

Miramonte Neighborhood Association (MNA)
Board Of Directors Meeting
March 9, 2022

I. Call To Order: The ZOOM meeting called to order at 7:04 pm.

II. Roll Call:

- a. Board Members Present: Ellen Wheeler, president; Joanna Dinan, vice president; Ann Baldwin, treasurer; Jan Howard, secretary; Adam Lucia; Sam Behrend; Richard Webster, Brenda Kazen, Anne-Marie Laurian
- b. Board Members Absent: Linda Dobbyn, Greg Gibson, Alecs Sakta
- c. Guests: Ward 6 Council Aide Dora Maldonado, Ravi Bewtra, Kathleen McLoughlin, Dr. K Iveson, Ruth Beeker, Lois Sheering, and Terry Poole.

III. Crime in the Neighborhood:

At last month's meeting, there was a discussion about the level of crime experienced in the Miramonte neighborhood, especially on Dodge Boulevard and eastward. Ellen suggested we form a working group with Ward 6 Councilman Steve Kozachik and a Tucson Police Department representative have to better understand the types of crime (from trash and vandalism to theft and violence) and how to prevent and mitigate the community impact. One participant suggested taking photos of car tags when a violation occurs as a way to help police find the culprit. Another option was to revitalize the Neighborhood Watch program. Ellen asked for volunteers to join the group. Ravi volunteered to be on the committee, and other volunteers are welcome to join the effort.

IV. Pocket Park Update:

Ruth Beeker has been leading the committee revitalizing the Pocket Park, and Ruth and Ellen have met with City Parks & Rec and with Steve K about plants, more cleanup, and the play area. After much effort, landscape designer Margaret West (who has been volunteering her expertise) has obtained the original design from the City of Tucson. Items to coordinate with the City will include:

1. Sandblasting the graffiti from the park's wall. This was determined after years of painting over the graffiti that sandblasting would offer the best restoration of the structure. A recommendation to plant cactus or other

prickly shrubs or to place large “pointy” rocks beside the wall, will be considered as deterrents to graffiti and homeless camping. .

2. Funding for plants: With the design for plantings, securing funding or donations will be a critical piece of the renovation. Steve Kozachik will work to secure 10 plants from the Benedictine Apartments owners. Most importantly, City Parks & Recreation staff will help with the placement of plants and help prepare the holes for planting. The Miramonte Neighborhood is asked to join the MNA board and other volunteers to help with a Planting Day, tentatively planned for Saturday, April 30.
3. Other Park Amenities: In addition to the revitalization of the plantings for the Pocket Park, Ruth asked Steve K about City funding for a sailcloth shade structure over the children’s play area, as well as purchasing some of the “diggers” play toys found in other Tucson area parks. Brenda’s research showed the diggers are about \$500/each which all agreed seemed like a reasonable price for the sturdy, all-weather toys. After looking into swing sets, City of Tucson safety guidelines precludes the installation of one on site.
4. Overall, there has been progress on preventing trash and vagrancy at the park.

V. Annual Meeting 1-3 p.m., Saturday, April 9, St. Mark’s Courtyard Planning:

Ellen updated the board on the outline for the meeting, and details on what needed to be set up and staffed to make the time successful for everyone attending.

a. Tasks:

1. Chair and table set up before the meeting starts. Placement of sign-up sheets for committees and refreshment station. Set up time is scheduled for 12:15 p.m. Brenda, Anne Marie and Richard volunteered to assist with set-up.
2. Annual board elections will be held, and Ellen said she plans to have a slate of nominees for the board. Almost all current board members are interested in serving another term. Ravi Bewtra is interested in joining the board, and Ellen proposed including him in the slate. Ravi is relatively new to the board, already an active volunteer in the neighborhood and a senior manager at Raytheon. Nominations will also be open to other during the annual meeting. .

3. In addition, the meeting will have updates from the Ward 6 office and a Tucson Police Department officer and opportunities for questions from the audience. Ryan Fagan from the City Department of Transportation is invited to discuss the 5th/6th street changes. The Royal El Con project has been invited to attend, but Ellen was not sure whether they would. Another potential speaker could be a representative from the Rancho Center (Miramonte/Speedway) for an update, and an update from St. Mark's Church about the garden and other community outreach efforts.

VI. Ward 6 update:

- a. Ward 6 Council Aide Dora Maldonado provided an update that they were still waiting on decisions on personnel, plant and financial support of the pocket park. She said that Steve K. would have been at the MNA meeting, but that the Mayor and Council were meeting at the same time.

VII. UPDATES:

- Camino Miramonte Traffic Calming Committee: Brenda followed up with City of Transportation staff Ryan Fagan and Blake Olofson with a list of proposed traffic mitigation measures. While not dismissing all of the suggestions, they “sort of kicked the can down the road,” stating that Miramonte would eventually be transitioned into a bike boulevard and then the mitigation measures could be implemented with timeline of about 2025. The discussion with the City of Transportation staff is now being reframed as a pedestrian safety issue. In addition, committee members hope to meet with the University of Arizona College of Architecture professor who led a student effort that prepared a comprehensive plan for the Camino Miramonte bike boulevard.
- Treasurer's Report: The account balance is \$10,678.81 with one outstanding check still not cashed. Jan said she'd donate the funds back to the Association for future needs.
- Newsletter: The spring newsletter was delivered to neighborhood residents the week of March 8.
- Royal El Con Proposed Expansion Committee: The meeting and tour of the proposed expansion of the apartment complex provided frank feedback to the developer on the lack of confidence that the expanded complex will be better managed than the current property. The addition is being proposed to support

the expansion of urban workforce housing. Questions were raised by neighborhood residents, including the height and artwork for the wall surrounding the property, to the number of units and if some of the parking spaces could be dropped to allow for more greenspace. The meeting ended with the Royal El Con development team committing to a more detailed plan of the project. There was discussion with the developers about limiting the project to seniors, given that the owner of Royal El Con said a majority of their residents are over 55, and there is a need for low-income senior housing.

- VIII. Opening the meeting to any other comments or questions, Sam said that Sundt was contacted about the ugly mechanical structures on the Anderson side of The Benedictine complex, with no screening from the neighborhood. It was mentioned, too, that there are remnants of metal fencing still on the ground beside the oleanders. While the Sundt representative said that the east side of the project was complete, Steve K said that it was not complete. In addition, the Benedictine is charging residents a \$50/month parking garage fee, so it appears some are parking along the streets in the neighborhood to avoid the charge.

In other matters, it was confirmed that the missing free library and free pantry in front of St. Mark's will be replaced after a fire and vandalism destroyed the two structures.

With Merrill, St. Mark's liaison out of town, Jan provided her update on the beginning discussions about establishing a site at the church to offer help with access to city services as well as counseling. Formal discussions and a proposal to St. Mark's could be anticipated as early as late spring, early summer.

- IX. Ellen adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jan Howard, Secretary