

SOUTHEASTERN SAN DIEGO PLANNING GROUP (SSDPG)

Meeting Location:
Neighborhood House, 841 S. 41st Street, San Diego, CA 92113

MINUTES
January 11, 2010 6:00 p.m. – 7:55 p.m.

This Planning Committee covers the area south of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Freeway (Highway 94), east of Interstate 5, north of the border of National City, and west of Interstate 805. It includes the communities of Sherman Heights, Logan Heights, Grant Hill, Memorial, Stockton, Mount Hope, Mountain View, Southcrest, and Shelltown.

NOTE: The General Election to become a general member of the SSDPG will be in March 2010. Election of Officers and SSDPG Board members will take place in April 2010.

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND INTRODUCTIONS

Steve Veach (Chair), representing Sherman Heights
Reynaldo Pisaño, representing Mount Hope
James Justus (Treasurer), representing the Business Community
Louise Torio (Secretary), representing Sherman Heights
Liliana Garcia-Rivera, representing Sherman Heights
Robert Leif, representing the Business Community
Vincent Noto, representing the Business Community
Ben Rivera, representing Logan Heights
Paul Sweeney, representing the Business Community
Josh Von Wolkfolk, representing Mount Hope
Reggie Womack, representing Stockton

Board Members Not At Meeting: Ivette Vela

City of San Diego Planning Department Staff: none

Chair Steve Veach introduced himself, welcomed Board members and guests to the meeting, and explained the purpose of this planning group, which serves in an advisory capacity to the City of San Diego in regard to land use issues in this area.

2. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S AGENDA (ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS)

Motion by Noto, seconded by Leif, to approve agenda. MSC: 11-0-0

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (two minutes per public speaker, on non-agenda items only)

Veach wished all a happy New Year. The SSDPG General Elections will be in March, and the Board Officer elections will be in April. There is only one person who will meet the qualifications to become a new general member next month. Please encourage others in your community to get involved in the planning group. Veach encouraged others to run for Chair, since he would like to be just a Board member again.

4. STAFF REPORTS

- 1) Mayor's Office – none
- 2) Council District 4 – Bruce Williams reported the update of activities in District 4 and the committees on which Council Member Young will serve in 2010. To save on paper and printing, he encouraged everyone to get the District 4 updates via e-mail.
- 3) Council District 8 – Humberto Peraza reported that Council President Ben Hueso was reelected to the president role again. More lights will go up in Southcrest and Stockton. The SEDC Strategic Plan is coming up, and hopefully many members from the planning group can provide input. (The SEDC Strategic Plan is not the Southeastern San Diego Community Plan update. They are different documents.) Torio thanked Ben Hueso and Tony Young for their strong support for the Villa Montezuma Museum and for the funding recently granted in late November 2009 for the museum's foundation and chimney repair.
- 4) Congresswoman Susan Davis' Office – Ricardo Flores reported that Susan Davis supported the Jobs for Main Street Act and the extension of COBRA health benefits. Davis protested the State's desire to eliminate mammograms for low-income women as a cost savings for the State. Davis met with the Inspector General regarding the proposed closure of the Golden Hill Post Office to support its continued operation at that site. Congress has not yet voted on the issues of which post offices would be closed. Justus supported a national healthcare build that would lower the cost of insurance. Leif suggested the use of disabled vets to pilot military drones.
- 5) Congressman Bob Filner's Office – none
- 6) SEDC – Sherry Brooks introduced James Arnold, who has recently joined SEDC to do Human Relations. In December 2009 the 24-Hour Fitness opened in Imperial Marketplace and had a successful hiring of local residents from the job fair. The 2010 Entrepreneur Academy will be starting soon. SEDC still wishes to incorporate the Dells Imperial Study Area in order to have a larger voice and to connect with the CCDC downtown redevelopment area.
- 7) CCDC – none
- 8) Planning Department – none
- 9) Other – none

5. CONSENT ITEMS: None

6. ACTION ITEMS:

- A. **Gray-Water Reclamation, Request for Letter of Support** – Use the EIR information from ENCPG subcommittee 2/09 and the State update 7/28/09 to recommend including onsite gray water reclamation/reuse on all new construction inside the City of San Diego as part of the Community Plan and eventually the Building Code. Gregory Morales presented in November. Leif drafted a letter of support for SSDPG review.

Motion by Pisaño, seconded by Sweeney, that this item be continue to February.
M-S-C: 11-0-0

- B. **Approval of November 2009 Minutes**

Motion by Leif, seconded by Noto, to approve the November 2009 minutes.
M-S-C: 8-0-3 (with Garcia-Rivera, Rivera, and von Wolkfolk abstaining since they were not at that meeting.)

7. INFO ITEM:

- C. **Southcrest Villas** – a project-in-concept for the corner of Alpha Street and Keeler Court, which will include 53 units of multifamily rental affordable housing. This is an Informational item only. Sylvia Martinez, Project Manager for Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation, said that Wakeland is an 11-year-old nonprofit that owns and manages properties throughout California (see www.wakelandhdc.com). They keep ownership of the properties; they do not sell them. The current zoning at the corner of Keeler and Alpha is industrial and the land is vacant (it previously was a lumber yard). If this project is to go forward, Wakeland will need a community plan amendment. They seek to build affordable units, and it would house a mixture of seniors and families. They are thinking the project would be 3-stories tall and would have some community open space, with a community room, classrooms, and a computer center. There would be an on-site property manager. It would be a LEED Silver project.

The previous owner of this site initiated the zone change, and that is where we saw this property before us at a past meeting. Wakeland would continue with this zone change and expect to purchase the land from the current owner. If the project moves forward, there would be about 18 months of planning work, and construction might begin in 2012.

SSDPG Board comments included the following:

- This is a high-density project, and there is not much play area for children nor places to park.
- This is the start of Wakeland's outreach. They will contact neighbors.
- Neighbors on Newton and Keeler should be notified too.
- The project should have fire sprinklers. (It would.)
- Consider roof gardens. (As envisioned, there would be solar panels on the roof.)
- The required parking is 85 spaces, but only 78 are planned. This could be a problem if residents are not using mass transit.
- There can be crime prevention through good architectural design. Please seek input from the SDPD early.
- The sewer and water infrastructure is old. Consider that Wakeland may need to upgrade these when planning project costs.

- D. **Preliminary SEDC Strategic Plan Presentation** – Informational presentation summarizing the existing conditions, preliminary recommended changes, and public outreach process for the draft SEDC Strategic Plan, an Agency-directed performance audit requirement. Brian Trottier, the acting president of SEDC, presented.

Instead of a SEDC Strategic Plan presentation, Brian Trottier came to this meeting so that he and the planning group could begin a dialog.

Trottier said that the Dells and Gateway areas were adopted by the City and passed on to SEDC when SEDC was formed. Gateway has no available tax increment; no cash is being generated. Expanding an existing redevelopment area by incorporating the Dells Imperial Study Area (I-15 west to I-5) is easier than to create a new redevelopment area.

Pisaño said that there are misconceptions about what SEDC does. Redevelopment has become political and it shouldn't be that way. There has been very poor communication from SEDC for many years. SEDC staff could come to this planning group for years and say very little about SEDC activities. Trottier said that SEDC is listening now. He pointed out that SEDC does not have a large budget, and the State took 30 percent of their funding to balance the State's budget. SEDC is suing the State over this. At its

peak, SEDC was collecting \$7 million per year tax increment, but bond payments cost \$4 million per year. SEDC must build stronger community relationships and be the catalyst in the area. They are committed to make this work.

Does communities have to be in SEDC's redevelopment area to benefit? Trottier said that or some types of projects, yes, but many programs are for entire Enterprise Zone (Southeastern). SEDC needs to be the leadership in the community. Leif said he wants SEDC to not provide leadership, but to enable and facilitate growth desired by the property owners, residents, and area investors. SEDC owns small sites scattered around the area, and small, noncontiguous sites cannot be successfully developed. Leif would like to reduce traffic speed on the streets and reduce traffic. We should encourage mass transit and discourage cars. SEDC owns land that have Artesian wells on the sites: a developer won't want that site, so SEDC should keep it since the water is valuable. The eminent domain process shouldn't be used against property owners. For the SEDC Strategic Plan, form a PAC with citizens who live in the area and let the PAC make decisions.

SEDC did surveys in Logan Heights and Sherman Heights to get a feel what the communities in the Dells Imperial Study Area want. Rivera said that most residents don't know anything about redevelopment and that people are skeptical about these affordable housing projects and they fear gentrification. Trottier said that in boom housing markets you cannot prevent your neighbors from selling out and moving away if they can get a good price for their home. We must attack pockets of blight and encourage business.

Pisaño said that Southeastern desperately needs parks, but the City will not accept the gift of land to be used as a park since a park is expensive to maintain.

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – none (out of time)
9. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – none (out of time)

ADJOURNMENT

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