

BANKERS HILL COMMUNITY GROUP MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 20, 2021

Via Zoom videoconference

BHCG Treasurer Jeanne Rawlings called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following Steering Committee members were present virtually: Treasurer Rawlings, Chair Nancy Moors, Vice Chair Becky Veen, Secretary John Lamb, Ann Garwood, Qamar Bradford, Char Lou Benedict and Ben Baltic. Approximately 43 people participated in the virtual meeting.

Rawlings welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced BHCG officers and Steering Committee members.

Announcements

Chair Moors said BHCG has formed a small focus group of property owners interested in neighborhood safety. One meeting has been held, and another has been scheduled. The community group has also received an email from the organization Ladies Who Paint looking for building owners in the area who might be open to murals. Moors also mentioned a recent survey taken in the neighborhood to gauge interest in creating a “community benefit district,” which would potentially provide more services along Bankers Hill’s arterial roads than the city can currently afford to provide.

Treasurer’s Report

Rawlings reported that as of August 31, there is \$6,369.36 in the bank, including \$2,500 in donations for the Balboa Park Adopt-A-Plot project.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

A resident requested contact information. Moors said she would forward information.

Adopt-A-Plot Update

Rawlings reported that efforts to replant landscaping in front of the Bridge Club in Balboa Park now include working with Forever Balboa Park. She said \$2,500 has been raised and the planting beds have been cleared. Aiming for a planting date at the end of October, Rawlings said. BHCG attendees interested in participating should reach out to the BHCG.

Project Review Committee

The committee will meet Oct. 6 to focus on the current Uptown Community Plan and how planning guidelines conflict with new developments like 525 Olive. The committee meets on the first Wednesday of every month.

San Diego Police Department Liaison Update

Veen discussed the city’s Get It Done app.

Uptown Community Parking District

Parking District board member Tom Fox provided an update on the bike-lane project along Fourth and Fifth avenues. Last elements to be installed will be blue trash receptacles. Fox said the hope is to have bike lanes open by mid-November. “Walk the Walk” directional signage will also be installed, he said. Regarding district elections delayed by the pandemic, Fox said bylaws allow for term extensions but added he hopes elections will be held soon, possibly in January.

Uptown Planners Update

Helen Rowe Allen, an Uptown Planner board member, provided an update on the planning group, which she said is now “simply divided on policy.”

Government Representatives

Kohta Zaiser, representing Mayor Todd Gloria, provided an update on the city’s Pure Water project and financial relief available to small-business owners.

Jake Estrada, state Assemblyman Chris Ward’s representative, said Ward had been appointed Majority Whip. He also discussed homeless housing planning and state money coming for improvement projects, including in Balboa Park.

Stopher Vallejo, staffer for state Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins, discussed legislation targeting sea-level rise, residential lot splits and funds for homelessness.

Abbey Reuter from county Supervisor Nathan Fletcher’s office introduced herself. She discussed community-energy efforts and the county board vote to declare COVID misinformation a public health crisis.

SDPD Community Relations Presentation

Officer Larry Turner discussed reductions in jail bookings due to the pandemic and neighborhood crime-fighting efforts. “There’s a lot of violent crime going on,” Turner said. Vein described the challenging conditions at the 7-Eleven on Fifth Avenue as well as the significant homeless presence at the south end of Bankers Hill. Vacant property is an issue, she said. Turner said he appreciated the information.

Turner took questions about the new public restrooms in Balboa Park, increasing patrols in Bankers Hill, whether letters of agency authorizing trespassing arrests are effective tools for businesses and homeowner associations, and the rise in drug overdoses in the area.

Turner was asked if it would be possible to hold a town hall meeting similar to one held recently in Mission Hills to discuss homelessness. Rawlings suggested it could be a virtual meeting. Turner said via Zoom would be better at the current time.

San Diego Rock ’n’ Roll Marathon

Caroline Barr gave a brief presentation on the upcoming marathon and half marathon at the end of October. She said few changes were planned.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Lamb, Secretary.