



UPTOWN PLANNERS

Uptown Community Planning Group

Meeting Minutes

October 7, 2014

Meeting Place: Joyce Beers Center, Uptown Shopping Center

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Jaworski

Present: Pesquiera, Daniel, Mullaney, Dahl, Grinchuk, Jaworski, Bonn, Bonner, Butler, Ferrier, Ward, Wilson, Winney, Winter

Absent: Fox, Tablang, Mellos

Approximately 35 in attendance

Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order

Motion by Wilson to move the Letter of Support for the JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes to the consent agenda approved by unanimous vote; 11-0-non-voting chair abstain.

Treasurer's Report:

None

Chair/CPC Report:

Jaworski attended the latest CPC meeting and reported that the city is in the process of making the Facilities Benefit Assessment program permanent. FBA is one of the two common funding mechanisms (the other being DIF) used to provide funds for infrastructure.

Non-Agenda Public Comment:

Congresswoman Susan Davis was in attendance, and reported that the long Congressional recess allowed her to return to her district and meet with constituents, and provide an update of pending legislation. Davis discussed various the various issues being considered in Congress, and took questions from the board and audience. She indicated Congress had passed a budget on December 11th; and was providing funding to train the Syrian free army. The issues discussed included for profit education facilities and post office consolidation.

Brian Genovese, from the City of San Diego Senior Traffic Engineer, spoke about the City's plan to remove a lane of traffic on Fifth Avenue, between Laurel Street and Upas Street, and replace it with a bicycle lane. This would be done as part of the resurfacing of this section of Fifth Avenue after the conclusion of a pipeline replacement project. The restriping project was expected to be completed in late October 2014.

Ben Nichols expressed concern over the lack of public notice, and questioned how many additional bicycle plans the city was proposing. Wilson inquired about whether the project had been subject to environmental review. Genovese responded the restriping project did not require environmental review, and could be done under as part of the resurfacing project. Wilson and City Council Office representative

University Heights residents Terry Grossman and Bert expressed concern over the increase in transient activities in the community, and the noise generated by the widespread use of leaf blowers.

There was also discussion of the problem of bicycle riders not dismounting on the Vermont Street Bridge, which created a risk for pedestrians. It was suggested the issue be raised in the University Heights newsletter. Luke Terpstra volunteered to help raise awareness of the bicycle and pedestrian right-of-way issues. Terpstra also announced that on Oct 14 at the Hillcrest Town Council meeting Marty Block and Susan Davis would be guests for a Q/A session.

Leo Wilson announced that on October 22, 2014 the Metro San Diego CDC and the Bankers Hill Business Group would be cosponsoring a Taste of Bankers Hill event that would be held at The Abbey.

Representatives of Elected Officials:

Adriana Martinez from City Council District Three provided an update of the activities of Councilmember Todd Gloria. She was aware the removal of the traffic lane on Fifth Avenue was a contentious Ben Nichols asked about what outreach had been done about bike lanes and road diet; and also stated SANDAG and community were not communicating in an effective manner about the SANDAG bicycle project. Martinez and Wilson disagreed whether the Fifth Avenue restriping project was in conformance with the City of San Diego Bicycle Plan.

Consent Agenda:

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Wilson, seconded by Dahl, passed by a 13-0-1 vote; non-voting chair abstaining.

1. **LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE JDRF WALK TO CURE DIABETES – Hillcrest --** Event will take place on November 8, 2014, and will take place on Balboa Drive and Sixth Avenue, from Upas Street to Laurel Street, and along trails on the West Mesa of Balboa Park.

Action Items:

REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR NORMAL STREET LINEAR PARK/ MYSTIC PARK GRANT APPLICATION – Hillcrest/ University Heights -- Hillcrest Business Association.

Presentation by Ben Nichols, Executive Director of the Hillcrest BID, about grant to application to obtain funding for a planning grant for the proposed Normal Linear Park/Mystic Park. The source would be a Caltrans planning grant.

Previous application had been denied, but it had received high scores from evaluators. Only the top six of 45 grant applications received funding. The previous grant application may have been seventh on the list. The grant application received 12 out of 16 points.

CALTRANS issues grant funds to communities so they can organize and plan for local transportation and community improvements. The grant application will look at using the excess public land along Normal Street, and study various pedestrian related improvements, and adding park space. It will also look at how the proposed Mystic Park on the north side of Washington Street could be linked to the linear park on Normal Street.

Nichols stated there is a need to bolster community engagement for the next attempt to secure grant funding.

Nichols requests a Letter of Support from the Uptown Planners for the \$350,000 grant request. His intents to increase community engagement in project planning, as part of submitting the new grant application. The grant is actually submitted by the City of San Diego, who will oversee the use of funds if the grant is obtained. The grant application needed to be submitted within approximately 30 days, so there was a short deadline.

Public Comment:

Matt Wahlstrom was concerned over the Hillcrest BID taking too much control over what should be a public space, and questioned whether the funds would be properly administered.

Luke Terpstra supports the need to make improvements to the area around Normal Street, and supported the grant. Sharon Gehl liked the fact that Mystic Park was included in the study area of the grant.

Butler indicated some reservations on the proposed Normal Street Linear Park, but supported doing the study. Bonn suggested more community outreach, which Nichols indicated he would be doing; she indicated concerns over the Mystic Park proposal.

After extended board discussion, a motion to call the question was passed by a 12-2 vote.

Motion by Wilson, second by Ferrier, to approve Uptown Planners writing a letter of support for the grant application; approved by a 13-0-1 vote, non-voting vice chair abstaining.

REQUEST SUPPORT TO RENAME FLORENCE ELEMENTARY REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO RENAME THE FLORENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THE CHRISTINE T. KEHOE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Hillcrest – Third City Council District

Adriana Martinez provided a summary of the proposal; Chris Ward, who is a member of the task force seeking to rename the school, also spoke on behalf of the proposal.

Florence Elementary is named after the city in Italy; it is not named after a person. Ward explained the initial goal was to have the school renamed by the beginning of the next school year. City Councilmember Todd Gloria, Congresswoman Susan Davis, and State Senator Marty Block were all supportive of the action. A meeting with the school's parent/teacher association was planned for later in the month.

Public Comment:

Terry Grossman and Mat Wahlstrom spoke against the change in name; both identified themselves as members of the GLBT community. They raised the issue of naming a school after a living person. Janet O'Dea and Barry Hager indicated that neighborhood the school was located had historically been associated with the name Florence. Opposition was also expressed by Betty Houk and Rich Gorin. An issue also raised was whether Kehoe had any connection with the school.

After board discussion; a motion was made by Winney, seconded by Wilson, to continue the item until after the meeting of project proponents with the PTA. Motion passed by a -4 vote; voting in favor: Winney, Wilson, Butler, Winter, Dahl, Grinchuk, Bonner, Bonn; voting against: Pesqueira, Ferrier, Fox, Daniel; abstaining non-voting vice chair, Jaworski.

PROPOSAL TO PLACE FOUR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS AT THE INTERSECTION OF NORMAL STREET AND UNIVERSITY AVENUE – Hillcrest -- City of San Diego

Jacque Chirazi made the presentation on behalf of the City of San Diego. He stated that according to Cleantech research there are about 10,000 electric vehicles in San Diego. The City of San Diego is applying for a grant to install additional EV charging stations.

The present proposal is install two EV charging stations in the median near the intersection of Normal Street and University Avenue in Hillcrest. The action will require that one of the charging stations be ADA accessible, and it is hoped that an existing ADA parking space can be used.

Public Comment:

Rich Gorin asked for clarification about the use of the ADA parking. Chirazi stated that drivers with eligible for ADA parking can park in the spot without using the space to charge an electric vehicle.

Chirazi also clarified that the charging stations under consideration are not meant to perform a complete battery recharge: The stations are intended for relatively short visits to supplement a full recharge that occurs at a more appropriate site.

Representatives from the Business Improvement District voiced concern about the stations taking away public parking for motorists with conventional vehicles. Chirazi stated he will entertain suggestions to put the stations in other locations on the advice of community members.

Motion by Wilson: Support using an ADA space as an electronic vehicle charging station. Seconded by Dahl. Board discussion of the motion reveals concern about proposed location and perhaps the availability of a location that will have less impact on scarce parking. Wilson withdraws motion. Motion by Winney to continue the item; seconded by Wilson. Motion passes 11-0-1. (Daniels left the meeting and therefore did not vote; non-voting chair Jaworski abstaining.)

Community/Board Reports:

Tom Mullaney: Independent Study Group Recommendations: – Presentation by Mullaney of his Independent Study Group’s recommendations regarding the draft Urban Design Element (Sept 2014 draft); Request that Uptown Planners support the proposed modifications.

Twelve people representing five of the six neighborhoods of Uptown attended four meetings on the topic and produced 13 pages of written comments regarding their recommendations. The written comments were provided board members in advance of the meeting, and are available upon request.

The recommendations are summarized here as follows: add seating in public places – need to identify areas where mini-plazas and small areas marking gateways into the our various neighborhoods and communities could be constructed.

The Independent Study Group participants encourage further engaged of individuals and groups or other organizations throughout the community to make specific recommendations, place oriented comments to the city on certain design elements.

Mullaney emphasized that the community must build into the plan update effort a specific process for implementing the plan. How can this be achieved? One idea is to specifically revisit the plan every two years or so and assess how well the plan has been implemented to date. A mechanism to measure plan implementation needs to be created to make sure the ideas and goals are realized.

Mullaney commented that the Independent Study Group focused on ideas that it might be easy to achieve consensus on and to have move forward.

Regarding recommendations for the area of Uptown east of the 163: a University Heights survey raised the question of whether we should retain the “institutional” designation at the school district site.

Sharon Gehl and Leo Wilson raised issues of making sure public spaces are designed so that they do not attract transient or create crime related issues. For instance, the plan should place a priority on using good design so as to discourage loitering and vagrancy on both public and private property. During public comment, Janet O’Dea wanted to encourage adaptive re-use and sustainability.

Motion by Wilson, seconded by Bonn: to request the City Planning Department review and incorporate the Independent Study Group recommendations as part of the Uptown Community Plan update process. Motion passed by a 13-0-1 vote; none voting Vice-Chair abstaining.

Bob Daniel: Western Slope Community Association: Recommendations for Uptown Bicycle Corridor Project’s alignment through Middletown along San Diego Avenue and Washington Street.

At the request of Daniel, the item was continued.

Motion to Adjourn made by Pesqueira at approximately 9:20 pm. Passed by unanimous voice vote

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Jaworski, Acting Secretary