



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association is a volunteer group of residents working to make our neighborhood a better place to live work and play. A Community Action & Pride Grant from the City of San Jose supplements newsletter funds.

Issue 128 of your local neighborhood newsletter.

Notes From the President

Sometimes a meeting simply makes you smile. This is what happened at last month's SONA meeting because, for the first time in awhile, we were having an actual discussion with folks from **San Jose City College** instead of wondering what bad thing was going to happen next. The new administration, instead of simply carrying on business as usual plan, has made a point of reviewing plans and taking a hard look at what the capacity of the site is and how it can best serve those enrolled there. We heard "I don't know why this was done this way, but here's what we're looking at" a number of times. And, most often the proposal matched what the neighborhood has been asking for years. Many thanks to the SJCC folks who attended and who will be sending a representative to every SONA meeting.

In the meantime, there's been lots of activity at the Sherman Oaks site. A new tenant, **Sage Vista School**, has moved into part of the old Parkway facility. Sage Vista is a private elementary school. Due to budget cutbacks, **Parkway Child Development Center** reduced enrollment in the pre-school program that serves our low-income families. They unfortunately also had a lease that escalated rents, which further exacerbated the problem. Because Parkway depends on leasing property from the Campbell Union School District and is funded through the county and state, this is a complicated issue. **Susan Price-Jang helped organize a Madres group** that took concerns to the school board and helped highlight the needs of the community. Parkway now has an extra room and will be serving 24 additional students during both morning and afternoon sessions.

SONA is still gathering materials to operate our "office" site in the old office space used by the city. If you are willing to help clean and paint, let us know. This space will be shared with other users.

Campbell Union School District recently held a meeting to outline plans for **new playgrounds, a new multi-purpose room and outdoor seating on the Sherman Oaks Drive side, and a commercial kitchen off of Leigh Avenue.** Residents who attended this meeting had much to say about the location of the Sherman Oaks building and a proposed parking lot. They also pointed out how hidden and prone to vandalism the new playgrounds would be. While residents did not disapprove of the intent to add new playgrounds and a building, it was the location and siting that presented a problem. These points were all taken to heart and at a recent meeting; new preliminary plans were outlined that blend our ideas into the scenario. New rough drafts should be ready soon. The timeline on this is still on track to complete the playgrounds over the summer and start construction in Fall 2012.

Residents did not welcome the proposed kitchen facility on Leigh at all. Most considered it an intrusion and questioned "why here". This led to a great discussion of where it might be placed and how this could be incorporated into long-term community goals during the environmental review process. This will take time to develop so there's no panic, but stay tuned.

Busy month! *See you at the meeting...Randi*

General Meeting November 10, 2011

*****6:30pm- 8:30pm*****

SPECIAL MEETING NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The usual meeting will not take place this month. Thanks to Cindy Dellas, a Neighborhood Watch meeting has been arranged with the City of San Jose. Join your neighbors and learn about recent crime in the area, how to work together, how to recognize and report suspicious activity and much more.

Only people who have signed up in advance to attend and who stay for the entire meeting will receive a Neighborhood Watch sign and other materials.

Due to the fact this is an official police presentation and is being held on City property, alcohol consumption is banned. Due to space limitations and the nature of the meeting, only adult household members should attend.

Meeting location and contact info:

**Sherman Oaks Community Center
1800A Fruitdale Avenue
San Jose, CA 95128**

**Contact:
Cindy Dellas
294-7144**

Thanks, Cindy, for taking the lead on this program!

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association general meetings are open to all and held on the second Thursday of each month at the Sherman Oaks Community Center, 1800A Fruitdale Avenue, San Jose, CA 95128. Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month in the same location at 6:30pm. Board members are listed on page 2.

Notes and News

SONA E-mail List: We are looking to add you to our list of online members for several reasons. First of all, it's expensive to deliver newsletters and our grant funding for this has been drying up. Second, it's the right thing to do. We need to reduce the amount of paper we use and become a leaner, greener community. Third, we need to expand our ability to contact each other and stay in touch. Because our newsletter is delivered monthly, we miss sending you vital information about your neighborhood. We also miss the general "chat" that makes life interesting and fun, so we'll be sending you requests to join our Yahoo group as well. Plans are in the works to launch our Facebook page and re-vamp our website. Who's having a garage sale, who needs a gardener or plumber, who's looking for a babysitter, who's having a block party, who's selling their home? Online forums will allow us to build these neighbor-to-neighbor ties. **At no point will your information be given out or sold to anybody, at no point will your info be published.** If you have the skills and are interested in helping us grow our e-presence, contact Layne Kulwin (see below).

PayPal is available on SONA's website! You can pay your yearly dues with just a few clicks, make donations and contribute to SONA's success. We simply cannot afford to mail out reminders to people, so we are hoping that you will use the PayPal option on the website's front page and make your contribution count. This is a secure and easy way to pay your dues each year and you can also opt to have your dues deducted every year from now on. What a great way to support your neighborhood from the comfort of your own home. **The SONA website is located at <http://www.sona-sj.com/>.** You can also sign up for easy to use yearly renewals or add a little extra to support SONA.

SONA Board members Jussi and Lisa will be conducting another recycling pick up day soon. Save your cans and bottles! Give either of them a call and let them know you want to be on the pick up route. We won't publish the date of these pick ups because we don't want people scouting the neighborhood and taking the items off your front porch.

Newsletter carriers needed in the Princess Ann area. If you have an hour or so a month, SONA needs somebody to deliver newsletters each month. Great community service project or simply a way to make sure your neighbors are well informed.

This is the time of year to get ready for winter. Take a look around and make sure your weather stripping is in good shape. Check out your gutters and downspouts, repair the cracks in driveways and sidewalks and think of the problems you had last year. Check with your elderly neighbors and see if they need help in winterizing. A great resource for those who are experiencing a stressed wallet this winter is the 211 numbers or 211.org. Dial or visit the website for a list of referrals to agencies and groups who can help.

The metering lights on Highway 280 are still in the installation process up and down the route and are not expected to be activated until next year. It doesn't hurt, however, to be more attentive at that nasty merge leading to the Meridian exit. Keep in mind holiday shopping will be starting this month so plan your alternate routes now.

The County of Santa Clara offers no cost flu shots to adults over the age of 18 who are uninsured or underinsured. Seniors over the age of 65 can also receive shots with their Medicare card. Shots are offered at the Park Alameda facility, 976 Lenzen Avenue, Ste 1500B, San Jose CA 95126 Monday through Friday. Hours of the flu shot clinic and drop in clinics vary, so call 792-5200 to find out when to be there. Appointments aren't necessary. These clinics also provide a variety of services for those who are currently uninsured or underinsured.

SONA will be participating in the Christmas in the Park tree display this year! Details on what exactly that means are a little thin at press time, but we want you all to help! Contact a SONA board member for more information.

SONA Contact List

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SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to 1500 residences. All ad copy is due by the 15th of each month. Newsletter editor is Randi Kinman. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation. Feel free to contact any of us with ideas or questions.

San Jose City College Update

President Barbara Kavalier, Vice President of Administrative Services Greg Nelson and Dr. Marie-Elaine Burns all attended SONA's October meeting. The meeting focused on existing improvements to the campus that are currently underway and an update on future plans. While an EIR and master plan were completed recently, the administration is taking a new look at how the site, constricted on all sides, can be better configured to serve the most people while reducing the impact on the neighborhood.

Because there has been no sale of the bonds approved by voters during the last election, this is a good time to review and amend plans. A completely redesigned look and feel is being proposed and this will have to go through the master planning process and a new EIR.

New proposals will remove the baseball field from future development with the intent to enter into a joint use agreement with another entity. This allows buildings to shift within the campus and will allow parking lots to be reconfigured. An access loop connecting all parking lots is on the drawing board, along with removal of buildings on Moorpark, central drop off points and the ability to reinstate the 3-way traffic signal at Leland. This will allow a new theater to be built internal to campus and adjacent to a main parking lot.

Many of the ongoing neighborhood concerns were addressed such as adding parking, removing access on residential streets, increasing circulation on campus, centralized buildings and intensified security. There will be ongoing discussions, a formal process and moving forward a stronger emphasis on the core value of teaching students.

The multi-use field on Leigh is still a sticking point for everyone because it can't be used for soccer without significant safety upgrades. Residents were encouraged by the district's desire to see this field used for youth and peewee soccer, a need in this community that is currently not being addressed.

In the meantime, the topping off ceremony for the new Math/Arts building was done and this project is coming in ahead of schedule and under budget.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Smoker Safely:

Careless smoking is the leading cause of home fire deaths and the second leading cause of injuries among seniors. For those who smoke it's important to remember:

- Never smoke in bed.
- Put your cigarette or cigar out at the first sign of feeling drowsy while watching television or reading.
- Don't leave your lit cigarette or cigar unattended.
- Use deep ashtrays and put your cigarettes all the way out.
- Consider switching to fire-save cigarettes (firesafecigarettes.org) that self-extinguish when they're not being smoked.

Cooking Safely:

Home cooking fires are the number one cause of fire injuries among the elderly. Tips that can help include:

- Never leave food cooking on a stovetop unattended. When leaving the kitchen, take a wooden spoon or potholder as a reminder to turn off the oven or burners or consider installing an automatic stove shut-off device as a safety precaution. Cookstop.com, homesensors.com, stoveguardintl.com and pioneeringtech.com sell them.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing with hanging sleeves when you cook and keep towels and potholders away from flames or burners.
- Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- Double-check the kitchen before you go to bed or leave the house.

Heat Safely:

Alternative heating devices like space heaters, stoves and fireplaces are another potential fire hazard for seniors. Seniors who use these devices should keep these tips in mind:

- If you use a space heater, keep anything that can burn at least three feet away and always turn it off when you leave the house or go to sleep. Also, if you're buying a new space heater, look for one with a safety feature that automatically shuts off the power if the heater falls over.
- If you use a fireplace that burns wood, be sure you have a glass or metal screen front to catch the flying sparks and rolling logs and have the chimney flue inspected annually and cleaned if needed.
- If you use a heating device fueled by gas, oil, wood or kerosene, purchase and install carbon monoxide detectors to alert you to potential toxic gas problems.



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Bascom Community Center and Library

While many residents attended the September 28, 2011 meeting, it was surprising to hear that a project in the works for ten years was “new news” to some residents, many of whom lived nearby but didn’t realize that amazing building at 1000 South Bascom was “ours”. It has been a decade long process to get the facility built and at press time we are almost a year past the time the building was certified as ok to occupy.

As our councilmember stated on groundbreaking day, July 14, 2008, we have bond money to build facilities but the overall budget meltdown and economic crash have left us without the ability to open or staff facilities. Rather than folding the Bascom site into the overall inventory, rather than opening it part time like all other sites, this site will remain vacant for the time being.

Our councilmember, Pierluigi Oliverio, and Councilmember Pete Constant from District 1 issued a memo, approved by council that allows the Bascom site to be placed on a list of “reuse” facilities. This allows the city to ask service providers if they would be interested in operating the community center portion of the site. Based on the priorities of the 9/28 meeting, service providers were notified, invited to submit an application and provided with a tour of the facility. For many of these providers, the estimated maintenance and operations cost of \$350-\$500,000 per year will mean they self eliminate from the process. There is still hope, however that a service provider will take this project on.

At press time, the deadline for applications was not here. Once the applications are received, staff will review them and then a committee will go through the process of ranking and rating the applications. The committee will consist of some community members and city staff. People at the 9/28 meeting were asked to sign up if interested and the District 6 neighborhood group submitted names of people who wanted to be on this group. Because the facility includes a library meant to service District 1, there should be a mix of people from both districts.

If a vendor or provider is approved and chosen, the process of determining how and what services will be on site will be the next step. This contract could be awarded to one vendor to supply all requirements or a service provider could partner with other groups.

If you are interested in joining other residents who support opening this site, you can contact Board member Marlene Bird (see page 2) for more information.