

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL MINUTES
April 28, 2014 – DRAFT

11 Associations Present:

Balboa Terrace, Roger Ritter
Forest Hill, Walt Farrell
Golden Gate Heights, Sally Stephens
Greater West Portal, Matt Chamberlain
Lakeshore Acres, Bill Chionsini
Midtown Terrace, George Wooding
Miraloma Park, Karen Wood
Monterey Heights, Franck Avril
Pine Lake, David Golden
Sunnyside, Estelle Smith
The Woods, Judy Clarke

9 Associations Absent:

Forest Knolls, Ingleside Terraces, Lakeside Property
Owners, Merced Manor, Mount Sutro Homeowners,
Saint Francis, Sherwood Forest, Twin Peaks,
Westwood Highlands

Officers Present:

Matt Chamberlain, President
Roger Ritter, Vice President
Sally Stephens, Secretary

Guests Present:

Mitch Bull, Westside Observer
Barbara Chionsini, Lakeshore Acres
John Farrell, Forest Hill
Lee Hsu, GWPNA
Tim White, GWPNA
Rae Doyle, GWPNA
Rani Singh, SF District Attorney's Office
Una Bailey, SFPD
Kathy Montague, Pine Lake
Gus Guibert, Forest Hill
Carl Wendorf
F.X. Crowley
Herbert Dunmeyer, Forest Knolls
George Matula, Clarendon (TPIA)
Myrta Matula, Clarendon (TPIA)
Mathias Mormino, Sup. Yee's Office
Judy Berkowitz, Coalition of SF
Neighborhoods

Meeting called to order: 7:32 pm, there was a quorum (11 of 20).

Minutes: The draft minutes for the March 24, 2014 meeting were approved, with two small corrections.

President's Report: Matt Chamberlain noted that the May 2014 meeting conflicts with Memorial Day, so the May meeting will instead be held on Monday, June 2. There will be a second meeting in June, the normal June meeting on June 23.

There was no Vice President's, Treasurer's, Secretary's or Parliamentarian's Report.

Committee Reports:

Planning and Land Use Committee: Matt Chamberlain reported that the Mayor has signed the secondary unit legislation. The question is whether or not the WTPCC should hire an attorney to oppose the legislation in court, or try to get a ballot measure addressing the issue. We would need 10,000 signatures to qualify for the ballot. Matt added that he does not think a ballot measure will win. He thinks it is more likely to go to court, based on CEQA violation since they said it would only impact existing secondary units, but a loophole could allow new secondary units. **Matt asked delegates to go back to their member organizations and ask them if they would be willing to give money to challenge the secondary unit legislation in court.** Estelle Smith noted that we could take a wait and see approach, see how many legalizations actually take place for a few months.

George Matula gave an update on the proposal to take unimproved part of Stanyan St and turn it into a private driveway. The legislation was sent to the full Board of Supervisors from the Land Use Committee. He argued that Sup. Norman Yee did not back the neighbors and wants them to negotiate with the developer. There is now a 60-day continuance.

Matt Chamberlain discussed Sup. David Chiu's proposed legislation to change how the City handles short-term rentals. It is currently illegal to rent for less than 30 days, except for hotels, bed and breakfasts, etc. But there are currently 14,000 listings for nightly or weekly rental listings on VRBO and Airbnb. Chiu's legislation would legalize these short-term rentals, but only if the person doing the renting lives there most of the time. If a unit is rent-controlled, the legislation would cap the short-term rental price at the rent-controlled amount. It would ban non-resident owners from short-term renting. If there is a no subletting clause in a lease, that would still apply. The legislation would not apply to single-family homes; it would still be illegal for short-term rentals of those. However, if you have two or more units, then the legislation would allow short-term rentals for them. So, if you legalize a secondary unit in a single-family home, you could use the secondary unit as a short-term rental. **Matt asked delegates to go back to their member organizations and ask them if they will support WTPCC in a fight against short-term rentals.**

Open Space Committee: Sally Stephens reported on a Public Plaza program sponsored by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development. It is an attempt to activate underutilized public plazas, especially those with maintenance issues, by allowing a non-profit group to come in and, in exchange for a commitment to maintain the plaza, the non-profit can use up to 1/3 of the total space for private uses. These private uses could be music concerts, or farmers markets, or outdoor movies, or even retail space. Critics are concerned about the privatization of public space and a lack of oversight once the non-profit takes over. The proposed legislation will be heard before the Planning Commission on May 1.

There was no Public Health, Transportation, Technology, or Public Safety Committee reports.

New Business:

Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi: The Sheriff provided an update on what is happening in our jails and in the Sheriff's Dept. They have a staff of 1,100, both sworn and civilian employees. 49% of his budget is related to jails, so they are involved with a lot of other things. We currently have the lowest jail population ever. He has focused on reducing recidivism. SF has never sent as many people to state prison as other counties, so we are not as impacted by realignment sending prisoners from state prisons back to county prisons to relieve overcrowding of state prisons. SF has the first charter high school in a jail; the school will soon expand to the LA County Jail. City College will start holding two classes in jail. He would like to see vocational programs to train people to take part in the Bay Area's construction boom after they are released. As the jail population decreases, Mirkarimi said we may need to re-imagine the role of the Sheriff's Dept. He suggested Sheriff deputies could handle bookings as they once did, which would free up SFPD staff to do more pressing duties. Deputies could help with public safety and enforcement; for example, deputies could be deployed on MUNI or in parks. He noted that he is concerned about the population of mentally ill people. Jail should not be substitutes for mental health facilities. The issue of inmates with mental health issues is growing and needs to be addressed. The Sheriff's Dept. also conducts evictions, which have increased both in numbers and in intensity. He has created an Eviction Assistance Program to try to bring clinicians in during evictions to help people being evicted, which is an extremely stressful situation. The Sheriff's Dept. also tries to ensure people have some place to go when they are evicted. When asked what he has done to cut costs, given that the jails are only 48% occupied, Mirkarimi said he had closed one jail in the Hall of Justice. When asked why SF should not combine the SFPD and Sheriff's Dept. into one department, Mirkarimi said that if there was any consolidation it would have to be managed under the Sheriff's Dept. because the Sheriff is an elected office.

SF City Budget: Sup. Mark Farrell, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Supervisors, reported on the San Francisco City budget. He noted that when he came into office, unemployment in SF was 10%.

It is now 4%. In fact, SF is the #1 city for job growth. In many ways we're better off. But we still have challenges. SF must have a balanced budget. Currently, we are looking at a \$66 million deficit that must be addressed (three years ago, the deficit faced by the City was \$585 million, so it's better, but still bad). The actual deficit may be less, since the revenue numbers from March may be better than expected. However, the City is in the middle of labor negotiations that are likely to increase the budget deficit; every 1% raise, increases the deficit by \$20 million. He noted that people think the City had a lot more money than it actually does. When asked why the SF city budget of \$7.9 billion is higher than many state budgets, Farrell responded that SF is both a city and a county, and the city budget includes departments like Sheriff, Airport, PUC that are normally not in a city budget. He noted that the budget has a lot of set-asides, e.g., SFPD staffing, so there is a discretionary budget of "only" \$1 billion. He said there is no political will to cut government. When asked if SF could cut the growth of its workforce, he responded that there has been growth, but it's not that dramatic. He noted that for every \$1 in salary, the City has to pay 45% in benefits. However, he noted that we have the lowest police staffing levels in decades and he would like to add more police officers. Farrell noted that, with the passage of Prop A last year, San Francisco is the only city in the US that has passed both pension and retiree healthcare reform. After Prop A, in 30 years, the current \$4.5 billion unfunded liability for retiree healthcare will go down to nothing. However, there will still be deficits in the meantime. Our revenue growth is 12-13%, while expenses grow by 25%. When asked about the secondary unit legislation, Farrell argued that the motivation behind it was to increase housing, not revenue. He doesn't think many people will take advantage of legalizing secondary units. He is in favor of preserving neighborhood character, but he is also okay with bringing secondary units up to code. Farrell said he is happy to come back and talk more about the budget.

New Business

Matt Chamberlain noted that a grassroots organization has developed to put a measure on the ballot to restrict what MTA can do to restrict cars and parking. For example, the ballot measure would say that MTA could not increase parking meter hours and days of operation. **Matt asked delegates to go back to their member organizations to see if they support this ballot initiative.** At the next meeting, we can discuss whether or not WTPCC will support the ballot initiative and help gather signatures. Judy Berkowitz, from the Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods, suggested delegates consider supporting Tony Kelly, head of the Portero Hill Boosters, who is running for Supervisor against Malia Cohen, and also support Kathrin Moore and Hisashi Sugaya for re-appointment to the Planning Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Minutes submitted by Sally Stephens, Secretary

2014 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

Fourth Monday of every month – January 27, February 24, March 24, April 28, May (TBD because the normal meeting day falls on Memorial Day), June 23 (annual meeting), September 22, October 27, November 24. No meetings in July, August, and December. *All meetings are at 7:30 pm. Location is the Forest Hill Clubhouse.*

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