



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Notes From the President

Next month will be our 100th issue of the SONA newsletter! What a milestone for us! And a time to remind ourselves of who we are and what our goals are. SONA is a neighborhood organization that was founded to bring together residents living in an area bounded by the Los Gatos Creek, along Bascom Avenue to Hwy 280 at Meridian and back over to the creek trail. A large area, one with fewer stores and services than 10 years ago, but one with the potential to see huge growth in the next 20 years. SONA residents, businesses and other organizations work to make our area a great place to live, work and play. Our all volunteer army works to build relationships between neighbors, businesses, government, service organizations and other neighborhoods throughout our district and the city. We provided a soccer team with uniforms, have conducted numerous clean up days, and have helped reduce crime, graffiti and vandalism in our neighborhood, planted trees, come together on issues and enjoyed potlucks.

Our next meeting will be devoted to organizing efforts around San Jose City College (SJCC) and partnering with our neighbors on these issues. We have received support from Willow Glen, Shasta Hanchett/Park, Buena Vista and others. We are inviting them to our meeting and hope to have people from all these neighborhoods as well as the Burbank and Pamilar neighborhoods. It's time to have a group discussion and make sure everyone is aware of all our efforts and to ensure that problems aren't just pushed from one side of the campus to another. We also need all the documentation that you have stashed around your house so we can compile a complete file. We have discovered that many of you have emails or correspondence that others don't. If you can scan and send them to a board member, great, if not bring your documents to the meeting. We promise we'll return your originals.

On June 2 at 7pm a study session with the Board of Trustees will be held in room T-415 at San Jose City College. While comments for the SDEIR are closed, the Board is holding this session to discuss comments on the Baseball Field Complex only. This does not re-open public comment but will allow the Board to hear your statements. This is an unusual step but it will allow the residents to talk about the fact we were told one thing while another thing was being developed. You can also expect to hear from the baseball players and families that night.

Steve Kline received documents just before press time that will allow us to look at how the process of moving projects forward worked. While we seem to have the support of the trustees, many people would like to know where the failures were and how we can ensure they don't happen again.

There are some very important "Do not miss" meetings coming up, so please go to page 3 and make sure you don't miss them. We will need people to attend various meetings regarding SJCC, so please make sure that your name is either on a petition or contact Steve Kline, Michael LaRocca or Randi Kinman. We go to press before meeting agendas are posted so we need to develop a list of interested people.

The Bascom Avenue Library and Community Center walls are going up! The first wall was installed on Wednesday, 5/27 and the remaining walls will be staged in 6-8 week intervals. The work will move from the Bascom side to the Del Mar side and is quite the production to watch. There is a safe zone that allows interested parties to view the event. For more information on the next wall-raising, contact Shoko Hoang, City of San Jose Public works at shoko.hoang@sanjoseca.gov or 535-8386. The site superintendent for John Plane Construction is Chris McKay who can be reached at 642-1463. While exciting to watch, it is still sad that our center will not be opened upon completion due to the city's current budget mess. Don't shoot the messenger; I, too, believe that even opening one day a week would help serve our neighborhood that has been last in line for any city service.

Hope to see you at the meetings.....Randi

SONA General Meeting Thursday

June 11, 2009

6:30pm

Coffee and Social Time

7:00pm

Welcome and
Introductions

8:00pm

Where do we stand on
issues around San Jose
City College? Parking,
construction, signal
improvements,
bond expenditure, etc.

8:15pm Adjourn

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Sherman Oaks Community Center, 1800A Fruitdale Ave. SJ CA 95128

Notes and News

Thanks to our new and renewing members this month: **Stan Paddock** not only became a member, he helped pay for our website! We currently have 264 dues paying members representing 167 households and one non-profit. These dues and donations are essential for our operations.

At \$250 per month, our newsletter is our major expenditure. SONA could generate revenue from ad placement, but our volunteers are stretched pretty thin. If you know of somebody who would be willing to act as our ad salesperson, please contact Randi. We are hoping, also, that you **use Copyland for any printing needs because if they received enough people who use this month's coupon, they will discount an issue of printing our newsletter.** So, tell your family and friends to use the coupon on page 4 of our newsletter. Every penny counts.

St. Elizabeth park is going through the final process of being developed. The original agreement was that a portion of the land for the park would be used for a sales office for the St. Elizabeth development. Residents have noted the sales trailer being jacked up to be moved. The park will be completed by the developer prior to being turned over to the city. It must meet inspection criteria and be approved for transfer by the council which could take another couple of months. The tentative "we can use it" date is September 2009. By that time all grass and landscaping should have time to "set" before being used; if not the park will remain closed until it can handle high traffic. So, it's taken awhile, but we are on track to have a party at our new park sometime soon.

Some residents on the south side of San Jose City College are now celebrating a new buffer between their houses and the campus. After almost a decade of talk and many revisions, a modified wall was put into place in May.

Yeah for more trees! There are some wonderful new trees along Leigh Avenue beginning at Fruitdale that will provide much needed shade for pedestrians and users of public transit. The trees were planted along the fence line of the property used by the Parkway Child Development Center which is technically Campbell Unified School District property. Each piece of green helps!

The City of San Jose has mandated watering restrictions, so re-set any automatic timers you are using for lawn care. Help avoid rationing by watering only between 6pm and 8am. By watering only during these hours, you will lose less water to evaporation and lower your water bills.

The annual notification of property taxes will arrive in June. This notice will advise you of your home assessment for the tax year 2009-2010. It will not change the amount of taxes currently owed. If you feel that your home is valued lower than your assessment, you can file a formal request for review with the Assessor's office between July 2-Sept 15. While the assessment is free, a \$30 processing fee is required for each application. Do not fall for scams that ask you to pay for this free service. For more info call 299-5001 or go to the county's website at www.sccgov.org/portal/site/cob

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SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to almost 1500 residences. 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: Patrick Solmon

San Jose City College

The Board of Trustees met on May 12 in both open forum and closed session. Prior to the closed session, President Randi Kinman appeared before the Trustees to thank them for slowing the process of certifying the SDEIR until all questions were answered. Kinman also advised them that SONA residents and others would like to work with them on resolving issues and suggested a study session to bring all parties to the table.

During open session the Trustees decided to have an open session but couldn't come to a decision on a date. While they hoped to complete this task prior to their June meeting, as of press time there is no date set.

SONA board members Michael LaRocca and Steve Kline joined Kinman at the Trustees open session held in the auditorium. This turned out to be a very vigorous meeting because, for the first time ever, the district is looking at layoffs. With the current budget crisis comes severe cuts to funding for basic programming. Many students were there to state the campus is a life line to developing job skills. Because many students are very low income, there is concern that raising fees will push them past the point of being able to attend.

Steve Kline spoke during open session and presented a Freedom of Information Request regarding expenditure of bond funds. Steve has been unable to obtain a complete accounting of how bond money has been spent during the build out of new campus facilities.

All the board members spoke on an agenda item that would have raised daily parking fees 50% from \$2 to \$3. Staff had brought the proposal forward in response to a request to search out ways to generate much needed revenue. The increase in fees would have brought about \$55,000 to the general fund. Board members pointed out that raising fees would most likely be a tipping point for students who would save money by parking on city streets. Trustees were advised of the high rate of crime that residents and students endured when on street parking was at it's highest level as well as the existing permit parking on the south side of the campus and the number of cars currently using city streets. Board members asked that the campus conduct a parking survey prior to implementing a fee increase, another after a fee increase, commit to paying for permit parking if needed by residents and prioritizing construction of a second parking facility. The Trustees discussed the issue and the motion to raise fees was withdrawn.

Save the Date

06/02/09 7pm room T-415 at SJCC; study session with SJECCD Board of Trustees regarding Baseball Field Complex. See page 1.

06/06/09 9:30-noon at the United Way Building, 1922 The Alameda, The Great Communities Collaborative will show how our communities can be made more habitable with input from the Greenbelt Alliance, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and Urban Habitat. For more info contact Michelle Beasley 983-0856 or visit the website

www.greatcommunities.org

06/06/09 Buena Vista Home Tour runs all day. This is a great home tour just across the freeway. The BV neighborhood has an eclectic mix of "working man" homes that range from Victorian to Craftsman. It's always a treat to see how our neighbors have worked on some classic home. And you get great tips on home improvement projects from people who have already been there.

06/13/09 Is a San Jose Council District 2 health fair open to all from 10am to 2pm. Councilmember Ash Karla has organized an event in the Kaiser Permanente parking lot at Santa Teresa and Camino Verde. The weekly Santa Teresa Farmers Market will be in full swing, you can meet health professionals, enjoy entertainment and learn how to develop a healthier lifestyle. For more information or to make reservations, contact Stacie Shih at 535-4925 or email Stacie.shih@sanjoseca.gov.

6/20/09 is the 14th Annual Dancin' on the Avenue in Willow Glen from 5-10 pm. This family event has many interesting booths a variety of entertainment and, of course, dancing to bands on different stages. If you want to have a booth at the event or volunteer, contact Norma Ruiz at 298-2100 or norma@downtownwillowglen.org. For more information about weekly farmers markets, sales events and other happenings, check the website at www.downtownwillowglen.org.

07/04/09 Rose, White and Blue Parade on the Alameda is looking for vendors and floats! For more info call 436-8581 or email lclark@creditcorp.com

For a complete list of activities, events and classes offered by the City of San Jose's Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department, pick up a brochure at Sherman Oaks Community Center or visit the PRNS website at www.sanjoseca.gov/prns. Summer programs, including league sign ups can now be done online. This includes youth and adult leagues, San Jose summer camp and all programming offered at parks, community centers and neighborhood facilities.

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More Neighborhood Notes and News

As noted on Page 1, the Bascom Ave. site will not open upon completion due to budget cuts. Our Councilmember, Pierluigi Oliverio, has an online questionnaire that allows you to give input on how the city can balance the budget. You can access this by going to the website

www.sanjoseca.gov/district6/ and clicking on the button for the survey. If you cannot access the survey online, please contact the council office at 535-4906.

At press time all we know is the signal at Leigh and Kingman is due to be activated sometime in June. We hope to have a date at our next meeting so we can arrange a small ceremony. We hope that this signal will allow better control of traffic and pedestrians throughout the intersection, but realize that this will take some work to break bad habits. In any case, please be careful because it's very easy to forget that a new signal is working. We would hate to see accidents or tickets in the first few weeks while people are getting used to the change.

Hold onto those monitors, computers, TVs, VCRs, phones and other electronic items for our August e-waste recycling event. This is a fundraiser for SONA and we need all the assistance we can get. Spread the word to family and friends. Michael LaRocca is coordinating this event with San Jose City College and a tentative date of August 22 has been set. If you want to help or have questions, please contact Michael.

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