

MENLO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
Hybrid Meeting
June 08, 2023

ITEM	ACTIONS
Board Members present at MPNA monthly meeting menloparktucson@gmail.com	Kylie Walzak-President, Raul Ramirez and Anthony Nelson-Vice Presidents, Liza M. Grant-Secretary, Liz Martinez-Treasurer, Steve Brown-Parliamentarian, and Kara Harter and Celina Soto—members at-large.
Introductions	Board members and attendees introduced themselves to the group. There were 35 neighbors (including the 8 Board Members) in attendance at this meeting. Guests (12) included, Flor Burruel from Ward 1, Keith Bagwell from PCBOS District 5, Jesus and Jacob from Dust architecture, Melissa Campbell from Gadsen/Mercado, Tucson Water—Natalie DeRoock, James MacAdam, and John Kmiec, A Mountain Vendors Association—Carol, Cathy, and Giovanna, Logan Phillips(DJ Dirtyverbs and open space advocate) , and Isaiah Kortight from the Tucson Audubon Society.
May’s 2023 Minutes	Stanley motioned and Victor seconded the motion to accept May’s minutes which were unanimously approved.
Treasurer’s Report—Liz Martinez	Bank checking balance is \$1,214.72, with the \$10 monthly fee. There is \$25.00 in savings.
Tucson Water, Santa Cruz River Heritage Project Updates—John Kmiec	<p>-The purpose of the Tucson Water (TW) project is to put water into the Santa Cruz River, which is called the Santa Cruz River Heritage Project. The first out-fill was on 06-24-2019 just south of Starr Pass. There have been 2 important objectives which include establishing a 2nd out-fill (at Irvington) of high-quality water into the Santa Cruz River and to connect to the reclaimed water system. There has been very close monitoring of the water levels since the release of water of 3K gallons per minute. This pumping occurred so that the connections could be made to the reclaimed water system which has been a difficult task. The out-fill has been reduced to 250 gallon per minute so as not to overwhelm the system and not disturb the landfills along the river. The connections to the reclaimed system were just completed so the out-fill remains turned down because the aquafer water levels are still high. An “aquafer” is the sand and gravel space underground that holds the water that can be pumped out for later use. When the water levels sink naturally lower into the aquafer the water output can be raised.</p> <p>-The water treatment site at Irvington in 1994 focused on removing contaminants from TEC deposited in the 70’s and 80’s. Once treated the EPA forced return of that water to drinking sources. Then in 2021 PFAS were noticed to contaminate the water from the airport (firefighting foam). TW decided to not treat for PFAS since there was no economic assistance for that. Additionally, TW didn’t want there to be any coincidental contamination to the drinking water. Planning for diversion into reclaimed system was begun.</p> <p>-The Heritage Project starts at, between, 22nd and 29th St at the site of the first out-fill. It has a 700 to 1000 gallon per minute release flow which at times would reach St. Mary’s Rd. The evident flow varies upon how much water is pumped, how much natural rainfall occurs, and how much sinks into the ground. Two purposes of the project are to 1. Recharge the aquafer so that Tucson receives water credits for returning water and 2. To create a natural riparian habitat. Per the Arizona Department of Quality Control (ADQ) the water is only monitored at the A Mountain landfill site because that is the only site where the Heritage Project (out-fill into the river) is located.</p> <p>-Wells are monitored and tested at different intervals depending on the location. For example, the site at Irvington is checked weekly because it was an EPA super-fund site, other wells are tested every 2-4 weeks, and some quarterly. The well at Mission Garden was tested 3-4 months ago and they have not heard what the results are. TW will attempt to get results. Another question is since the testing regulations were initiated so long ago how do we know if those standards are still effective and possibly are those contaminants still present and dangerous? It is concerning that at times there have been floods that have obviously exceeded the level where the contaminants can leach from the landfill (and other pockets of contaminants) into the water (or may have even washed the contaminants out). Neither of these are known since testing has only been required because of the recent Heritage Project, but TW is being cautious and keeping the level of out-fill relatively low to avoid possible contamination.</p>

<p>The Meteor Cafe & Bike Shop Development Plan & Individual Parking Plan (IPP) Proposal— D.U.S.T. architects Jesus and Jacob</p>	<p>-Jesus reported that this MPNA meeting is the public meeting that they are required to have by the city. The project will be located at 901 and 905 W. Congress St. at the site of Jeff’s Market. He described the project as a Bike Shop (bungalow) and a Cafe and Wine Shop (the market), each in a separate building. Each building will be restored to the original as they are registered as historic. The building in the back is considered “noncontributory” and will be demolished for 12 on-site parking spaces. The developers are Doug and Chris who are avid cyclists and own similar venues in Bentonville, AR, Fayetteville, AR, and Austin, TX.</p> <p>-Jesus reported that the city considers the site as not having enough parking for the intended use and number of occupants. They have to show that they can find 14 more spots in the vicinity. The timeline did not allow for the project to get covered with the IID but can get covered by the new Food and Beverage (Bar and Restaurant Clause) parking reduction Individual Parking Plan (IPP) that just passed. The project also qualifies for an IPP because they are within 400 ft. of public transportation. They are looking at finding 14 spots on the street and not pushing any traffic into the neighborhood (only 1 block on both sides of Melwood); perhaps providing traffic calming efforts and/or having the city relax the parking regulations on Congress. El Rio maybe convinced to open up their parking lots after hours for public parking (and they have security for their building at that time too). Traffic mitigation efforts and funding for them is a concern.</p> <p>-It was brought up that a “hawk light” won’t be permitted because the proposed crossing is 400 ft. from Avenida de Conveto. But perhaps a flashing beacon or a pedestrian island in the turn lane may be permissible to cross Congress at Melwood. The architects are hoping to align with the bike boulevard and gain a roundabout. Parking at the Mercado will not be available since that space is slated for row-house residences called “The Lillian”. Lunch time maybe exceptionally busy, with pedestrians and cars. There is inside seating for 50; outdoor seating for 30. The project is termed Food Service with accessory drinks (beer and wine) and is not considered a bar. One of the goals is to make The Meteor Café bicycle and pedestrian friendly, and hopefully reduced parking will dissuade the use of cars and decrease the traffic. The architects are also hoping for changes to the parking availability on Congress in the future, which may provide more parking. At this time the parking lot design will feature a permeable material that will allow water to filter into the ground.</p> <p>-There is concern about what the amount of traffic on Congress will look like as development progresses. As it progresses, the need for additional parking will as well. Will there be discussions about permit parking in the neighborhood as there has been in the Mercado? And what about making sure pedestrians are safe (bicyclists not riding on the sidewalk).</p> <p>-The architects have not begun the design phase yet because they are in the “change of use” process. They currently have 60 days to submit their application and encourage everyone to submit comments and questions to the architects at the email address on the letter the neighborhood received, in the packet handed out this evening, and directly to the city: jacob@dustdb.com, jesus@dustdb.com, and DSD_Zoning_Administration@tucsonaz.gov</p>
<p>Audubon Society New Grant Opportunity Proposal—Isaiah Kortright</p>	<p>Isaiah reported that there is an addition grant that will provide funds for community engagement. He explained that the organization is called Tucson Audubon Society (TAS), keeping the affiliation with the national society through the chapter network. The newly funded grant is from the national Audubon Society called Audubon In Action that will support the concept of “Human wellbeing is the pillar of climate justice.” The grant will move the organization beyond education and recreation and promote the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build and support relationships with organizations that support anti-gentrification and displacement. 2. Defend and advocate open space enhancing the human experience. 3. Give rise to political action and urban biodiversity. 4. Advocate for planning and resiliency, participate in Plan Tucson. 5. Support ordinances promoting urban conservancy and implement the plans. <p>The Santa Cruz River is important because of the thousands of years of habitation and the contribution that has on Tucson’s complicated history, supporting the Heritage Project as a form of reconciliation of eco-gentrification. Land values have increased which increases rents so people get “pushed out”. It is a human right to have thriving natural ecosystems. On the flyer</p>

	<p>and business cards is contact information to communicate what you value in Menlo Park, and ecologically strengthen your neighborhood.</p> <p>-This grant will fund the mobile outreach van and hopefully fund greater participation by providing food at meetings and events, childcare, interpreters, space rental, and stipends for participants, furthering urban ecology.</p> <p>-Window stickers will be available to reduce the bird crashes and fatalities. This occurs with windows nearest the river when birds see the reflection of what is behind them appearing to be open space ahead of them. One can use tape, any stickers, and even strips of twine in the window to break up the reflections.</p> <p>-It is apparent that the MNPA generally supports the TAS' efforts and would be open to continuing dialogues, invitations to meetings, and provide contact information for those who would like to become involved. This includes posting contact information on social media sites. MPNA would also like to invite TAS to table at the upcoming Día De San Juan event at Mission Garden to inform the larger community about TAS' goals.</p> <p>Email: ikortright@tucsonaudubon.org</p>
<p>Día de San Juan Committee Update, Budget Request, and Call for Volunteers—Liza Grant</p>	<p>-Liza presented the following proposal: The Menlo Park Neighborhood Association will receive funds from Hughes Federal Credit Union earmarked for Día De San Juan from previous fiestas of more than \$1,000. I move that the MPNA approve and reserve that deposit for the strict use of/and for the Día De San Juan expenses. Stanley seconded the motion, passing unanimously.</p> <p>-Día De San Juan Will be held on Saturday June 24 at Mission Garden. The doors open at 5:30 which is when the food trucks will be ready to serve. At 6 PM there will be blessings, and publicly elected officials will speak. There will plenty of parking, craft activities for the kids, and a piñata and mariachi's of course. We are searching for another act, but we may have a children's folklorico dance group. We do have Logan Philips aka DJ Dirtyverbs who will play Cumbias!</p> <p>-Volunteers for the event are needed. We will need assistance to decorate and park cars. However, we do have parking attendants identified that will be trained by MG staff and paid (and wear reflective vests with flashlights). The next morning, we will need to go to Mission Garden to finish cleaning up, remove decorations, and put chairs away. The public are very good about not leaving much trash and it usually only requires an hour to an hour and a half. Please sign up!</p>
<p>Call to Audience</p>	<p>A Mountain Vendors Association recently formed in April of this year reported, spokesperson, Carol. The vendors began gathering at the base of the mountain since they closed the Westover Swap meet. The group of vendors wanted to create a safe space on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, where the area is kept clean, where there is safe parking (making own signs, placing safety cones, and safety tape), where there is a port-a-potty that can be locked when not in use (raising money for the service). Ward 1 has looked into signage for the area, but the city may have to close it down because of code enforcement issues. There may be a possibility that Rio Nuevo may move to deny use as well. Dangerous parking is an issue, not to mention blind spot turns because of the curve of the mountain. Some vendors do not want to organize and to continue to operate in a rogue fashion. However, new members to the Rio Nuevo board may take a different stance and possibly provide parking. Many neighbors support what the vendors do and have purchased some of the vendors' wares. Many of the vendors want to be affiliated with the Menlo Park Neighborhood Association and work together.</p>
<p>Meeting Adjourned</p>	<p>Stanley moved and Kylie seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting, which was unanimously approved by everyone, at 7:58 PM.</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>NO MEETING IN JULY! Next meeting scheduled for August 10, 2023, 6:00 PM</p>