



NORTH PARK PLANNING COMMITTEE

**PUBLIC FACILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, PARKS, AND PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE**

*www.northparkplanning.org*

**MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, April 14, 2010, 6:30 p.m., North Park Main Street office  
3076 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92104

Called to order: 6:34 p.m.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members:** Dionné Carlson (Chair), René Vidales (Vice-Chair), Rob Steppke, Cheryl Dye, Robert Barry, Lynn Elliott (arrived 6:38)

**Community**

**Voting Members:** Keoni Rosa (arrived 6:45)

**Approve April 14, 2010 Agenda.**

**Motion: Approve agenda. Barry/Dye 5-0-0**

**Chair's Comments.** New Chair Dionné Carlson welcomed everyone to the first Public Facilities subcommittee meeting of 2010

**Approve November 5, 2009 Minutes.**

**Motion: Approve November 5, 2009 minutes. Elliott/Carlson 3-0-3** (Steppke, Dye, and Barry abstained)

**Announcements:**

1. **SANDAG Public Workshops on Regional Transportation Plan.** April 26, 27, and 28, and May 3, and 6. [www.sandag.org/2050rtp](http://www.sandag.org/2050rtp)
2. **Comments needed for SANDAG's San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan (RBT).** Comments only on the Mitigated Negative Declaration. Public review started on March 25 and end on April 26. [www.sandag.org/bicycle](http://www.sandag.org/bicycle)
3. **National Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 21:** [www.icommutesd.com](http://www.icommutesd.com)
4. **City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan Open House:** Thursday May 20, 6-8 p.m. Hall of Champions at Balboa Park. <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/bicycleplan.shtml>
5. **Affordable Housing Parking Study.** May 18, 6-8 p.m. City Heights Urban Village Office and Townhomes, 4305 University Ave. <http://www.sandiego.gov/affordpark/>
6. **Lafayette Hotel, Special Open House revitalization celebration.** Thursday, April 15, 10:30-11:30 a.m., 2223 El Cajon Blvd. RSVP [Tina@LafayetteHotelSD.com](mailto:Tina@LafayetteHotelSD.com) or call 619-296-2101 ext 162.
7. **Balboa Park Plaza de Panama Improvements.** Part of the Balboa Park Master Plan, which includes historic revitalization. April 20, Balboa Park Club, Santa Fe Room, 5-6 p.m.

**Non-Agenda Public Comment:**

1. Lynn Elliott stated that the following events are to be held on April 24: Clean up, Rebuilding Together, possible graffiti cleanup
2. Lynn Elliott also stated that the NPCA Annual Board Elections will be held on April 28, 6:00 p.m. at the North Park Theater

### **Information Items:**

#### **1. Report and discussion on the University Avenue Mobility Plan (UAMB) Scoping Meeting.**

This topic was discussed in order to have more information at a future meeting and a possible action item. Dionné Carlson introduced this item by stating that it was a follow up to the City's Scoping Meeting held on March 24, 2010.

- Robert Barry stated that Bicycle Lanes will not be located on University Avenue.
- Lynn Elliott mentioned that she talked to the engineer and mentioned the Kansas St. drainage problem while trying to implement diagonal parking.
- Rob Steppke gave the example of Arizona Street for diagonal parking. Rob measured Arizona Street between Lincoln and University, using the City standard of 20 ft and 18 feet if bordering a driveway. In calculating number of the diagonal parking spaces, he came up with only one additional space for that street segment. Parallel parking tends to be more squeezed-in because there is no striping.
- Dionné Carlson added that commercial parking is being pushed to the side streets, and while removing Parking from University may not seem to be a problem, the diagonal parking that is being added on the side streets does not necessarily increase parking.
- René Vidales talked about traffic and the surrounding streets. There are plenty of stop signs on Lincoln, North Park Way, and Wightman. A suggestion was made to see how the UAMB works before any requests are made for additional traffic calming.
- Dionné Carlson mentioned that some vehicles stick out further when parked diagonally, which is a code enforcement issue. Larger vehicles need to be accommodated.
- Dionné Carlson also added that pop-outs work great, they add additional sidewalk and do not reduce the width of the street from curb to curb.
- Rob Steppke had concerns regarding adding an additional bus stop in each direction in the vicinity of Arnold and Hamilton.
- Dionné Carlson suggested installing enhanced crosswalks with embedded flashing lights. The in-pavement flashing devices should be red, possibly adding lights in advance of crosswalk to alert drivers.
- Dionné Carlson will follow up with the City on comments that were made during the Scoping Meeting.

The public review of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is scheduled for September, 2010. A suggestion was made to follow up with another PF/PA subcommittee meeting prior to September.

#### **2. Report & Discussion from Subcommittee tasked with investigating "V-RAD" and Utility Boxes in the Public Right-of-Way.**

This topic was discussed in order to have more information at a future meeting and a possible action item. Robert Barry introduced this item by stating that there is a disconnect between the permitting process and the preparation of the plans as to what is required. The utility companies are only working with the Engineering Department and not with Planning and Development. If a utility company has a franchise agreement with the City, all they have to do is to follow city code and coordinate with the Engineering Department. The process can be changed if a City ordinance is adopted. Utility boxes are regulated state wide, but not locally (City/County).

Cheryl Dye gave a presentation and the following is the summary:

- Utility boxes are typically used for telephone, cable, irrigation systems, traffic lights, etc. SDG&E uses them for transformers, fuse cabinets, switches, and terminators.
- New boxes are added in the following situations:
  - 1) When additional capacity is needed triggered by new construction or a new business in an existing building, but through a request.
  - 2) For conversions of utility pole and line undergrounding.
  - 3) When SDG&E upgrades reliability and capacity as part of their expansion plans. Because of the utility companies' franchise agreement with the City, they don't have to submit plans to the Planning Department but only to the Engineering Department. This includes sidewalk repairs for the accommodating of facilities.
- The utility companies select locations based on cable pulling, coding, sight line restrictions, safety standards, 8-ft clearance for access. Typically boxes are located close to the property line, but not in front of doors of businesses.
- Types of undergrounding:
  - Subsurface, which includes Manhole Boxes and Hand-hole Boxes. Manhole Boxes allow a person in and all that is visible is a cast-iron lid. Hand-hole Boxes are concrete boxes with cable connections.
  - Vault rooms. Vault rooms are typically installed in very large buildings like in downtown. Vaults are entirely underground and include a transformer. Dimensions vary from 14'x20' to 20'x23' by 8' high or 12' high. SDG&E will pay for the equipment but everything else is paid by the owner; the sizes are by SDG&E standards. Vaults are typically in private property, either in the parking garage or on the first floor.
- If the undergrounding is serving more than one customer, there needs to be an easement.
- Regarding Public Noticing Process, if it is located in the Public Right-of-Way there is none. If it's a result of conversion, like undergrounding, there will be community meetings.
- Information has been obtained as to how many SDG&E boxes have been installed in North Park over the past 5 years.
  - Due to conversion there are two projects:
    - 30<sup>th</sup> street undergrounding of lines: There have been 7 utility boxes.
    - Meade Avenue from Park to I-805: 12 resulting boxes for undergrounding.
- Request for new businesses has resulted in 26 new boxes.

After Cheryl Dye's presentation, the following discussion followed:

- Keoni Rosa suggested to have the utility boxes reviewed by the Planning Committee and the Historical Resources Board, ask for a moratorium and tie it to the Community Plan Update.
- Robert Barry suggested using the Community Plan Update to identify this as a process, in order to have the City a look at this as a community issue and not an engineering issue. He would also like to see Uptown and Golden Hill to get more involved.
- Dionné Carlson would like to see more undergrounding from SDG&E. She would also like to see the Community Plan Update identify locations for the expansions.
- Robert Barry added that suggestions for undergrounding locations would not be possible because of the franchise agreement and technical expertise. He suggested to make it a public issue, and the Community Plan Update is the best route. We have a 2-year window because of the Community Plan Update.
- Rob Steppke suggested to go to other providers just as it was previously done with SDG&E, and then come back to a sub-committee. Rob Steppke will let Leo Wilson know to have this item agendaized in CPC.
- Robert Barry would like to obtain cumulative information on utility boxes, and the Engineering Department is the best source. He suggested to come back with a report to the Public Facilities sub-committee, then to the full board, in order to write a letter to ask for a moratorium on further placement on these boxes until the communities have time to address this issue in the Community Plan Update. The next step would be a letter to the Mayor.

- Cheryl Dye suggested to have Todd Gloria involved and the three Community Plan Updates.
- The following was agreed between sub-committee members:
  - Obtain support from the full board
  - Recommend Moratorium on utility boxes but only in North Park
- Rob Steppke suggested the following:
  - Do due diligence before writing a letter.
  - Make sure Uptown is on board, and if they want this to be part of the Community Plan Update, then include it.
  - Do not go citywide with this effort.
  - Have a moratorium so that we can have specific language incorporated into the Community Plan. He suggested to make a report for next NPPC meeting highlighting the lack of coordination between the Planning Department and Engineering Department.
- Dionné Carlson will give PacBell contact information to Cheryl Dye.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Unfinished, New Business & Future Agenda Items:**

1. **Unfinished business.** Mid-City Rapid Bus Transit project not coming in April. More input needed from community and planning groups. Possibly coming in May or June.
2. **New business and Future Agenda items:** Sewer improvements for Between the Heights neighborhood.

**Next meeting date:** Wednesday, May 12, 2010

**Adjournment:** Motion: To adjourn meeting. Barry/Dye 7-0-0. Meeting adjourned 9:05 p.m.