

BPNA, INC

Executive Board Meeting February 12, 2009

Time and Location: 7:30-9:00 pm, home of Rob Sperling
Directors Present: Margaret Buss, Marc de la Vergne, Hal Edmonds, Sally Flory-O'Neil, Dave Philipp, and Rob Sperling
Guests Present: Claire Russell

Secretary's Report

Because Catherine Turrill, the 2009 Secretary, had not been able to attend the Executive Board meeting on January 8, the previous Secretary, Sally Flory-O'Neill, composed the minutes and circulated them among Board members for their review and approval. Rob reported on the January meeting, which was limited in both agenda and length, and did not involve any votes.

Treasurer's Report

Hal Edmonds, the 2009 Treasurer, distributed copies of his report, which also will be included in the Board's records, in accordance with the established procedure. He is using a new two-page format, one page reporting "Profit and Loss," the other serving as the "Balance Sheet." General approval was expressed of this new format by the Board. It also was reported that about half of the BPNA members have renewed.

Hal also reported that he had received a box of financial records and other materials from the past Treasurer, Pat Cosentino. After some discussion, the Board agreed that BPNA bank statements needed to be stored for one year only; statements from previous years will be shredded before being discarded. Other materials in the box were unrelated to finances but were of potential historical interest. Margaret Buss, as the director in charge of Preservation, will review these items.

ParkBeat Content for March 2009

It was agreed that, effective with the April issue, a member of the Board will be responsible for collecting all newsletter material and delivering it to Asha Jennings, the Editor, by the 15th of each month (deadline: 5:00 pm). Catherine Turrill, Secretary, agreed to do this in 2009.

We discussed whether or not the March and April newsletters should be consolidated into a single issue because the content of the newsletter tends to be light during these months. However, after some discussion, it was agreed that keeping a regular routine was preferred, even if it means that one issue is a single page only.

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Article Topics/Authors, March issue of *ParkBeat*:

- Historic home: Asha
- New members: Sally
- Annual SOCA Home Tour: Catherine
- Friends of the River: Catherine
- BPNA website: Hal
- New business (Grateful Dog): Rob
- Green Thumb: Margaret
- Real Estate: Dave

We discussed the phrasing of the article about the canceled Mardi Gras party (usually held at the Betzings' house), and Margaret agreed to reduce it to the essentials. Marc said there would be no home improvement article this month, but asked if there could be a real estate article that addressed the topic of current median home prices in Boulevard Park. Dave agreed to prepare a brief article on real estate but said that discussing the median home price might be difficult.

2009 BPNA Meeting Calendar

Executive Board Meetings

We agreed that the Executive Board Meetings would continue to be scheduled on the second Thursday of each month, but, after some discussion, changed the starting time to **7:30 p.m.** (the ending time is set at 9:00 p.m.). The meetings will be hosted as follows:

- March 12: Hal
- Apr. 9: Catherine
- May 14: Sally
- June 11: Dave
- July 9: Marc
- Aug. 13: Rob
- Sept. 10: Marc
- Oct. 8: Hal
- Nov. 12: Catherine
- Dec. 10: Sally

General Meetings

The exact date of the next General Meeting, to be held in April, will depend on the availability of the Hart Center. Catherine will ask for April 1 as our first choice, and the following Wednesday, April 8, as our second choice (7-8:30 pm). Marc offered to coordinate the meeting, and proposed the McKinley Village project as the main topic. Margaret said she could help coordinate the meeting. She also suggested that it might be a good idea to have a representative from the city traffic office there.

Rob suggested that, rather than hold a separate General Meeting in October, we should use the Spaghetti Dinner in September for this purpose, as has been done in past years. We did not discuss the January 2010 meeting yet.

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Social Events

- **Mardi Gras** party: cancelled, as noted earlier.
- **Yard Sale:** The date on the draft calendar distributed at the January meeting, June 13, was wrong. The Yard Sale will be held on **June 6** (with pricing done the previous day, June 5). Pat Cosentino still is able to store donations in his garage. Dave and Rob will help with the sale; Margaret will oversee the cash box. She recommended that Marti Geiger be invited to help with the pricing on June 5.
- **Fourth of July** event: As in 2007 and 2008, Rob and Corey will collaborate with Pete Bramson on a fireworks display in the evening. It was suggested that we also try to have an afternoon event, possibly a potluck meal in the meridian so that residents could simply stay on for the fireworks. Marc suggested further that the Wheelmen of Sacramento, the bicyclists' group with historic associations to the racetrack that preceded our neighborhood, might be interested in participating in some way. Sally offered to help with the planning of the July 4 events.
- **National Night Out:** Hal and Catherine offered to be co-coordinators of this annual event on **August 4**. In terms of the individual courses, Hal and Marc will oversee the hors d'oeuvres (planned for the meridian on 22nd Street between F and G Streets); and Sally will oversee the entrees (location to be determined). We did not come to a decision yet about the location or oversight of the dessert course. In terms of permits, one is needed only for the first course on the meridian.
- **Spaghetti Dinner:** On **September 12**, with coordination by Sally and the Executive Board, as noted on the calendar.
- **Holiday Pot Luck:** Scheduled for **December 5**; to be coordinated by Dave and Marc.

Possible October event: Marc noted that a traditional Curtis Park event, the "Pumpkin Toss," had not been held for several years. He wondered if this might be a good event for Boulevard Park, possibly in partnership with the Grant Park group. There was general approval of the idea, and some discussion of the date. Since October 31 is a Saturday, should the pumpkin toss be held on Sunday, November 1? (it was pointed out that this was a good way of disposing of those Hallowe'en pumpkins)

Business Items

Website:

Hal reported on what he and Pete Bramson have learned about ways of improving the BPNA website. Prior to the meeting he had shared ideas with the Executive Board members by e-mail; at the meeting he distributed a report drafted by Pete Bramson that summarized the current structure and recent usage of the website. Also included in the report were specific suggestions for improvements to the site so that it would be more functional. The new version could have interactive features and would require some additional expense, in the form of a one-time design fee and an annual "hosting fee." Hal reported that the new website could be about five pages long, including a home page, forum page (where announcements or comments could be posted), resources page, etc. In

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(Business Items: Website, continued)

discussion, we agreed that a forum page for readers' comments would need to be monitored or moderated. Rob questioned whether this could be done without incurring additional expense (he noted that some screening structures such as a password for log-on, etc., would be needed). The issue of monitoring a forum page was discussed further (would this screening be construed as censorship? Could the creation of a mission statement or guidelines for comments make the forum manageable?), and we realized that we could not resolve it at this meeting. Marc suggested that we revisit it after the website was up and running. Based on his extensive experience with websites, Rob suggested that we approach the whole project in a series of steps or phases, and then summarized a possible structure for the website: home page (information about BPNA), board page (contact information for Executive Board members; information about qualifications for board membership and the election process); calendar page; forum page; and links to city services and other useful resources for Boulevard Park residents. In further discussion, this outline was revised as follows: BPNA page, board page, calendar page, resources page, and an archive (copies of documents such as meeting minutes, etc.: Marc asked if this section could have a search feature). Another possible section could have photos of BPNA events. The Curtis Park website was recommended as a possible model, and Hal added that he had noticed other good sites when searching the internet.

Rob suggested that we try to launch the new website by this summer, under the coordination of a subcommittee with members from both the Board and the BPNA membership. Hal Edmonds and Pete Bramson already have given time to the project; at the Board meeting, Dave Philipps and Marc de la Vergne also expressed interest in serving on the subcommittee, with Marc volunteering to coordinate a resources/home improvement page/forum, if we decide to have a forum section. Rob explained that he is deliberately not offering his services for this committee. It was suggested that we also solicit some additional "web-savvy" volunteers from the BPNA membership.

In a unanimous vote, it was **moved, seconded, and voted** to allocate \$500.00 from the BPNA budget towards the costs of redesigning the website.

Liability Insurance

Sally asked that we also address this topic early in the meeting (both it and the website topic were moved to the top of the agenda because Hal could not stay for the entire meeting). She raised it because she was concerned about the cost. She had discussed it with some insurance folks who reported some high rates. Dave noted that his yacht club spent about \$1000 for its liability insurance. Rob pointed out that the July 4 event may be of concern for liability reasons. Margaret recommended that we ask another neighborhood organization, such as Sierra/Curtis, how they handle insurance, assuming they have the same legal structure that we have just adopted in Boulevard Park.

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Bon Faire (market/gas station at the SE corner of 20th and H Streets)

Rob reported that Bon Faire may be preparing to request a 24-hour license. There is local concern about the impact of this on liquor sales. Apparently the owner has not yet filed an official request. He also had heard that a recent ABC hearing about the store's license might result in the imposition of additional restrictions (he added that Sue is looking into this now).

Planting Trees

Margaret reported that residents of the Winn Park neighborhood have learned that the city is not replacing all of the trees that it has removed. She wants to look further into this issue. Dave suggested that she contact the City Arborist Dan Pskowski directly.

SOCA's Annual Home Tour (Boulevard Park; Sunday, September 20)

Catherine reported that she has been in contact with Clark Mildenhall, the SOCA board member who is chairing the Home Tour committee this year. We discussed the importance of this event for Boulevard Park. Possibly the Boulevard Park books and postcards (with drawings of houses by Ed Cox) could be sold at the street fair.

Washington School Update

Rob had attended the neighborhood meeting on January 21 about the fate of this and other city schools that may be at risk of closure due to reduced enrollments. Also represented was Theodore Judah Elementary School (3939 McKinley), which has an even lower enrollment (246, vs. 260 at Washington) and also a smaller percentage of neighborhood children attending (55%, vs. 72% at Washington). He observed that Steve Cohn also was at the meeting and that he had expressed strong support for the neighborhood schools, asserting: "We have spent much money in the development of this area and you cannot close this school." In his February newsletter, Steve Cohn reported: "I attended the meeting held at Washington Elementary School in January and spoke to District representatives about the importance of keeping Washington Elementary, Theodore Judah, Caleb Greenwood and other District 3 schools open." Rob emphasized at the Board meeting that Steve Cohn's support is very important. Apparently the Arts Council has expressed interest in using the Washington Elementary School facility if it became available. Rob added that there might be other creative ways of using the facility that would also support the school. For example, it apparently has a record of high electricity usage. What if a solar feature were added?

Rob noted that the comparatively high percentage of local children attending Washington Elementary is a strong point in its favor. Margaret added that the Boys and Girls Club of Sacramento (1117 G Street) also had been concerned about the potential impact of school closures on its membership, and might be another ally in support of retaining Washington Elementary. Also to consider is future population growth in the areas served by the school. For example, eventually it could be affected by the new housing in the Railyards Development. Rob emphasized that the role of the BPNA board is to get word out about the value of the school to the neighborhood. Marc asked if we should also write a letter expressing this. No action was taken at the meeting.

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Membership Payments and Voting Privileges

Sally had raised this topic because our revised bylaws do not make it clear how membership payments and votes are connected, given the sliding fee scale (different households of comparable sizes pay different amounts). Our bylaws state one vote per household, but some households are making the equivalent of multiple payments, and would seem to deserve multiple votes (for example, a single \$15 payment could imply one vote, a payment of \$30 could mean two votes, depending on whether one or two names are written on the renewal form).

Sally suggested that we revise next year's renewal form to make the payment/vote connection clearer. After discussion we agreed that, for 2009, any membership renewal form that has two names and is accompanied by a payment of \$10.00 or more will give that household two votes.

Reporting on some of the comments written on the renewal forms, Sally noted that one member had asked about getting a tax deduction for donations of items to the annual yard sale. However, the status of BPNA does not allow for tax deductions.

The same member also asked about a public meeting on the topic of the "tent city" on the other side of the railroad tracks from Boulevard Park. In discussion, it was suggested that this could be a good topic for the general meeting in April.

Preservation

Margaret reported briefly on two preservation items: the delay of a potential restaurant at 2326 K Street, and the new housing project at La Valentina that apparently is supported by the residents of Alkali Flats.

Another recent issue was raised by SOCA in a message to its membership that Margaret shared with the Board members. In her February 11 e-mail, Kay Knepprath wrote: "The Development Oversight Commission (DOC) is proposing scrapping the Design Commission and adding two of its members to the Planning Commission to streamline the process for developers. SOCA is preparing an opposition letter to the Planning Commission where this proposal will be heard at their Thursday, 2/12, 5:30 meeting." Margaret observed that the Planning Commission had had little or no input about this meeting, which occurred the same day as our monthly Board meeting.

Other

Marc reported on two projects proposed by Sacramento Heritage, Inc., the city organization involved with historic preservation: a walking tour program covering all of the city's historic neighborhoods, possibly made electronic; and the creation of a policy for the approved format of historic plaques installed by homeowners, neighborhood organizations, etc. Also, while on a trip to New Orleans, Marc met with residents there on behalf of Sacramento Heritage and learned about a program launched there where groups of volunteers repaint houses in historic neighborhoods. Homes owned by older residents are the most likely recipients of this service, which is funded by block grants. Marc wondered if a similar program could be initiated in Sacramento.

Adjournment: The February meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Next BPNA Executive Board meeting: on **March 12** (home of Hal Edmonds).

