

MIRAMONTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
Ward 6 office, 3202 East 1st Street

Ellen Wheeler, President, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

MNA Board members present: Ellen Wheeler, Linda Dobbyn, Ann Baldwin, Jan Howard, Theresa Webster, Betsy Lubis, Ravi Bewtra, William Kuitert, Brenda Kazen

absent: Sam Behrend, Richard Webster, Morris Palter, Anne-Marie Laurian

Guests: Approximately 5 additional Miramonte neighbors in-person and online; Dora Maldonado, from the Ward 6 office; Nicholas McCullough from the Pima County Board of Supervisors District 5 office

Ward 6 Update

- Steve Kozachik's last day on city council is March 31. The remaining council members probably won't have Steve's replacement until later in April. Dora and staff will be operating the office "business as usual" until new person is appointed. Dora anticipates attending the next MNA board meeting on April 10.
- Steve has been helping MNA communicate with the city parks department that the Miramonte Park irrigation system is not working again. The issue is not that the system is inadequate, it's because of leaks, which will be important to get repaired before summer.
- The Board agreed that Steve's leadership and community service to the neighborhood has been invaluable. It was suggested that Board members consider a parting gift for Steve or a donation to a nonprofit on Steve's behalf. Several ideas were discussed. Casa Alitas emerged as an org for which Steve might appreciate a donation.

It was agreed that members of the board send a donation in an amount of their choosing (personal check or Venmo) to Ellen, and she will forward to Casa Alitas. Ellen will also send a card of thanks and appreciation on the Board's behalf.

- Fifth Street lighting – The decision by the Bond Oversight Commission is to stick with the original plan and have the 35' tall lights. Members of the Sam Hughes/El Encanto neighborhoods are still trying to get the city to change the actual fixtures to something nicer looking and more befitting a residential neighborhood.
- Expiration of funding for migrant services: funding runs out end of March for shelter services. Given the political environment, large numbers of street releases are expected. The City and County plan to continue working with Customs and Border Patrol to know where people are dropped. Casa Alitas continues to play a vital role in providing services. Current Casa Alitas capacity is 100 migrants/day, though they are seeing about 1,000/day. County facilities are going to keep operating to take them in, with a focus on mothers/children.
- Reid Park –The mayor and council voted 6:1 to move forward with installing a walking path that would bisect the Del Urich and Randolph golf courses at Reid Park. It is an estimated \$20M, two-phase project. Phase one requires engineering analysis and Army Corps of Engineers approval to preserve/redesign necessary water retention layouts; phase two involves a wildlife impact study and probably also Corps of Engineers approval. If neighbors would like to provide comments, please contact [Tucson Parks and Recreation](#).

Other Updates:

Safety Signage along 3rd Street

- Board member, Will Kuitert, recently witnessed a bike/car accident at 3rd and Dodge. Stop signs have recently been changed at that intersection. He suggested posting “cross-traffic does not stop” and “watch for bikes” signs on Dodge Boulevard, near the 3rd Street intersection.
- Dora agreed to email the Tucson Transportation & Mobility Dept. requesting additional signage.

Chicanes signage

- Ruth Beeker has initiated and sponsored a project to post signage at the north and south entrances of Camino Miramonte signaling entry to the Miramonte neighborhood. The signs, labeled “Miramonte Neighborhood” and carrying the neighborhood’s graphic theme/lettering will be sited within the northern- and southern-most chicanes once the chicanes are installed.
- Ellen presented illustrations showing the signs’ design, dimensions, and materials. Ruth is donating the signs (estimated cost ~\$5,600) and installation cost is approximately \$3,000/each. The city has agreed to install the signs at no cost to the neighborhood, but they will not maintain or repair them. The City has asked MNA to sign an agreement stating that MNA will be responsible for maintenance and repair should the signs be damaged or vandalized.
- Linda made a motion to sign the City’s agreement that MNA will maintain the signs—understanding that if they get damaged later, the Board will determine at that time whether to use MNA funds to replace them or not. Brenda seconded the motion; Board members voted all in favor.

Chicanes update

- City already has proposals from two contractors on chicane work, and installation may begin as early as April. Some planting may have to wait until fall.

Treasurer’s Report

- Ann reported no change to treasurer’s report: a beginning balance of \$6,154.33 in the account, with no deposits or expenses. The ending balance, as of March 13, 2024, remains \$6,154.33.

Upcoming Annual Meeting

- The MNA annual meeting will be held on April 27, 2024 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Ward 6 office. Ellen reviewed a slate for election to a two-year term on the board, which was put together by a Nominating Committee that included Sam Behrend and Linda Dobbyn. She will present the latest slate of continuing and potential new MNA Board members at the annual meeting.
- Once board members are elected, the annual membership meeting will close, and officers will be elected at the end of the meeting.
- Invited guests are our newly assigned mid-town Tucson Police Department lieutenant and reps from Larsen Baker, the commercial real estate firm now representing the Rancho Center.
- Additional information and agenda to be announced.

Larsen Baker plans for Rancho Center

- Larsen Baker plans a major exterior renovation of the entire Rancho Center property.
- “Miramonte” will be a new restaurant occupying the space that was most recently used as the Halloween pop-up store.

- Midtown Mercantile Merchants will be moving from its current location (on Speedway between Columbus and Swan) to the former Bookmans space.

Royal El Con

- Discussion about the property at 3660 E. Third, the Royal El Con apartments. There are people who got evicted and are still around—whether with carts or couch surfing, etc.
- Dora will try to contact the realtors listing the property for sale to get an update.

Spring newsletter

- Plans for the MNA Spring newsletter are underway. Ellen, Jan, and Theresa will coordinate, along with Stephanie van Latum’s help. The newsletter will be mailed to all Miramonte households/residences in mid-April.

Old Pueblo Community Services (OPCS) individual parking plan waiver update (3701 E. Third St.)

- OPCS provides Veterans services. They want to add 18 studios to the existing 24-unit complex in order to house more individuals. They will also be making improvements to the building exterior and landscaping, putting in sidewalks, moving and enclosing the existing dumpster, and fixing/painting walls surrounding the property. They have petitioned the City for a parking waiver, citing that OPCS is transitional housing for short-term (~90 days) stays, and many residents won’t have vehicles. OPCS believes there is plenty of parking available in their current (off-street) lot configuration, and that Dodge and 3rd streets can accommodate potential (on-street) overflow parking.
- Over the past several months, OPCS has solicited comments and concerns from the MNA Board and neighbors. Board member and Dodge Boulevard resident, Morris Palter, has submitted comments outlining his concerns that too many cars parked along Dodge would contribute to the daily congestion caused by Basis school traffic and pose both pedestrian and vehicle safety risks. MNA previously submitted a letter in support of Morris’s concerns.
- The Board discussed the matter further and decided not to submit another comment at this time.

Other Upcoming Events

- Miramonte Pocket Park – the next Miramonte Meet-Up is scheduled for Thursday March 28, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. The next Kid’s Playtime at the Park will be on Saturday afternoon, April 6, from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Volunteers and donors (time, talent, food, drink, or funds) are always welcome.
- We’ll have another BOD meeting on Wednesday, April 10. The major agenda item will be the route of the Camino Miramonte/Palo Verde bike boulevard, with city staff coming to discuss their recommendations and the possible alternatives. The Reid Park event is Saturday 3/23 (they are going to present their recommended alternative routes).
- Fifth/Alvernon Crime Coalition – the next meeting is Wednesday, March 27 at 6 p.m. at the Ward 6 office.

The regular April MNA Board meeting is set for Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Ward 6 office, 3202 E. First St. The meeting will be available via Zoom.