

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL MINUTES
March 25, 2013 – DRAFT

13 Associations Present:

Balboa Terrace, Roger Ritter
Forest Hill, Walt Farrell
Golden Gate Heights, Sally Stephens
Greater West Portal, Avrum Shepard
Ingleside Terrace, Paul Conroy
Lakeshore Acres, Bill Chionsini
Midtown Terrace, George Wooding
Miraloma Park, Karen Breslin
Monterey Heights, Copley Crosby
Saint Francis Homes, Carolyn Squeri
Sunnyside, Estelle Smith
Westwood Highlands, Dave Bisho
The Woods, Judy Clarke

7 Associations Absent:

Forest Knolls, Lakeside Property Owners, Merced
Manor, Mount Sutro Homeowners, Pine Lake,
Sherwood Forest, Twin Peaks Improvement

Officers Present:

Matt Chamberlain, President
Roger Ritter, Vice President
Carolyn Squeri, Treasurer
Sally Stephens, Secretary
Avrum Shepard, Parliamentarian

Guests Present:

Meghan Tiernan, SF DPW
Peg Divine, SF DPW
Katie Miller, SF PUC
Barbara Chionsini, Lakeshore Acres
Gus Guibert, Forest Hill
Mitch Bull, Westside Observer
Kathy Howard, SF Ocean Edge
Lee Hsu, Greater West Portal
John Farrell, Forest Hill
Matthias Mormino, Sup. Norman Yee's Office
Mari Wizer, Sup. Norman Yee's Office
Annie Chou, State Sen. Yee's Office
Rob Chua, Assemblymember Ting's Office
F.X. Crowley
Pat Skain, Pine Lake
Lisa Spinali, Sunnyside
Alex Millarez, Ingleside Light
Sara Bloomberg, Ingleside Light
Al Harris, District 11 Council, OMI-NIA
Mary Harris, District 11 Council, OMI-NIA
Ryan Johnson
Billy Bob Whitman
Eric Brooks

Meeting called to order: 7:34 pm, there was a quorum (13 of 20)

Minutes: The draft of the January 28, 2013 minutes were approved – Avrum Shepard moved, Walt Farrell seconded.

Officers' Report: There was no President's, Vice-President's, or Secretary's Report

Treasurer's Report: Carolyn Squeri reported that WTPCC has \$3267.76 currently in the bank. She has received dues from about half of the member organizations. She reminded delegates that the IRS Form 990 e-file postcards (returns for exempt organizations) are due at the end of March if your fiscal year ended in December 2012.

Parliamentarian's Report: Avrum Shepard noted that he is still working on a roster of members. Ten organizations have not responded to his request for contact information. He will work with them to get the needed information. Matt Chamberlain reiterated that if you need to reach another delegate and you don't have contact information, you can email info@westoftwinpeaks.org and we will get back to you with the information. Shepard noted that another gold buyer/pawn store received approval from the police to rent at 162 West Portal. He also

noted that the St Francis Market wants to stay in its present location on West Portal (where La Boulange hopes to open).

Committee Reports:

Planning and Land Use Committee: Estelle Smith reported that she, Dave Bisho, Paul Conroy, Roger Ritter, and Matt Chamberlain had met to discuss the new Planning and Land Use Committee. They put together a list of issues for the Committee to follow: serial permitting, CEQA, secondary units, the Housing Element, and the Monterey Blvd Safeway. The Committee will send a message to members in the next few weeks asking for feedback on what issues are important to members, what's happening in their neighborhoods, etc. They want to be inclusive. If you would like to be on the Committee, you can contact Smith at info@sunnysideassociation.org. Matt Chamberlain noted that land use issues are a big deal in all neighborhoods, but it can be overwhelming keeping up with everything. The Committee can help with that. Barbara Chionsini suggested the Committee add conditional use permits, e.g., on West Portal, including enforcement of those permits to its list of issues.

Tech Committee and Open Space Committee: No Update.

Public Health Committee: George Wooding reported that there is a new California Pacific Medical Center agreement. CPMC wanted to build a new hospital on Cathedral Hill while continuing to operate St. Luke's. Their current campus is not seismically safe. He also noted that two doctors from Laguna Honda who reported misuse of funds and were subsequently fired were just awarded \$750,000 in a wrongful firing lawsuit.

Transportation Committee: Avrum Shepard reported that SB1492 from State Sen. Mark Leno would allow SF to change more for vehicle license fees, potentially generating \$72 million each year. This bill will be on the November 2014 ballot. He also noted that the MTA is considering changing how it defines "Levels of Service", so that impacts of a transit project on congestion of cars will no longer be considered. He suggested traffic would likely move much slower in the future if this change in definition goes into effect. Carolyn Squeri noted that the 19th Avenue Transit Project's proposal to move the M MUNI line on 19th Avenue also currently proposes eliminating stops at Ocean Avenue and Eucalyptus. Neighbors and seniors who go to Ocean Ave for medical appointments do not want those stops removed. In addition, neighbors are concerned about plans to put MUNI on an overpass between two rows of house in Lakeside Village. Squeri suggested WTPCC help the neighbors with their concerns. Matt Chamberlain noted that the project is still very much in its planning stages, but that people who are concerned should organize to get in front of the issue. The next meeting on the 19th Ave Transit Project is Wed, April 10.

New Business:

1) 15th and Wawona Water Main Break: Katie Miller, the Head of Engineering with the City Distribution System for the SF PUC, gave some background about the SF Water System. SF Water serves 800,000 residents in a very sustainable, gravity-fed system, with water from Hetch Hetchy. The water is very high quality and the system is generally very reliable. She noted that there are 1200 miles of pipeline in SF. Water is run through 12 large reservoirs and 12 pump stations, to keep pressure constant in the system. 60% of pipes are cast iron, installed before 1970. They are replacing those with iron pipes that are more flexible and have less corrosion. 18% of pipes, or about 223 miles of pipes, are over 100 years old. They are replacing them, but cannot do them all overnight. The Pipeline Replacement Program currently replaces about 15 miles of pipes each year, or about 1% of the system, at a yearly cost of \$45 million. Much of your water bill goes to this program. They try to prioritize which pipes are most likely to fail and replace those first. Even so, there are about 120 pipe breaks a year, although most of them result in minimal property damage.

Miller reported that at 2:30 am on February 27, 2013, a joint on a 16-inch, high-pressure (100 psi) pipe broke open on 15th Ave between West Portal and Wawona, unearthed the pipe, and flooded the street. The topography of the area is a bowl, and when sand from the break clogged the storm drains, the flooding got much worse. They had the water shut off within 30 minutes but because it was a high-pressure pipe, a lot of water came onto the

street. 23 homes and many vehicles were inundated with water. There have also been ground subsidence issues and sinkholes. The SF PUC had people on site, including claims people, from the beginning.

Miller said that the neighborhood was created from the “spoils” of the creation of the West Portal tunnel and the soil likely was never compressed properly before it was built upon. It was also once an old creek bed. The sewer lines that were replaced on 15th Ave in the months before the break may also have created weaknesses or leaks in the pipe. The SF PUC is working with homeowners and is doing infrastructure improvements in the area. They have replaced 8-inch pipes on four blocks in the area, and will replace the 16-inch pipe. They will redo the streets and sidewalks in the area. They have set up a temporary office at 383 West Portal to work with homeowners on claims. They are doing deep boring throughout the neighborhood to better understand what’s going on with the soil in the area. They have done mold and e-coli tests in homes in the area. They are taking responsibility for the break and she pledged they would make residents whole. They decided to close 15th Ave between West Portal and Wawona to protect pipes from vibrations from cars until the work is completed. They will spend about two more weeks on water projects in the area, then another 2-4 weeks on sewer work on Wawona. Some sewer work on 16th Ave that had already been planned will be done now, since they’re already doing so much other work in the neighborhood.

2) Update on Sloat Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program (SPSIP): Meghan Tiernan, from DPW, reported that the SPSIP has grant funding for improvements at three intersections with Sloat– 23rd Ave, Everglade, and Forest View. They will put bulbouts at Forest View and Everglade, which reduce the length of street that people have to cross and calms traffic. They also plan to install a flashing beacon at Sloat and 23rd Ave, which will flash and let drivers know that there is someone crossing the street. Note that Sloat Ave is not city property, so they are doing these improvements on Caltrans property, Highway 35. Barbara Chionsini noted that there is at least one pedestrian fatality a year, sometimes more, on Sloat, including one just recently. She noted that traffic planners want traffic to flow on the road, leaving them resistant to pedestrian issues. She also complained that the city planted tall native plants in the median, which have grown too high and make it hard for drivers to see pedestrians until they are in the street. She would like those trees removed. She noted that neighbors sent a letter to Caltrans a year ago about pedestrian safety issues and nothing happened. She thanked Tiernan and Peg Divine, both from DPW, for their help getting the grant and moving the program forward. Tiernan noted that they know there are more problems on Sloat than can be addressed with just this one grant, and they are seeking additional grants to deal with other issues. They hope to accelerate any design changes so they can be done before Sloat is repaved by Caltrans in 2014. When asked if bulbouts make it unsafe to make turns, Tiernan said that she had been told it makes it more safe. Matthias Mormino, from Sup. Yee’s Office, noted that new legislation will ensure that bulbouts are safe and meet fire safety needs. When asked if we can slow traffic speed limits on Sloat, Tiernan said they could talk to Caltrans about that. Matt Chamberlain added that a police officer at the Taraval Station has taken on pedestrian safety as an issue. When they do enforcement, people slow down. But as soon as the police stop enforcement and leave, speeds go back up. Mormino added that Sup. Yee has called for a hearing on pedestrian safety issues in District 7 for April 4th at 10 am in Room 263 at City Hall. He hopes people will come and tell their personal stories, or email stories to him if you cannot attend.

3) Changes in CEQA Appeal Process: Matt Chamberlain noted that we would not have the discussion of proposed changes to the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) appeals process that we had planned for tonight since Sup. Scott Wiener could no longer attend the meeting. We will have a more detailed discussion next month. He asked Eric Brooks, from the Community CEQA Improvement Team, to give us some basic background about CEQA. Brooks noted that there have been many horror stories about misuse of CEQA, but there are even more horror stories from when big developers push projects through. When you build something or operate a plant, you have to reveal the impact of what you want to build or operate on the environment and on people. CEQA controls these impact reports. Brooks said that big developers want to stop CEQA or water it down, as for example, when they tried to change CEQA at the end of last year’s legislative session in Sacramento but activists stopped it. In San Francisco, there are new plans to change CEQA appeals process. Sup. Wiener didn’t talk to any neighborhood, grassroots, or environmental groups before introducing legislation to change the

appeals process. He was told to meet with groups to amend his legislation. According to Brooks, Wiener met with a few groups, but refused to change anything.

Brooks argued that there are three main problems with Wiener's proposed legislation – 1) Wiener wants to change when you can appeal a project. Currently you can appeal a project after its *final* approval. Wiener's legislation would change it so that you can only appeal a project 30 days after its *initial* approval. The concern is that if you can only appeal a project after its initial approval, then developers will design their plans to look nice at the initial approval stage and then change the project to something people don't want after the initial approval stage when there is no longer an opportunity to appeal the project. 2) Wiener wants to limit appeals to the full Board of Supervisors. Currently CEQA appeals are heard before the full Board. Because they are a quasi-judicial body, you need a hearing before them if you plan to take a project to court. Wiener's legislation would make it so that the full Board never hears CEQA appeals, only a much smaller Committee of the Board. 3) Wiener's legislation will mean you have to have all the material you need to make your case at the time of the appeal.

When asked why there is any need for changes to CEQA appeals, Brooks said that there are exemptions you can get for a project so that you do not have to do a full Environmental Impact Review. There is vagueness in the way local laws control exemptions, and, because things are so vague, the Planning Dept is essentially making it up as they go along. He said he is okay with changing the vagueness of CEQA, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Brooks also noted that currently you can get approval for a project and you may have to wait to actually do the construction. Then, for example, two years later, any activist can swoop in and try to stop your project. He said there should be limits on appeals, but those limits should be based on final, not initial approvals. Brooks added that Sup. Jane Kim will introduce an alternative CEQA appeal reform legislation. He said some aspects of her legislation are too heavy-handed, but they are still working on it and he urged people to wait to oppose it until they see the final version that she introduces. He does however hope that WTPCC will oppose Wiener's legislation.

4) Other Business: Dave Bisho reported that the Palace Hotel announced they will bring back the historic Maxfield Parrish painting that they had announced earlier this week that they would remove from its place in the hotel bar. Carolyn Squeri noted that they said they would bring it back, but they did not promise to put it back in the bars, so people should not assume the issue is settled.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:01 pm

Minutes submitted by Sally Stephens, Secretary

2013 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

Fourth Monday of every month – January 28, February 25 (location TBD), March 25, April 22, May 20 (note the date change for May due to the Memorial Day holiday), June 24 (annual meeting), September 23, October 28, November 25. No meetings in July, August, and December. *All meetings are at 7:30 pm. Location at Miraloma Park Clubhouse, 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd at least through the summer, as the Forest Hill Clubhouse is renovated.*

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: Balboa Terrace – Forest Hill – Forest Knolls – Golden Gate Heights – Greater West Portal – Ingleside Terraces – Lakeshore Acres – Lakeside Property Owners – Merced Manor – Midtown Terrace – Miraloma Park Improvement Club – Monterey Heights – Mount Sutro Homeowners – Pine Lake Park – St. Francis Homes – Sherwood Forest – Sunnyside – Twin Peaks Improvement Association – Westwood Highlands – The Woods