

MIRAMONTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Ellen Wheeler, President, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Present: MNA Board members Ellen Wheeler, president; Joanna Dinan, vice president; Ann Baldwin, treasurer; board members Richard Webster, Brenda Kazen, Sam Behrend, Linda Dobbyn, Ravi Kumar Bewtra. Board members absent: Jan Howard and Anne-Marie Laurian.

Ward 6 update - Steve Kozachik

Steve discussed recent meetings with police, the City Attorney, and other city officials and nearby residents concerning both the Royal El Con and Royal Palms apartment complexes regarding drug use, transients moving through, other crime/refuse mitigation. He said similar problems are occurring at both complexes, which have the same ownership. Royal Palms is located on 2nd Street near Craycroft.

The owner of the properties did not attend either meeting. Steve has exchanged emails with him and urged him to hire on-site security and on-site property managers. The property owner said he would look into security and costs, and Steve indicated he thinks it is a necessity regardless of cost.

About a dozen residents who live near Royal El Con were present and provided information about the problems they are encountering with thefts, break-ins, visible drug use, etc., much of which they tie to Royal El Con. One asked if the city can take any legal action against the complex, and Steve said TPD and the City Attorney are compiling data on police calls to the property, which might form the basis for getting the property declared a “nuisance,” in which case a court would order corrective action.

On a positive note, Steve said the Ward 6 plastic recycling initiative has achieved 6 tons of material for recycling, which is a major success. He has talked to the City Manager about this success and the strong community interest, and urged the program be expanded city-wide. Some of the plastic blocks produced from the recycled waste are being used to build benches at Himmel Park, near the play area close to the library.

It was noted that the next Alvernon-Fifth Crime Coalition meeting will be Wednesday, September 28, at 6 p.m. at the Ward 6 office and via Zoom.

Halloween Party

The annual kids' Halloween Party will be Oct. 29 at 3 p.m. at the Pocket Park. Joanna Dinan is chairing the committee, which will include Charles Casey, Morris Palter, Tiffney Johnson, Theresa Webster, and Jan Howard. Merrill Evans of St. Mark's Church confirmed they will again provide bags of candy and help pass them out during the party. Devil Dan will lead the kids' costume parade.

The Halloween Party will be featured in the newsletter, which should be mailed early in October to all households in the neighborhood. Ellen noted that she has the banner and a sandwich board sign. Ellen also said that Charles Casey and Paul Gee volunteered to pass out flyers a couple of weeks before the party. It was suggested that Jan Howard could help design the flyers.

Presentation: Mapping Racist Covenants by Jason Jurjevich, UA Asst. Professor of Geography

Jason, who has recently moved into Miramonte, presented an initiative he is leading to highlight covenants contained within "Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions" (CCRs) that contain racist language. He said the CCRs for Encanto Park subdivision, which is within the Miramonte neighborhood, contain language prohibiting residency of Asian/Black homeowners. He said such CCR provisions are not legally enforceable, but residents still have had to sign and acknowledge these provisions, sometimes unknowingly, when they purchase their homes.

Some CCRs have perpetual language that prevents removal of these provisions. His initiative hopes to bring these to light and attempt to formally address them, which likely requires state legislative action for any changes to occur. The website is: <http://mappingracistcovenants.org>. Jason's PowerPoint file is attached to these Minutes.

Updates

- Fall newsletter – it is on track to go out early in October. Ads were sold to cover \$600 of the expense.
- Rancho Center—the new owners (Larsen Baker Real Estate) reached out to Whole Foods about renewing its lease, with its space improved and/or expanded. They have not heard back. Larsen Baker hopes to add apartments above retail spaces. Also, they said they want to participate in the crime coalition, and they will donate \$1,000 to the upgrades for the Pocket Park play area.
- Pocket Park – The City has ordered the new play equipment - 2 climbing animals and 2 sand diggers. The neighborhood paid for equipment (partially with funds loaned by a neighbor), and the City will pay for installation. There is at least a 12-week timeline for delivery of the play equipment. The new shade structure (paid for by Ward 6) for the north end of the play area may be installed by the Halloween Party. To make it easier

for neighbors to donate toward the playground upgrades, Morris Palter asked if it's possible to set up an electronic payment method. Ellen said she will investigate that possibility.

- MNA Treasurer's Report – Current bank balance is \$4,528, following donations of \$850 (including \$50 at the meeting) toward park play equipment and \$150 in ad payments for the newsletter. Ellen noted the anticipated donation from Larsen Baker of \$1,000.
- Traffic committee – Brenda Kazen said 12 people attended the last meeting, which prioritized discussion of Dodge and Camino Miramonte. She said the highest priorities were addition of sidewalks, trees and dedicated bike lanes for Camino Miramonte, and lights for Dodge. The next meeting will be Sept. 29 or Oct. 19. Brenda has reached out to Ryan Fagan and Blake Olofson from the City Transportation Department to invite them to participate in the meeting.
- Proposal for new apartment complex on 3rd near Alvernon – Ellen brought up the proposal for a 26-unit apartment complex called "Woods Manor." There would be 24 one-bedroom apartments in a new building and 2 two-bedroom apartments in a renovated existing house at the northwest corner of Alvernon and 3rd. The property owner is seeking rezoning the property from O-1 (office) to R-3 (residential) and for an Individual Parking Plan (IPP) that would provide for 32 parking spaces on-site, which is 8 less than city code would require. The apartments will be market rate, and the property will be fenced and gated.

There was discussion about the proposal, particularly the requested parking reduction. Ellen said the property owner would like the neighborhood's support, and attendees indicated they want more information on the plans and design. It was decided that the project proponents would be asked to attend the October board meeting to provide more information.

- Chicanes at Richey and 3rd (for traffic slowing and water harvesting) – Linda Dobbyn said that due to the design of the streets (inverted crown), sewer line placement, and storm water flow, and lack of available funds, the city does not see a way forward to installing chicanes. If other ideas or possibilities arise, she will research them.
- Request from resident to find out current residential occupancy rate of the Benedictine. (After the meeting, Steve K estimated 90% occupancy of the new residential structures.)
- Gmail email group --Discussion on setting ground rules for use of email distribution. One recent email appeared to be for personal use vs neighborhood matters. Discussion led to approach to wait to see if additional personal emails occur.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

NOTE the following Addendum to these Minutes, which is a report from St. Mark's Church on current activities.

St. Mark's Announcements for Sept. 14 (Merrill Evans):

The Second Sunday Suppers on Second St. have resumed at St. Mark's Presbyterian, 3809 E 3rd St., on north side of property, facing 2nd St. Potluck dishes are welcome but not required. Please join us to meet your neighbors and enjoy some amazing food. We start serving at 5pm on Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11.

Iskashitaa Refugee Network is preparing the garden on the west side of the St. Mark's' property for planting. Volunteers needed. Contact Molly McKasson at memckasson@gmail.com

St. Mark's is now sheltering overflow asylum seekers from Casa Alitas. All have tested negative for Covid. Volunteers needed for 2 or 3 hours on weekday afternoons to prepare rooms for visitors, assist staff making travel arrangements, or serve prepared food for dinner. Contact Caroline Rondeau at carolinerondeau0408@gmail.com.