



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Notes from the President

Fall is often that odd time of year for those of us in California. While everyone else can depend on the slow, but steady pace of seasons changing, our seasons have a touch of humor to them. We always get that one week in August or September that brings cold, rain or other warnings that send us scurrying because we think fall is coming quickly. Then we get that balmy Indian Summer season that lulls us into thinking we have plenty of time before we need to get ourselves ready for winter. Going to a ballgame means either tank tops or tundra wear. While we are still harvesting tomatoes and admiring our roses it's easy to forget we need to be weatherizing our homes. Mother Nature is such a trixster.

Our October meeting is our traditional time to spend with San Jose City College staff and administration. While we've had a rocky year, I'm confident that our relationship with the current administration is coming along nicely. We all have work to do. With the most drastic cuts ever in state funding, the campus and the district are undergoing some painful adjustments. The administration is working hard to minimize the impact on students, but some hard times are ahead. Campus funding is the easiest to cut and the hardest to get back.

Joining us will be the new Vice Chancellor, Jeanine Hawk, who has been on board less than six months. She has been a proponent of meeting with communities in her previous positions and has expressed, from day one, her desire to build a good relationship with the neighbors.

We've asked neighbors to note the parking overflow from the campus and report back to us. We want to get an idea of how deep into the neighborhood the parking is going and at what times this semester. It seems that the increase in enrollment, combined with the poor economy means people are cutting corners. Parking fees are a corner that's easy to cut.

Also, we're doing our red curb survey this month so we can list the areas that need paint. If you want to help in your part of the neighborhood, let Randi know.

As San Jose PD reminded us, there is no time period when it's ok to have live bands or other noise disturbing your peace and quiet. You can call the non-emergency number and file a complaint, the officers will drive out and shut it down. If it starts back up again, more drastic measures are taken. When somebody is disturbing your peace and quiet, you don't have to wait until it's late at night to complain. As a matter of fact, it's better to do so earlier because things pick up later in the evening and non-emergency calls fall further down on the list. Day or night, it's your right to not be disturbed by other people. And, you don't have to be able to pinpoint the exact address. You just need to know which block it's on for the report. They'll ask you all kinds of questions like, "is there alcohol, are there firearms" and my response is always "I don't want to walk down and expose myself to find out". And, if you are planning a party or event at your home, be considerate. Let the neighbors know in advance, be respectful of their needs and remember that you cannot have amplified music. **See you at the meeting.....Randi**

SONA General Meeting Thursday October 8, 2009

6:30pm

Social Mixer

7:00pm

San Jose PD

(if available)

**San Jose City College
Staff & Administration**

Campus Projects

What's New

What's Going on

What's in the future

8:30 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

Funds for our newsletter are supplemented with a Community Action and Pride Grant through the City of San Jose

Notes and News

At press time the only thing we know about the recent “raid” of our Redevelopment Agency funds by the State of California is that the Agency will be laying off 25% of their staff and drastically cutting programs and projects. It can be assumed that our community center and library will go forward because they are built with bond funds, but staffing and stocking may be in jeopardy. When funds are cut from the Agency that have gone to other departments, those departments will have to make adjustments. Agency funds have contributed to parks, helped plant trees, pay for programming and have helped us add signal lights, street lights and other important things to local neighborhoods. Budget talks will begin immediately, so keep your eyes and ears peeled.

Pumpkins in the Park is October 10

at Discovery Meadow in downtown. This great event is for the entire family with cider tasting, activities, music and more. You'll find the perfect pumpkin to carve or take home a glass pumpkin. You can easily reach this event by light rail.

Don't forget to save those cans and bottles for our next **Cash for Cans** drive. The date hasn't been set yet, but you can bag and set aside the recycling materials (plastic bottles, cans, etc.) for our board members to redeem for our fundraising drive. If you wind up with too much to store, call Lisa or Jussi.

And, don't forget to save those electronic items for our 1st of the year E-Waste drive. Gather up all of those remote controls for those unknown machines, the cords that used to go to something or

other, the broken radios, tv sets, computer equipment, boom boxes, microwaves and other appliances that are sitting around the house. You know there's a stash of stuff somewhere. Put it to good use by helping SONA in our fundraising drive.

Still no word on St. Elizabeth Park. Well, still no word on the “official” grand opening. We know it's there, but it would be nice to enjoy the party sometime soon. We'll keep you posted.

A big thanks to our Councilmember, Pierluigi Oliverio, who took a hard stand at a recent council meeting to support saving some commercial property in the district. SONA Board had sent a letter opposing the project along with about half the neighborhoods in the district.

City Council is undergoing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) study to determine how the city can (or should or will or will not) go about banning plastic bags. Options include charging a fee for bags, not just an outright ban. There will be plenty of time for you to have your say in the matter. The process of an EIR takes a lot of time in gathering data and soliciting opinions. We'll keep you posted regarding meeting sites.

While our library is under construction, you can visit the Willow Glen branch that is celebrating its first birthday. The original fireplace still welcomes you and the outdoor patio was designed around an existing tree. One recent Saturday held a session on “How to Yo-Yo”, a harp recital and a classic guitar recital. They have a wide variety of DVDs and CDs, a computer room, a teen room, café area and, oh yeah, lots of books.

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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 Solar Discount Program

Bruce Karney, Sungevity

September's meeting was full of great information about current pricing, rebates and tax incentives in today's world of photovoltaic solar for the home. Bruce Karney from Sungevity provided facts, figures and an incentive to SONA members to go solar.

With existing rebates from the State of California combined with Federal Tax credits, the average home can install a system that costs only \$12,000 total. There are different ways of financing a system these days, but when you look at the savings, it's worth a few hours to investigate whether this is right for you. This is the lowest pricing for solar since rebates were offered and, with the emerging markets, likely to be as low as we see for some time. The intent of the California rebate system was to bring pricing down, at it seems in that respect we are fairly successful.

In addition to going over options and prices, Bruce outlined a number of tactics to use when talking to potential vendors. His helpful hints can be used in dealing with any major need you have for contracting around your home. He outlined key questions for your sales people, what they should be responsible for during your installation, how long it should take and who should be responsible for the paperwork. And, he reminded us that it's important to take the final step; having PG&E actually set up so you can flip the switch and start generating your own power.

Sungevity keeps costs lower by performing the "evaluate and quote" portion of the project online. They can tap into overhead shots of your home, determine when and where sun is available and evaluate your roofline to determine what your capacity for installation is before you meet. Online quotes also allow you to review information without feeling pressured by a sales person in your home.

SONA residents are being offered an incentive to go solar with Sungevity. If 5 homeowners sign up under the SONA discount program, you get 5% off your system. This discount grows with the number of people who sign up with a 15% maximum discount. You have to move on this soon, however, because, as with all good deals, it's for a limited time. You can contact Bruce at www.sungevity.com or call him at 877-257-8648. Additional discounts are available if you order early.

What do all These City Meetings

Have to do With You?

We are often telling you about meetings throughout the city that pertain to general issues (planning, parks) and policies and specific projects and are asked, "What does this have to do with SONA?" Here are some answers.

General policies regarding how we allot park space to communities, how we develop park space and how we maintain community services are under review at this point. With no park space in our neighborhood (and a community center underway), what does that have to do with SONA? Well, for one thing, trails and schools count as accessible open space and services for our community. Looked at that way, because we have access to several schools, why would we need a park? What happens if you want to legally walk your dog where there is some open space, if you are a senior citizen, if you want to enjoy some open space during school hours? Schools aren't exactly available unless you are a student on campus. And, they aren't open for everyone during weekends.

The General Plan is our city's way of planning for future growth. Where will all the new housing go, where will we have shopping centers, where will we keep land available for jobs? How will our transit system develop to serve the needs of the future? When you attend these meetings you will find that Bascom Avenue, Southwest Expressway and other nearby areas are being looked at for high density development. Many of our aging apartment complexes are being eyed for conversion to much denser housing. As we have seen in the past, that sometimes means we lose the businesses that support the residents. What do you want Bascom to look like in the future? How many people can our neighborhood take in without existing services and if we lose retail and commercial space?

Specific projects set the tone for what happens in this city. A recent proposal to develop a housing/retail project near Sam's Downtown Feed on West San Carlos was vetoed by a very narrow margin by City Council after lobbying by many neighborhoods. When arguing for saving commercial space to save jobs residents were accused of being against affordable housing. The reality is this project would have set a precedent for other neighborhoods to lose vital space that houses local services. How this city gets developed is up to you. You don't have to be trained in any subject, you just need to have an opinion.

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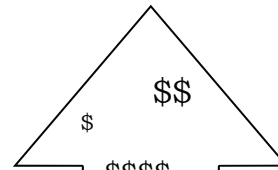
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\$3,000



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