

Notes and News

Look, down the road, it's a park, it's green, it's almost done! **St. Elizabeth Park** is almost completed. Developed with community input, this park was built with money and land that came from new housing as well as funds from the City's Park Trust Fund. The land came as part of the requirement for the Fruitdale Station (old K-Mart) development that is now opening its doors. The construction was handled by the Pinn Brothers development adjacent to the park. The playground structures, seating area and turf have all been in for some weeks now and the construction fencing came down a little early, but we should be seeing "our" park opened to the public in the next few months. The park will eventually be extended to include the current area occupied by the construction/rental office and will be fully enclosed with a safety fence. Until the park has been thoroughly expanded, inspected and signed off on by the parks department it will remain off limits. This process ensures that once the City accepts responsibility for the park it is with the assurance all features meet local, state and federal standards. There will be extra attention paid to the equipment to make sure we don't repeat what happened at O'Connor Park. A climbing wall was installed with the grips upside down and it took the better part of a year to fix it. In the meantime, the grass will take root, the trees will start to fill out and we can start to plan a celebration. SONA residents have waited almost a decade for this park to open; we can wait a few more weeks to make sure it is done right. In the meantime, stroll by the intersection of Curci and St. Elizabeth Drive and see how wonderful a 3/4 acre park can be.

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United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County is holding its annual neighborhood summit and workshop session. The workshops always feature courses that provide information on a variety of subjects ranging from Emergency Preparedness to "how to run a special event". The event this year will be held on October 11 at San Jose City College. More details will follow in next month's newsletter.

The Burbank Community Association, in conjunction with O'Connor Hospital will be conducting their second **health fair on October 18, 2008**. Free screenings for adults and kids will be available along with a resource fair. Kids will also be able to receive free dental screening.

New park space has been acquired close by.

Those of you who walk down to Buena Vista Park at the corner of Buena Vista and Scott will be pleased to know that the City has purchased the adjacent park with plans to extend the park along Scott. This property recently came on the market and local NAC (see pg 3) representatives asked that it be obtained to expand the existing site. Funds were available due to the fact the sale of another site fell through. This purchase will double the size of the existing park. Currently there is play equipment for the younger set, benches and a picnic area. Design of the new section will take place later this year.

SONA's board meeting did not take place in August due to scheduling conflicts of the board members. We will update you at the next meeting.

SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to almost 1500 residences. It is partially funded by a City of San Jose CAP Grant. All ad copy is due by the 15th of each month. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation and comments.

SONA Newsletter Editor: Randi Kinman
SONA Website Administrator: **Help Needed**

San Jose City College

After a discussion with SONA board members, SJCC has halted further construction of the baseball facilities for now. While we will still be looking at a partially completed project, it will not move forward without public input.

While SONA residents were promised that the field would not have bleachers, lights or a PA system, it was slated for a 90' net fence, restrooms, snack shack, bleachers and batting area. SONA board members met with SJCC President Dr. Michael Burke and discussed whether or not the construction plans were legally permitted under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA was designed to ensure not just standardized environmental review, but also public input regarding the project. While an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was completed many years ago, changing the plans drastically would mean the EIR should have gone before the public for a supplemental review and approval.

It would appear that this step was not taken during the many administrative changes over the last few years. This has left the current administration in the position of having to backtrack and find out how this happened. They were left holding the bag, so to speak, but have reacted quickly to address the problem. SJCC has agreed to review their records with their architectural team that has led the construction. In the meantime, all construction of the field has been halted.

In addition, SJCC is conducting a review to determine how the sound wall on the south side can be built without negatively impacting the residential neighborhood.

SONA board members were encouraged by the fact SJCC acted quickly to current problems and also discussed how SJCC could assist in graffiti and litter removal around the campus perimeter. Dr. Burke has let us know that he wishes the campus to be good neighbors and is especially concerned about the security of the campus. SJCC and SONA agreed that we have many problems in common such as traffic and parking and Dr. Burke has stated he is committed to working with residents to maintain a safe and healthy community.

What's Important to You?

The Burbank/Del Monte Neighborhood Advisory Committee is beginning a process of looking at priorities for the next few years. As a large member of this group, SONA has a vested interest in these priorities.

The B/DM NAC will be holding a series of meetings this fall to make sure that, as a group, they are directing energy to the things people want.

The original "Top 10" list of action items created years ago included items that were completed (pedestrian lighting along Scott and Auzerais), items still in progress (acquisition of park land), and items that eventually were deemed low or no priority (trolley along West San Carlos). Among the original items on the list was the feasibility study to determine whether or not a platform could be developed across Highway 280 between Moorpark and Parkmoor to provide open space and opportunity for income generation. One item that was not on the list but wound up "bubbling up" was the soon to be installed signal at Kingman and Leigh Avenues.

By participating in future discussions you can help shape the future of our neighborhood and the neighborhoods adjacent to us.

What's important to you? Is it parks and open space? Traffic calming? Blighted housing? Creating more local jobs? Enhancing our schools? Developing local shopping and retail?

Looking ahead 5, 10 or 20 years, what would be most important to you?

No project is too small and no dream is too big.

SONA has open seats on the B/DM NAC for somebody who wants to help move SONA ideas forward. If you can't devote time to attend meetings, there will be questionnaires and surveys coming out soon. Current SONA residents who serve on the B/DM NAC board are Michael LaRocca, Susan Price-Jang and Randi Kinman.

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National Night Out

Luther Burbank School

Residents from SONA, Burbank, Buena Vista and Shasta Hanchett enjoyed a night of food and fun. The barbecue was manned by SJ Fire staff, served by residents and enjoyed by all. A number of activities were available, ending with a showing of Shrek. While there were a few raindrops, that didn't dampen people's interest in the different info booths that included Megan's Law, search and rescue, canine patrols, bike safety and local activities. SONA residents walked and drove to this event in lieu of our August meeting. A raffle was held for kids who won bike helmets, games and the grand prize of a new bike.



Sherriff's Department Search and Rescue staff enjoyed receiving the free cloth shopping bags handed out by the Burbank Community Association



Board Member Michael LaRocca tended the serving line that dished out burgers (and veggie burgers) along with chips and drinks.



Fire Station 4 staff brought out the trucks and kids of all ages were allowed to see what it's like to sit in their seats.