

GREATER GOLDEN HILL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 13, 2013 – Approved

The meeting took place at Balboa Park Golf Course Club House on Golf Course Drive. Chair Ruchelle Alvarez called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The agenda had been posted in accordance with the Brown Act. A quorum was present.

Members present: Ruchelle Alvarez, Richard Baldwin, Cheryl Brierton, Susan Bugbee, Janice Davis, John Kroll, Richard Santini, Pat Shields, David Strickland, David Swarens, Matt Thomas, Angela Vasconcellos. **Members absent:** None. (Note: Maureen Burke-Medveyev has resigned because she moved from Golden Hill.)

The minutes from January were approved unanimously on a motion from Brierton/Strickland.

GOVERNMENTAL REPORTS

Police report: None.

33rd Congressional District/Gavin Deeb. Rep. Davis wants to repeal the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision by a Constitutional amendment. Asked about her views on the military-industrial complex, he said that as Davis comes from a military family, she supports the troops. Deeb said Davis was not assigned to the sequestration budget issue

Council District 3/Courtney Thomson provided information from a senior traffic engineer on questions raised in January about street lights:

- 1) The city's policy on light replacement: The Utilities Undergrounding Program removes existing street lights (with pole attachments) and replaces them with standard street lights based on the city's street design manual.
- 2) Acorn lights: These won't be replaced with acorn lights because of the undergrounding program.
- 3) Cost of acorn lights: About \$3000 to \$8000 more than a cobra light depending on the type selected.
- 4) Where acorn lights are permissible: City-wide if a streetlight Maintenance Assessment District is created to install and maintain them.
- 5) Is a lighting district the only way to fund acorn lights: Yes, unless the community is both historic and high-crime or unless the City Council obtains funds from another source.
- 6) Still to be answered: process and policies regarding undergrounding in historically designated communities (from Cathy Winterrowd, Senior Planner, Historical Resources Board Liaison) and maintenance of Fern St. lights (information to come from Labib Qasem, Senior Traffic Engineer).

The lighting issue will be discussed further at the March meeting. Shields urged a motion to urge Todd Gloria's support for acorn lights.

Thomson said that limited funds to trim palm trees are available and will go to areas where residents call and request the cuts. If the money runs out, unserved areas will be placed on a waiting list.

Several committee members questioned Todd Gloria's apparent attempt to resurrect Irwin Jacobs' Plaza de Panama project.

Thomson was asked to determine Gloria's views on reestablishing a city Planning Department. This issue will be on the March agenda.

39th Senate District/Chris Ward. Ward, representing State Senator Marty Bloch, expects to appear regularly at committee meetings. His e-mail is Christopher.Ward@sen.ca.gov. He was asked about state and federal programs that allow refinancing to prevent housing foreclosures.

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

A Golden Hill Business Group may be forming.

Lack of sidewalk passage at Café Madeleine and the new pizza restaurant on the former Santos site, as well as at Food Bowl Market, was brought up. Thomson will investigate.

STATE ROUTE 94 EXPRESS LANES PROJECT

Andrew Rice, Project Manager, Dept. of Transportation

SANDAG has approved speeding up enhancement projects for two building alternatives: 1) an elevated roadway from I-805 to 28th St. and 2) the same on grade level. Either of these alternatives would eliminate the eastbound on-ramp to SR 94 at 30th St. and the northbound connection from I-15 to SR 94. Possible enhancements might include a park or bike lane connections. A cut and cover project over the freeway wouldn't be considered because it would cost \$50 to \$100 million and the enhancements have been budgeted at only \$10 to \$15 million.

Community workshops on these two alternatives plus a third – to build nothing at all -- will take place in May.

The aim of the project is to increase commuter choices throughout the region by providing them with carpool lanes or express buses.

Several committee members said that neither of the first two alternatives would benefit Golden Hill and would act to its detriment. Shields called the project “a dinosaur,” based on 20-year-old thinking.

COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

Brierton notified some residents around Beech & 30th Street about today's GGHPC proposed vote on Land Use changes within the South Park Historic District. (A copy of the Turgeon Map of January 15, 2013 is attached to these minutes.) Of those residents contacted, all expressed approval of density plan changes affecting the area.

A discussion to further lower density took place. Swarens noted that except for the transit corridors of 30th and Fern streets, most areas in Golden Hill have low density; he thought density should be dropped in the transit corridors to match those of surrounding areas. Brierton countered that reducing density too much could meet resistance. City Planner Bernie Turgeon said the proposed densities take away incentives to develop commercial properties or multi-family housing but to retain the value in housing as it is.

A motion (Brierton/Baldwin) to adopt density changes as in the map of Jan. 15, 2013, was approved (11-1-0).

ELECTIONS

Elections will take place in March. The combination of members continuing their terms, members standing for re-election, and new candidates running should lead to a total of 13 members out of a maximum of 15 members as in the by-laws.

STANDING SUB-COMMITTEES

Alvarez proposed changing several sub-committees (Balboa Park, Transportation, Airport Noise, and Historic) to liaison reports to conform with Council Policy 600-24, which states that sub-committees must consist of more than one member, both from the Planning Committee and the community, and meet regularly.

Historic: Swarens said the number of historic issues in Golden Hill suggests that this should remain a sub-committee. He volunteered to co-chair the sub-committee with Bugbee. Strickland will also be a member. The subcommittee will meet the final Wednesday of the month at 6:30 beginning in March.

Balboa Park: The committee voted (11-0) on a motion by Alvarez/Davis to change this to a liaison report and to eliminate a separate Parks Sub-Committee.

Airport Noise: The committee voted (11-0) on a motion by Swarens/Shields to change this to a liaison report.

Land Use: The committee voted (11-0) on a motion by Baldwin/Alvarez to change this to an ad hoc committee.

Ad hoc committees. Thomas proposed, supported by Baldwin, that committees should begin as ad hoc and become regular sub-committees if the press of business warrants it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.