

Normal Heights Community Planning Group

APPROVED MINUTES

August 5, 2014, 6:00 P.M.

Normal Heights Community Center

Meeting called to order at 6:03 P.M.

Board Members present: Jean-Louis Coquereau, Joseph Fombon, Marianne Green, John Hartley, Scott Kessler, Joe Kissell, Phil Kramer, Mark Lawler, Nancy Lawler, Suzanne Ledebor, Caroline McKeown, Mark Rowland, Dan Soderberg (arrived at 6:08), Gary Weber, Ryan Zellers

Community Members/Guests: Jim Baross, Mary Beth Chruden, Bill Conway, Tony Cruz, Toni Duran, Katelyn Hailey, Steven Horman, Phillip Kramer, Adriana Martinez

Welcome and Introductions

- The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Caroline McKeown.

Modifications to Meeting Agenda

- Caroline stated that the city planner has requested that we postpone agenda item 8 (“Young Residence”) until next month because the city development office has not yet had a chance to make comments on the project. Mark Rowland said that the NHCPG previously had a projects review subcommittee (separate from the Historical Review subcommittee) to deal with zoning variances such as this one, and proposed that the subcommittee be reconstituted. (Mark is the only member of the former subcommittee still on the committee; Jim Baross, Mark Harrison, and Bob Forsyth were also members.) Marianne and Jim volunteered to join Mark on the subcommittee. The subcommittee will meet, if required, a half hour before the regular NHCPG monthly meetings. The applicant should appear at the next meeting (at 5:30 on September 2, 2014) to present the project to the subcommittee.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- The minutes of both the June 2014 and July 2014 NHCPG meetings were distributed prior to the meeting. The June minutes were not approved at the July meeting due to a misunderstanding. Marianne Green moved to approve the June minutes with no modifications. Mark Rowland seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Marianne moved to approve the July minutes, modified to indicate that board members Mark and Nancy Lawler had been in attendance, and Jean-Louis Coquereau seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report

- Mark Rowland, Treasurer, stated that the group’s funds had been transferred to the Normal Heights CDC, as previously agreed. There has been no action since.

Non-agenda Public Comments

- Jim Baross brought flyers about “Sharrows” (shared lane pavement markings) and explained these to the group.

- Gary Weber brought up deficiency in park space. He wanted to know when or how the committee will address this. Caroline stated that it will be on September's agenda. Mark suggested holding a Saturday workshop. Gary is in favor but doesn't want to be in charge of setting it up.
- Gary also brought up a question about boundaries between communities (Normal Heights, North Park, University Heights, etc.). There are people who feel very strongly about boundaries but disagree with each other, so perhaps this should be a topic of discussion in the future.
- John reminded the group about a workshop on August 23, 2014 about protecting neighborhoods against inappropriate development.
- John also brought up plans for the site on which the Community Center is located, specifically potential park space. He's concerned that the community will have too little input. Caroline replied that public meetings were scheduled but the project was put on hold for unclear reasons. John would like to discuss this before the project gets to public meetings. Scott says plans are still in progress and future meetings are anticipated.
- Caroline stated that Joseph has now finished his agreed three-month term as interim secretary and that Joe Kissell has volunteered to take over the position of secretary for the remainder of the term. Suzanne Ledeboer moved to appoint Joe as secretary through March 2015, and Marianne Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Government Representatives and Community Groups

- **Katelyn Hailey, from State Senator Marty Block's office:** August 22 is the deadline to amend bills in the legislature. The last date to vote on bills in August 31. So there's a lot of last-minute activity, including sneaky amendments. If you have any concerns, contact Senator Block's office. Tomorrow (August 6), SB 850 (community colleges), SB 911 (residential care facilities for the elderly), and SB 1395 (rapid testing for water quality at beaches) will go before the appropriations committee. No major opposition to those bills is expected.
- **Adriana Martinez, from the office of city council president Todd Gloria:** City government is on legislative recess for the month of August, so this is a good time to submit service requests. An ordinance was passed to raise the minimum wage. The mayor's office is expected to veto it; city council will probably override the veto. A referendum may follow. Tree trimming contracts have been approved and more trimming will happen soon; submit additional requests soon. Street sweeping time changes voted on last month should come into effect later this month. Jean-Louis asked about the replacement of the recently resigned planning director. A nationwide search will be conducted. Mark asked about a hotel room tax before the courts that would finance the new convention center. Andrea didn't know where that proposal was going.
- **Michael Prinz, from the city planning department:** Michael spoke further about the resignation of planning director Bill Fulton. Departmental staff comes to planning meetings once a quarter unless there's other activity. Mark expressed concerns about the limited amount of information NHCPG has received in relation to the zoning variance request for the Young residence. Michael said that more details will be forthcoming after the city is further along in the review process. Property owner Bill Neff provided further information about the project status. If sufficient information is not available prior to the September NHCPG meeting, the discussion will have to be postponed until October. Jim Baross checked to see whether planning information is being sent to the right contact person. John asked for details about the adopted Mid-Cities Community Plan. Caroline will send everyone a link to the plan. Marianne asked when the plan

will next be updated. Michael was uncertain of the timing, but said that it ranks fairly high; an answer should be available within a few months.

- **Toni Duran, from CA Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins' office:** Legislative recess has just ended, and bills can be pushed through until the end of the month. Toni spoke about new bills signed into law, including AB 1623 (domestic violence survivors), AB 2149 (public safety), AB 1963 (preserving local assets). July was LGBT Pride month. Speaker Atkins was grand marshal for the Pride Parade. She was also acting governor on July 30, and was in San Diego that day. The Speaker's office of member services began public office hours. Joseph asked how long Speaker Atkins has left in office before terming out. The answer was two more years.

Action Items

- **805 Overpass Belvedere/Parklet Proposal (AABA and Architect Steve Florman):** Steve presented an overview and mentioned a few changes since last month's presentation. They've added trees, greenery, and a welcome sign. Ryan proposed adding a refuge island on Adams at Mountain View and moving a crosswalk from the west side of the intersection to the east side. The budget is currently unknown; AABA has been paying the project expenses so far. The proposal was: "Shall the NHCPG support the AABA's 805 Belvedere/Parklet as proposed?" Scott moved to support the concept as presented, and Marianne seconded the motion. An audience member expressed a wish for 2 more feet of sidewalk space on the south side. Gary abstained from voting because he's involved with the money. The remaining 14 board members voted unanimously in favor, and the motion carried.
- **SANDAG Meade Avenue Bike Corridor Proposal:** The Traffic Calming Working Group put forward a proposal to request further traffic calming measures in the portion of the proposed Meade Avenue Bike Corridor that will run through Normal Heights. Ryan summarized the working group's discussion and proposal, with accompanying handouts. Ryan moved that NHCPG send SANDAG a letter with the following three requests: (1) Adding more traffic calming devices; (2) Achieving "improvement equity" along the route from community to community; and (3) Requesting status updates of these comments and progress of these objectives.. Marianne seconded the motion. All board members voted yes except Mark, who was opposed because of the use of the word "equity." Marianne moved to reconsider the motion, striking "equity" and replacing it with "consistency." Dan seconded the revised motion. Jim added that sufficient additional traffic calming devices were intended to make sure traffic speeds stay within posted speed limits. All board members voted in favor of the revised motion except Joseph, who abstained. The motion carried.
- **Adams Avenue Street Fair Participation (Sept 27-28):** In the past we've participated by manning a booth and selling license plate frames. It is work to set up and tear down; volunteers are needed. Suzanne said we have many license plate frames to sell, and that participating is a great deal of work. She also mentioned we're obligated to participate in the street fair by our bylaws, so we needn't vote on it. Nevertheless, we can do so only with sufficient volunteers. Mark and Joe volunteered for setup. Caroline will rally additional volunteers via a Google Doc. Each board member was requested to sign up for at least one two-hour shift.

Committee Reports

- **Community Planners Committee (Marianne, Caroline, Mark):** The planners went dark in July and August.

- **Historical Review Committee (Dan, Mark, Jean-Louis, Marianne):** The committee's concern was not having any idea what sort of work is going to be done on a given property, so they don't know what to say about historical significance. Michael Prinz will try to get the group more data.
- **Ad Hoc Bylaws Subcommittee (Suzanne, Earlene Thom, Marianne):** Suzanne said the next meeting is Monday, August 18. Next week she'll send everyone Article VII (officers and duties). Otherwise, the bylaw review is finished. Marianne will send out info about Rosenberg's Rules of Order, and will have a PowerPoint presentation about it next month.
- **Utility Undergrounding Working Group (Mark, Earlene Thom, Jean-Louis, Bill Conway, Gary):** Mark wasn't able to make the last advisory committee meeting. Suzanne was there. She said it was two hours of being inundated with PowerPoint presentations about why we can't put the utilities in vaults. AT&T won't put their lines underground, period. SDGE says it's too dangerous because the vaults flood. Next city meeting is on August 15th, at which the city will be telling us their process and procedures. Monthly working group meetings should resume as soon as a good date and time can be found.
- **Transportation/Traffic Calming Working Group (Ryan, Gary, Jim Baross, Joe):** The group talked about possible additional crosswalks on Adams Ave., potential treatments for safety, and educational components for both pedestrians and drivers. The working group will make further proposals to the committee in future months after additional discussion. Caroline received a letter from the city stating that on 35th St. south of Adams, the speed limit should be 25, not 35, and that new signs will be posted soon.
- **Library Branch Working Group (John, Jean-Louis, Mark):** John: the working group is putting its energy into building community support. The Community Association endorsed a Normal Heights branch library. The Recreation Council has also endorsed the idea. Next step is to set up an ongoing meeting for the 4th Thursday of each month, at 5:00 P.M. at Lestat's.
- **City Infrastructure Committee (Suzanne, Gary):** Suzanne didn't attend the July 23 meeting but there was a write up in the Union-Tribune. The city's public works director said, "It has ended up being more work than we ever thought it would be. Therefore, the plan is not going to be unveiled until late November or early December; we had expected it next month."

New Business/Future Agenda Items

- None

Meeting Adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

Next meeting: September 2, 2014