

**MENLO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

Minutes of HYBRID Virtual/In-Person meeting  
because of COVID-19

**April 08, 2021**

ITEM	ACTIONS
<p><b>Board Members present at Menlo Park School Cafeteria</b> <a href="mailto:menloparktucson@gmail.com">(menloparktucson@gmail.com)</a></p>	<p><b>Zach Yentzer-President, Wendy Sterner-Vice President, Raul Ramirez-Vice President, Isabel Doe-Treasurer, Liza M. Grant-Secretary, Steve Brown-Parliamentarian, Matt Perri-Historian, Gilbert Fimbres and Anthony Nelson-newly appointed members</b></p>
<p><b>Introductions</b></p>	<p>Board members were introduced to the attendees via ZOOM meeting platform and In-Person at Menlo Park Elementary School Cafeteria. There were 22 neighbors in attendance at the school and 13 present on Zoom. Guests included Lt. Morales from TPD and Council person Lane Santa Cruz and Flor Burruel from Ward 1.</p>
<p><b>March 2021 Minutes</b></p>	<p>The March minutes were unanimously approved.</p>
<p><b>Treasurer’s Report—Isabel Doe</b></p>	<p>\$801.06 balance in bank account. (Zach announced that there may be a fee incurred for the continued meeting at the school in the future by the City of Tucson and TUSD.)</p>
<p><b>TPD Report and Community Feedback—graffiti/break-ins, changes in service—Lt. Belinda Morales</b></p>	<p>Lt. Morales reported there have been a ramp-up in auto thefts and break-ins. In Sector 6 there has been an over-all 13.7% decrease in crime. However, there has been a 37.5% decrease in violent crimes without any murders; 66% of calls have been to report burglaries; larcenies/stolen cars have been a huge problem. The Lt. stressed the importance of locking your vehicle and using outdoor lights. Lights are one of the biggest deterrents. Tumamoc Hill is a favorite spot for car break-ins and thefts because so many people leave items visible in the cars. Steve reported that there has been an increase in theft of delivered items from porches. The Lt. was appreciative of the pictures and the reports (81 calls for service) and welcomes the report of every incident.</p> <p>Isabel lauded the efforts of Lt. Morales in the pursuit of the arrest of the individuals who sped down Cedar, from Grande.</p> <p>Lt. Belinda Morales Operations Division West, (520) 837-7203, (520) 589-8487, <a href="mailto:belinda.morales@tucsonaz.gov">belinda.morales@tucsonaz.gov</a>.</p>
<p><b>Ward 1 Q and A—Councilmember Santa Cruz</b></p>	<p>--Councilperson Lane Santa Cruz reported that there has been concern on how to navigate during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there has been staff at the office for 2-3 months now. There is a walk-up window with a phone to contact the staff inside the office. She reported that she will have a “soft opening” of the office in May.</p> <p>--There has been a re-organization in the office. Flor Burruel is now the barrio representative and will provide neighborhood updates. Questions can always be posed via the walk-up window, phones, and email. <a href="mailto:Luz.espinoza-burruel@tucsonaz.gov">Luz.espinoza-burruel@tucsonaz.gov</a></p> <p>--The Cushing St. skate park has been approved and is in the beginning stage. There will be a study of the area preformed. Outreach to other communities will happen to glean creative ideas from other communities. Because of the planning still necessary there is not a fixed budget for that neighborhood feature.</p> <p>--Concerned was raised about the condition of the streets as is evidenced by the nice pavement on Congress and the rough and pitted road once you turn on to Silverbell. The process of scoring the street conditions was explained as well as the backlog caused by the pandemic. There is a list of streets that are slated to be fixed which will be obtained by Ward 1.</p> <p>--Concern was raised about the list of calls that would cease to be responded to by TPD officers. A. What do we do as services shift from TPD to community partners? And, B. What are the plans to bring in more officers and retain them? Councilperson Santa Cruz indicated that there is not a plan in place yet to handle those calls. It was admitted there was no forewarning to Councilpersons to the non-respond list being developed by TPD as raised by Raul. She encourages everyone to continue to call TPD about situations that seem to necessitate such intervention.</p>

	<p>--Some calls could be handled by uniformed Community Service Officers (CSO) who do not carry weapons such as noisy neighbor complaints that could escalate to possible violence as Wendy pointed out. The CSO program will hire a director but the city needs community feedback on what safety means for the community.</p> <p>--Zach did raise a concern that there are calls which take hours to respond to, and so how can we have timely response to calls? The example was raised by Liza that the speeding and drag racing on Congress and Grande happens so quickly that they are gone before the incident can be reported. It was suggested that traffic mitigations efforts be addressed through the MPNA Traffic Committee.</p> <p>--Lt. Morales indicated her willingness to work with the neighborhood regarding traffic issues and safety issues posed by the liquor store. However, she also encouraged everyone to report incidents (online) that may not garner immediate response but will lay a foundation for further area attention by officers.</p>
<b>Transportation/ traffic committee update</b>	<p>--Kylie reported signatures are being gathered to place a traffic circle at Alameda and Melwood. There will be some traffic mitigation efforts built into the Bicycle Boulevard project alignment going from The Loop, through Menlo Park, across St. Mary's Rd. through Barrio Hollywood to Speedway. The project may be bundled with other projects on the Westside and may be completed as early as 2022. Be on the lookout for engagement opportunities to provide feedback for the Bike Boulevard, including the alignment of where the project may go.</p> <p>--A grant from America Walks was applied for which may provide for 2 flashing beacon signs to make the crossing of Congress on Melwood safer. Cars do respond to flashing lights!</p>
<b>President's Report</b>	Zach will email updates.
<b>Westmoreland Affordable Housing Update</b>	The development will be based on the survey which received 75 responses. The survey will help determine what the partnership of a developer with the City of Tucson looks like.
<b>Neighborhood Plan Update—Wendy Sterner</b>	Wendy reported that there is no recent update with the planning committee. <a href="mailto:wendysterner@gmail.com">wendysterner@gmail.com</a>
<b>Barrio 2 Barrio (FC Tucson)— Amanda Powers</b>	Amanda Powers, second ever female CEO of professional soccer team presented a vision of public re-engagement (since the pandemic quashed public participation). The team will host a community kick-off in Menlo Park at Mercado San Agustin Annex with a pop-up block party on 04-24-2021 from 12:00 to 2:00 PM. There will be games, swag, players and even COVID vaccines.
<b>Borderlands Theatre—Barrios Stories project—Veronica Conran</b>	Veronica asked for 1. 1-2 people to be present from MPNA to be on the Heritage Festival Steering Committee and 2. Neighborhood elders to capture the oral history of the neighborhood for their 4 <sup>th</sup> Barrio Stories Project, West Side Stories. She can be reached at <a href="mailto:veronica@borderlandstheater.com">veronica@borderlandstheater.com</a> and 520-276-9598.
<b>Call to Audience/Announcements</b>	<p>--Joan announced that there will be an event at Mission Garden on 04-24-2021 from 9 AM to 2 PM. There will be music and Native American vendors.</p> <p>--Gilbert asked if there was any movement on the BSN infrastructure project (that was to begin in Mid' April) so he can report back to neighbors. Flor from Ward 1 indicated that she does not have any updates. Raul reported he had contact with Jesse Soto from COT who reported that he believes he will be on schedule. Raul informed MPNA that Jesse indicated he had a contractor with a possible acceptable bid and could move quickly. Jesse will be at the May 13<sup>th</sup> MPNA meeting so those issues can be addressed then, by all those concerned.</p> <p>--Steve agreed to find out where there is a glass recycling center in the neighborhood (apparently there are 20 city locations) though he believes there is one located where Grande meets Speedway.</p> <p>--Gene announced that every Sunday at 9 AM (8 AM as it heats up) there is a Santa Cruz River clean-up group that meets below the Cushing Street Bridge. Isabel pointed out that the locale behind the previous Dragon's View restaurant is particularly in need of clean up (including couches).</p>
<b>Meeting Adjourned</b>	Isabel moved and David seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM which was unanimously approved.
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<b>May 13, 2021</b> in hybrid format <b>via Zoom</b> (link will be sent out) and <b>in-person at Menlo Park Elementary School Cafeteria.</b>