drainage infrastructure appears to be inadequate in a large flood as experienced by recent rains
- A two part motion was made to deny the proposal for construction of 2 single family homes in Stevenson Canyon at 4317 Idlewild Way, due to many concerns. The motion reads as following:
 - Part 1
 - Deny the project as presented (plans dated 8/01/24)
 - The denial is based on a lack of complete information such as the final site plan, clearing staff cycle comments, and environmental review including an updated biological report for the entire project and its impacts. The denial is also based on anticipated significant impacts to the neighborhood character, fire hazards, biological resources, and steep slopes (environmentally sensitive lands).
 - The project is in conflict with current Brush Management fire hazard reduction standards, as well as is non-compliant with several sections within the Clairmont Community Plan (CCP) including:
 - Primary Goals for Open Space and Environmental Resources (CCP pages 13 and 95)
 - Urban Design (CCP page 17)
 - Hillside Review Overlay Zone (CCP Figure 9, page 30)
 - Recommendations for Hillside Development (CCP, page 31, CCP Figure 10, page 21)
 - Recommendations for Companion Units and Guest Quarters (CCP, page 33)
 - Open Space (CCP, Page 99)
 - Biological Resources (CCP, Page 103)
 - Community Plan Map (CCP Figure 40, Page 149)
 - The applicant is welcome to return to the Clairemont Community Planning Group if modifications are made and more information becomes available.
 - Part 2
 - If the project is allowed to move forward, the CCPG requests the following 10 conditions/revisions:
 - Condition 1:
Comply with City's Steep Hillside Guidelines within Environmentally sensitive Lands (ESL). The subject project is shown within Hillside Review in the Clairemont Community Plan (CCP Figure 9 page 30).
 - Condition 2:
Move development away from the western property line and establish adequate brush management zones throughout the development, per landscape code.
 - Condition 3:
Reduce the number of units, and/or combine with duplex structures, if allowed, and cluster more effectively to reduce project footprint and impact to this portion of Stevenson Canyon.
 - Condition 4:

Remove the Guesthouse that creates excessive site disturbance and spans a portion of drainage subject to California Department of Fish and Game (CDFW) Jurisdictional Streambed and Banks, and City Jurisdictional Wetlands, including Southern Willow Scrub. The building would also significantly impact Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat. The Guesthouse includes a bedroom, kitchen, living room, and restroom. It is a fifth unit and should be removed.

- Condition 5:
 - Modify grading to blend with existing contours utilizing “landform grading” techniques with variable slope, and less “engineered” 2:1 slopes that do not align with natural slope aspect. Reduce retaining wall heights to 5 ft or less. Reduce or eliminate the large slope shown at the southeast portion of the project.
- Condition 6:

Prepare a comprehensive environmental review, including updated biological report that evaluates the impacts of the entire project.
- Condition 7

Mitigate for the disturbance of approximately 1.12-acres of CDFW Jurisdictional Streambed and Banks, and City Jurisdictional Wetlands on site, including Southern Willow Scrub habitat and disturbance to a portion of 1.6-acres of Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (see LSA biological resources report dated August 6, 2019). The CCPG requests that this mitigation occurs within Stevenson Canyon / Rose Creek Watershed, if possible.
- Condition 8

Grant conservation open space easement over the parcel 359-420-04 as proposed by the applicant. Expand this easement to include the area where the Guesthouse is currently proposed.
- Condition 9

To allow the community to continue to enjoy hiking in Stevenson Canyon, grant a recreational use easement for a pedestrian trail and unimpeded public access from the Idlewild Way alley through parcels 359-420-03 and 359-420-04 connecting to the existing trail in Stevenson Canyon.
- Condition 10

Add additional San Diego Native Plant material to the plant palette, hydroseed mix, and tree species (consider Coast Live Oaks for native tree canopy).

 - Motion to approve the denial (detailed above) of the proposal at 4317 Idlewild Way was approved by all members in attendance.

Item 9. Information Items 1:13:01

- **901: PureWater Update**
 - Natalie Rios and her team presented
 - 6.9 miles of pipe in South Clairemont have recently been completed
 - Construction takes place between 7:00 AM and 4:40 PM. At night welding takes place underground.

- Some water shutdowns will be necessary near Joplin Drive. Timing of shutdown will be done to not impact school schedules.
- Work will be done at night at pipelines near Clairemont Drive & Clairemont Mesa Bl. Work will take place between 9:00 PM and 6:00 AM to minimize impact to traffic.
- Work on Morena Bl & W. Morena expected to be reached my March
- Detailed photos presented showing the massive scale of the pipes being laid in 14 to 16 foot trenches
- Challenges due to groundwater have been encountered
- Repaved roads will include bike lanes. Repaving has been delayed due to weather.
- Curb ramp work requires that some corners be closed at any given time
- Clairemont Drive between Iroquois and Balboa will have new bike lanes separated by a floating row of parked cars (similar to West Point Loma Bl.). Expected completion sometime in March.
- Entire project is anticipated to be completed by end of 2025
- Street Parking will be available along Clairemont Drive in the residential areas.
- Challenges have been encountered working around underground electric utilities; home hand-digging has been needed causing delays.
- Pedestrian access on all streets will not be affected.
- Odors are not expected to be an issue near areas with vents

Item 10. Workshop Items

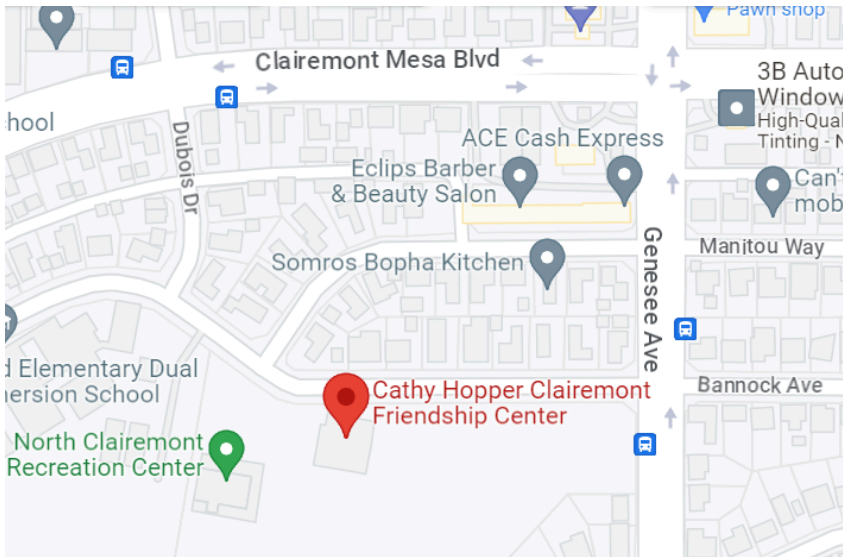
- **1001: Candidates' Forum**

- The following candidates introduced themselves
 - Eve Marcus
 - Has been a resident and homeowner in Clairemont for about a year
 - Works as a researcher at Scripps Oceanography; interested in environmental issues and supporting the many small businesses in Clairemont
 - Has attended several CCPG meetings
 - Grew up in El Cajon and has lived in Irvine
 - Michael Hernandez
 - Recent UCSD graduate, grew up in Riverside, has spent much of his life in Clairemont. Has held leadership positions in both his high school and college organizations. Interested in protecting Clairemont's assets and preserve it for the future
 - Works as a reporter, plays guitar and is an avid writer
 - Eric Leftwich
 - Is a father, a Clairemont homeowner and an engineer
 - Interested in learning how projects come to fruition and how he can help by adding his expertise.
 - Marc Mytels
 - Has been a board member and secretary for the past two years
 - Has lived in various parts of California and has been a resident and homeowner in Clairemont since 2018
 - Would like to continue to offer his knowledge acquired from being a longtime California resident.
 - Suzanne Smith

- Has been a CCPG board member for the past 2 years
- Lifelong Clairemont resident and had raised her kids in Clairemont
- Would like to continue learning from board members and neighbors about how projects come to fruition and offer her expertise.

Adjournment at 8:00 PM

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday March 18, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Cathy Hopper Clairemont Friendship Center, 4425 Bannock Ave, San Diego, CA 92117. (<https://goo.gl/maps/jkb4sftrQ1jm9oQj6>)



Note: Location subject to change, please see the meeting agenda for finalized location