

SJ Neighborhoods Commission, 6/11/14

informal notes and comments (corrections welcomed!)

by L. Ames, for outreach to D6NLG et al

[square brackets: LLA afterthoughts.]

Public Comment:

Pete Kolstad (D3) talked about issues w/ copper wire theft, and impact to street lighting and public safety.

- * need sting operation to catch recycling centers that willingly deal in stolen goods
- * organizing effort to “lock” the various lamp-post access panels: Sat 6/14, 9 AM, starting at 427 W. Virginia Ave.

Council Liaison Report:

by Ann Grabowski, staff to Don Rocha (D9):

- * a note of thanks to outgoing Cmsnrs for time served
- * desire for more dialog: NC is advisory to Council, but they now only get an annual letter; would like more
- * City Budget is approved, goes before Council next week for final adoption.

Firework Safety:

presentation by Deputy Fire Marshal Johnny Dellinger:

- * all fireworks are illegal in SJ since 1984
- * from study of various CA towns: sale of “safe & sane” fireworks (FW) does not reduce use of hazardous and illegal FW – in fact, sale of legal FW seems to increase use of illegals as well.
- * having official FW shows does reduce illegal FW usage.
- * SC Co. contributing \$70k this year for FW safety: \$50k for FW show, \$20k for video to be shown at movie theaters and public service announcements.
- * 3 public shows this year: (A) Discovery Park (downtown), (B) SJ Giants baseball stadium, (C) Almaden Park
- * Police and Fire on high-alert over July 4th. Advance info of hot-spots would be welcomed.

Medical Marijuana:

- * Council finally voted on issue yesterday: see Mayor’s e-blast
- * will change the landscape: many current dispensaries will have to close or move: 1-year transition period.
- * rules were 4-5 years in the making. Community support helped balance the dispensary lobby.
- * doctors can’t “prescribe” marijuana, since it’s technically illegal. County is only agency that can issue official “recommendations”, and few are issued. Most dispensaries issue “club cards”, many of which are used for recreational purposes.

Budget Letter:

- * NC sent in a “general guidelines” letter to Mayor and Council last month; was appreciated.
- * Cmsnr Cantore wanted a follow-up letter going into more detail in support of fire department

-- included wording from Mayor's original message mentioning closure of Station 6 to pay for Station 37: I objected. Topic OBE (overtaken by events): Council has moved to save up money over several years to pay for 37 w/o closure of 6.

-- letter would be received after Council had already voted for and adopted the budget:
OBE

-- question called: failed on 4 to 8 vote (w/ 1 abstain)

Work Plan:

- * some items are pre-defined.
- * new Mayor coming on-board this fall: will he wish to continue w/ the community inputs, budget games, etc.?
- * Public Safety: in Aug, NC will receive presentation on Community Service Officers: 28 are being hired, and will roll out in Sept or Oct.
- * Fire: NC to look at long vision; we can ask for a study. [How to best fill the gap in S. WG/Cambrian?]
- * Tree Policy: we should ask for a status update on City's implementation of past actions.
- * Public Safety of Transportation: bikes and sidewalks?

Suggestion: have NC meet at different locations: out in the districts, w/ emphasis on local issues. [what are our biggest issues? I've been talking about in-fill and interface w/ Urban Villages...]

Partner w/ other cmsns? Joint mtg w/ Planning Cmsn? Parks Cmsn?
"Quality of Life" issues.

I suggest: Nghbrhd interface w/ Urban Villages? -- there are several in D6...
"Main Streets" and "Grand Boulevards" are covered by "traffic" and "quality of life"...
Work Plan needs to be approved by Council Rules Cmte.

A number of new Cmsnrs will join in Aug.: need to help them get on board. Mentoring?
Emphasize outreach communications.
Help various districts set up leadership groups (like our D6NLG).

Also in NC charter: Code Enforcement:

- * blight, illegal signs, graffiti
- * hoarding and nuisance houses
- * RV living on public streets
- * homelessness. [That'll keep us occupied!]
- * discuss finances: be forum for discussion of sales tax and other revenue measures
- * nghbrhd prostitution and human trafficking
- * gas-powered leaf-blowers.

Report to Council more often? Quarterly?
Official Minutes are "Action Minutes" -- little more than "Cmsn voted to approve prior minutes", no content on discussions.

Caucuses:

- * for odd-numbered districts this year; even-numbered districts in 2016
- * D1, D3, and D9 are done. (Dave Dearborn and I helped facilitate at D1 and D9)
- * D5 and D7 both planned for Sat June 21st (morning and afternoon)
- * Several long-serving Cmsnrs chose not to run; some other long-serving Cmsnrs lost in the caucus process
- * there will be fresh blood come the fall. [Also a new Chair...]

Goodbye, Charles, Ramona, Beth, Mauricio, Bertha, Jim, and Hugh: it's been a pleasure to serve with all of you!

No NC mtg in July -- we return in August.
[it will be fun!]

~Larry,
one of the D6 Cmsnrs.