



UPTOWN PLANNERS

NOVEMBER 19, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

DATE: 11/19/15

Call to order by Vice Chair Tom Fox at 6:15

In attendance: Gary Bonner, Roy Dahl, Ken Tablang, Tom Fox, Bob Daniel, Michael Brennan, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney, Mat Wahlstrom (entered at 6:22 at which time quorum was met).

Roy Dahl, Treasurer, Chairs as Tom Fox, Vice Chair, is recovering from medical treatment.

1. UPTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN – REVIEW OF DRAFT RECREATION, AND UPTOWN HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT OF THE UPTOWN COMMUNITY PLAN. (Time Limits: Staff–10 Minutes, Board Members-10 Minutes)

Marlon Pangilinan, Community Planner.: Indicates the following presentation will consist of responses to preliminary feedback on the recreation element.

Howard Greenstein, Park Planner, Provided the Following Update: Additional park areas have been added to the plan including Mystic Park among others. Proposed equivalencies would be removed from the west end of Balboa Park. The two existing equivalencies they will retain are the Children’s Park and the dog off leash area. Quince Street mini park and Freedom Park will remain in the park figures. By removing the equivalencies they delete 39 acres of potential parkland. They add back 3.5 acres for a total of 35 or 36 acres to park deficiencies. Two recreational centers were proposed on the west stretch of Balboa Park but will be now be deleted in the plan. The two recreation centers will need to be located elsewhere in Uptown.

Michael Brennan: What is an equivalency? A: The use of parkland within a park as opposed to finding new parkland within the community. These usually occur in older neighborhoods that are impacted.

Public Comment:

Cindy Thorsen: The City of Los Angeles identified 50 parks totaling 170 acres in 2012. Parks are important for exercise and socialization. Long term planning is critical. Densely populated areas are the most deficient in parkland. Equivalencies were not counted.

Sharon Gehl: Mission Hills Town Council suggests that the Grant School recreational joint use should be a priority. The Goldfinch overlook should also be given priority.

Ian Epley: The Park & Recreation Dept. should consider the corridors for greening on 4th and 5th Street. Corridors should be green parkways; the tree plan should be fully implemented; urban forestry is very important.

Paul Meyer: from the Balboa Park Conservancy, thanks staff for removing the recreation buildings from the west side of the park. He wishes to stay in closer touch with the Uptown Planners.

Don Liddell: from the West Mesa Subcommittee, reiterates support for the removal of the recreation buildings.

Ann Garwood: She appreciates the removal of the recreation buildings. Requests an aquatic center in Uptown and recreation center before any more density should be allowed.

Ernie Bonn: Remnant lots (properties too small for future development impacted by multi-family projects) should be actively pursued for recreational opportunities and mini parks. The San Diego Unified School District (Annex 2 WPA 1936 building) should be considered for a recreation Center since it is adjacent to the Birney Joint Use Playing Field.

Gary Bonner: Clarified several points with staff including ADA compliance, responsibility for building and maintaining new trails, landscape buffer zones and community control of community based parks within Balboa Park.

Tom Mullaney: He is interested in parks and green space as they are crucially important to residents. The Planning staff keeps telling us that providing new parks is difficult. We know that. During the General Plan hearings, Planning Commissioner Carolyn Chase heard that comment, and responded: "Everything worthwhile is difficult!"

San Diego's 2.8 acres per 1000 people is a very minimal standard. Under 3 to 5 acres per 1000 people is regarded as 'park poor' by many state and national standards. Yet the city staff is making little attempt to meet even the 2.8 acre standard. He mentioned LA's ambitious plan, the "50 Parks Initiative". We should have a plan to find new park land rather than come up with an accounting method to say what we have is adequate. We have 5-15 acres of actual parkland identified in the plan, which is insufficient.

Typically canyons are considered Open Space, not parks. We need more parks for the additional planned residents of Uptown.

Tom provided 3 handouts: A 2006 motion from Uptown Planners opposing the counting of Balboa Park as a community park. The 2/24/15 Uptown Planners motions regarding the draft Recreation Element. And a table showing the park acreage added since the 1988 community plan adoption.

Bob Daniel: He is focused on Mission Hills. There is not enough park acreage. He supports the Grant school joint use recreational opportunity. He suggests that the City be required to have a policy of identifying and acquiring new park land.

Mat Wahlstrom: Distributed aerial photo to board identifying three properties at Laurel St and Union St. He reports that these properties are counted as public open space land but are up for sale by the city's real estate department. He noted that there was a similar problem with the Facilities Element counting two schools closed during 2015. City staff clarifies that the homes on the property may be historic and are not of interest to the Park and Rec. department. Mat believes these homes could be turned into recreation centers. In general, he is concerned the city is not consulting Uptown Planners on the sales of public lands in Uptown, and that the draft CP is already obsolete. Marlon indicated that the Real Estate Asset Department could be asked to make presentations.

Motion 1

Gary Bonner:

Motion regarding a Survey of Potential Park Sites

The General Plan states that the City's primary goal is to obtain land for park and recreational facilities.

Since Uptown needs additional parkland to mitigate the impacts of growth, it is desirable to establish a baseline for potential parkland before development proceeds under the updated plan.

Prior to the adoption of the Uptown Community Plan, a *Survey of Potential Park Sites* will be completed, and reviewed at a public hearing.

This survey will include the following:

1. Paper streets.
2. Undeveloped lots, whether public or privately owned.
3. Publicly owned land which has been identified as surplus.

4. Publicly owned land with buildings which are unused, or have been determined to be obsolete. Examples are the DMV site, and the San Diego Unified School District site on Park Blvd. (correct location – Normal Street)

This survey is not intended to identify all sites with future potential as park sites. It is recognized that currently developed land may become available in the future to satisfy park needs. This includes:

1. Public land currently in use.
2. Private land, to be obtained by the city through bequest, purchase, exchange, and Transfer of Development Rights.

Reference above to "parks" is assumed to include potential use as plazas.

Second by Mat Wahlstrom

Ernie Bonn friendly amendment: remnant lots be considered as well
Accepted by Gary Bonner.

Tom Fox: He is in support, eminent domain is not a part of the motion. The survey must be done prior to the adoption of the plan update.

Bob Daniel: Offers amendment that the City would “creatively and persistently” approach landowners
Accepted by Gary and Mat

Roy Dahl: He thinks that the City has been working toward the goal of the motion for the past 5 years.

Motion passes: 8-0-1

In favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Tom Fox, Bob Daniel, Michael Brennan, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney, Mat Wahlstrom
Chair abstains

Motion 2:

Mat Wahlstrom: Proposes a moratorium of the sale of any City owned lands in Uptown until the stipulations of the “motion regarding a survey of potential park sites” has been completed.

Second by Gary Bonner

Motion passes 6-2-1

In Favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Bob Daniel, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney, Mat Wahlstrom

Opposed: Tom Fox and Michael Brennan

Chair abstains

Motion 3:

Mat Wahlstrom: Uptown Planners supports the City in its response to public input to rescind its plans for recreation centers within Balboa Park.

Second by Tom Fox

Motion passes 6-1-2

In Favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Bob Daniel, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney, Mat Wahlstrom

Opposed: Tom Fox, Michael Brennan

Chair abstains

Historic Resources Survey Discussion:

Kelly Stanco, Senior Planner, Presentation: Handout provided to the board, "Uptown Survey Revisions." Reconnaissance-level surveys discussed as well as timeline of various completed surveys.

Roy Dahl, Chair: Requests clarification on CPIOZ protections for the potential historic districts. A: No additional language has been completed at this time.

Public Comment:

Ben Nicholls from the Hillcrest Business Association: He encourages new development and growth. They ask that actual historic buildings be preserved and that a National Main Street program should be the tool for preservation in Hillcrest. The potential historic district for Hillcrest should be removed.

Sharon Gehl: The City should not identify potential historic districts within the plan update process.

Ian Epley: In the 2007 historical resource survey the only historically significant historical resource in Hillcrest was the Jimmy Wong sign. Due process and property rights would be negatively impacted with potential historic districts, they should not be pursued.

Barry Hagar from Mission Hills Heritage: The historic survey is a step in the right direction. Speaks to the advantages of historic districts and preservation.

Janet O'Dea: She appreciates the additions to the survey and feels it is headed in the right direction. The Egyptian Architectural sites should be considered for a Multiple Properties listings.

Elizabeth Robinson: She reports that property owners in the commercial core are strongly opposed to the potential historic district in the Hillcrest core. The community needs growth and change which will be inhibited by the proposed district. Property owners should be asked whether or not they want to be included in a historic district.

Carol Emerick: Appreciates the study and acknowledgement of Cleveland Heights as a historic district.

Nancy Moors, Hillcrest History Guild founder: She supports Cleveland Heights as a historic district and supports historic districts in general as good for the community.

Ann Garwood: Many buildings and landmarks in Uptown still look how they did many years ago and should be preserved.

Leo Wilson: Metro CDC – Bankers Hill is a success story. They have gone out of their way to preserve historic buildings. Historic centers are a draw for tech companies. He is supportive of City staff's work on the survey.

Board Discussion

Mat Wahlstrom: He is skeptical of the HBA proposing a National Main Street Program as the preservation tool in Hillcrest, as there is no such program and, even if there was, it would leave us without an objective Historic Preservation Element. He also appreciates the survey and supportive of the work done by the City.

Roy Dahl: He would like the Main Street National organization looked into. Without the CPIOZ language it is difficult to have an opinion at this point.

Michael Brennan: Supports a National Main Street program. He is concerned about property rights of land owners in the commercial core. Individual buildings and landmarks should be preserved but the potential historic district for Hillcrest is too blunt a tool. He is supportive of historic districts for single family neighborhoods if the property owners are enthusiastic about it. Many property owners in the Hillcrest core are opposed and they should be asked to vote on the matter before burdening them with historic regulations.

Ken Tablang: Shares concerns with potential historic districts and the effect they will have on property owners.

Bob Daniel: Wants to know when the CPIOZ language will be completed. City staff reports that the timeline for this is undetermined.

Tom Fox: Identifies a possible conflict between the southwest Bankers Hill proposed historic district and the CPIOZ language. Of concern is the limitation of parking in this district.

Tom Mullaney: Supports the portion of Cleveland Heights that could be a district. He would like to focus on the survey and wants to narrow discussion on whether the information brought forward in the survey is correct.

Gary Bonner: Requests that the CPIOZ language be finished so that the board can make informed decisions.

Ernie Bonn: The Egyptian Revival Architectural sites as Multiple Properties Listings is missing from the survey. (Kelley Stanco responded that most sites have been individually designated). University Heights commercial area should be surveyed as a potential historic district. Buffer zones or conservation areas were looked at in the 2006 survey and should be considered in the updated historic element. (Marlon replied that they have been considered in the Urban Design Element).

Motion 4

Tom Mullaney: Uptown Planners request that the City Staff consider the northern portion of Cleveland Heights as a potential historic district.

Second by Gary Bonner

Vote passes 7-0-2

In Favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Tom Fox, Michael Brennan, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney, Mat Wahlstrom

Bob Daniel and Chair abstain

Motion 5

Mat Wahlstrom: Uptown Planners endorses all the recommended designations in the current draft historic resources survey report, establishing them as our communities' baseline historic preservation considerations.

Second by: Ernie Bonn

Tom Mullaney offers substitute motion: Uptown Planners accepts the draft November 2015 Historic Resources Survey Report as part of our community plan update.

Second by Bob Daniel

Vote to substitute motion

Vote passes 7-1-1

In Favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Tom Fox, Bob Daniel, Michael Brennan, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney

Opposed: Mat Wahlstrom

Chair abstains

Vote on substitute motion

Vote passes 7-1-1

In Favor: Gary Bonner, Ken Tablang, Tom Fox, Bob Daniel, Ernie Bonn, Tom Mullaney,
Mat Wahlstrom
Opposed: Michael Brennan
Chair abstains

Adjourned at 8:45