

BANKERS HILL COMMUNITY GROUP MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 15, 2019
Bankers Hill Clubhouse, 3030 Front St.

BHCG Chair Amie Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following Steering Committee members were present: Hayes, Treasurer Jeanne Rawlings, Secretary John Lamb, Ben Baltic, Becky Veen and Peter Raymond. There were approximately 35 people in attendance.

Hayes welcomed attendees and thanked those who had volunteered for trash cleanup during the previous weekend's Pride festivities. She also asked for volunteers for lunch services at the Bankers Hill Clubhouse on Sept. 22, Oct. 27, Nov. 24 and Dec. 22.

Hayes then asked attendee Don Liddell, Balboa Park Committee member, to give the audience an update on the committee, the West Mesa Subcommittee he chairs and plans for Inspiration Point on the east side of the park. Liddell said he has been on the committee for 10 years. He said he thought Pride events "went very well" this year, thanks to an emphasis on "cooperative engagement" between the community and park officials. He also suggested that the West Mesa Subcommittee may no longer convene but did not provide any details.

Regarding Inspiration Point, Liddell said the city has issued a Request for Proposals with the hope of energizing and activating that part of the park. "Time will tell" what is proposed, he said, adding that a plan will be developed over the next couple of years that will "bring revenue into the park." Asked about reports that a hotel might be considered on public parkland, Liddell suggested comparing Balboa Park to Mission Bay Park, where "they do hotels." He urged attendees to get involved and attend future Balboa Park Committee workshops.

Featured Business – Friendly Shoes, 3609 Fourth Ave.

Hayes introduced Edwin Lee, director of development at Friendly Shoes, a specialty footwear maker and retail outlet that recently opened in the neighborhood. Lee talked about the company that has designed shoes with a "friendly zipper" system for people who have difficulty putting on and taking off shoes. He said the shoes appeal to young and old alike. And because the company makes its own shoes, customers can also provide input that could be incorporated in future designs.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Rawlings reported \$3,182.28 in the bank. Noting that BHCG will be receiving an additional \$1,500 in September for the group's Pride cleanup hours, Rawlings encouraged attendees to provide input to the group on how that money should be used to benefit the community. Hayes said work is under way to design a decal that would represent Bankers Hill. Attendees, with the exception of one, were open to the idea. Hayes also noted a proposal under consideration to find a partner to share in the expense of installing and maintaining a dog-refuse station somewhere in the neighborhood. Attendees unanimously supported pursuing this idea.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

Bruce Dammann provided an update on city plans to replace the public restrooms in Balboa Park at Nutmeg and Thorn avenues. He requested further review of the plans, which have evolved over time. BHCG attendees voted 16-0 to send a letter requesting that the Balboa Park Conservancy review the project before construction begins.

Raymond said he's finding cigarette butts "all over the place." Wondered if containers should be deployed.

Government Representatives

Maria Bojorquez-Gomez, staff assistant for U.S. Rep. Susan Davis, discussed the congresswoman's efforts to push for early wildfire detection, treating border sewage runoff and protecting the rights of sexual-assault victims.

Javier Gomez, field representative for state Assemblyman Todd Gloria, updated attendees on state legislative efforts, including increased funding for public schools, increased access to college, housing and clean water. Regarding Gloria's attendance at the September mayoral forum, Gomez confirmed, "He will be here for that."

Ty Burch, area representative for Councilmember Chris Ward, discussed recent council actions and budget efforts, including council approval of preserving dog access to Fiesta Island, increased staff for code enforcement, more funds for tree trimming and brush abatement, and bathroom renovations within Balboa Park. He also discussed recent regulations that went into effect for scooters. He urged attendees who find scooters parked in the public right of way to immediately report it on the city's Get It Done app.

Maple Canyon Update

Roy McMakin, from Friends of Maple Canyon, was the featured speaker of the evening and gave attendees a detailed report on the city's restoration efforts in Maple Canyon. He gave a brief history of the erosion issues that have plagued the canyon over nearly a decade, ever since an invasive plant that had slowed water flow was removed from the canyon. Once that plant was removed, erosion increased dramatically starting in 2009, he said. The runoff from that erosion has had impacts on major businesses along San Diego Bay, including Solar Turbines and San Diego International Airport.

He said improved relations with city staff and the addition of Rick Engineering to the team has given him hope that a solution to the canyon's growing erosion issues will be found. McMakin said he hopes an advocacy group will emerge that can push for a holistic plan for the canyon, which is also slated for major stormwater repairs in the coming years. In July, the city applied for a federal grant of \$9.5 million, and the city has set aside \$4 million for the canyon work. Whether the city will receive the grant should be known in about a month, he said. Solar Turbines representatives would also like to meet regarding the erosion-reduction efforts, he added.

As far as new trailheads into the canyon, McMakin said one at the end of Curlew Street and another from Waldo Waterman Park off of Maple are "possible." He asked for a show of hands from those who support the Friends of Maple Canyon proposal to slow down the water flow in the canyon into an inlet at the bottom of the canyon that would take the runoff underground to the storm drain at Maple Street and Reynard Way.

Attendee Liddell objected to an informal vote, arguing that it was premature to do so. Baltic countered that the erosion-control proposal has been discussed at numerous meetings and was far from a new subject for BHCG. In the end, 13 attendees registered their support for the canyon group's efforts.

An ice-cream social was then held to thank all of the volunteers who helped during Pride.

Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Lamb, Secretary.