

Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association: Board of Directors
Minutes: Regular Meeting of 7/17/2012 (Himmel Park Library, PCPL)

Board members present: John O'Dowd (Pres.), Rick Bell (Membership), Christine Curtis, Corey Reidy, Gail Schuessler (News Co-Ed.), John Wilder (Website)

Board members absent: LouAnn Barr, Janett Carbajal, Carolyn Classen, Doug Donahue

Guests and general public: George Andros (Theta Chi fraternity, UA), Alex Chavez, Hope Cramer (Pima Co., Dist. 5 Office), Donovan Durband (Parwise), Chris Gans (Pres., West University Neighborhood Assoc.), Sheila Hoban, Suzy Isselin, Carissa Planalp (KOLD/Fox TV), Gladys Richardson, H. Burt Richardson, Rahul Seth (Theta Chi fraternity, UA), Kyle Snyder (Theta Chi fraternity, UA), Molly Thrasher (City of Tucson, Ward 6 Office) Adam Winnett (Theta Chi fraternity, UA), unidentified guest (illegible signature)

Call to Order: Because a quorum was not present, Pres. John O'Dowd called an informational meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. Carissa Planalp of KOLD/Fox TV attended the meeting specifically to video record the portion of the meeting concerning the request of UA's Theta Chi Chapter to have a house in the SH Neighborhood.

Minutes of the past meeting: Minutes of previous meetings were not reviewed.

PRESENTATION : ParkWise Program, City of Tucson (Donovan Durband, Administrator)

<http://parkwise.tucsonaz.gov/index.php?q=parkwise>

O'Dowd asked Mr. Durband to report on the current state of ParkWise since his recent appointment as head of that program. In particular, O'Dowd asked about the future of permit parking in Sam Hughes.

Mr. Durband said that ParkWise is overseen by a commission which includes representation from wards 1, 3, 5, and 6, the districts in ParkWise's service area. The commission is currently working on how the accounting for the residential permit program is done since the August 2010 rate increase. Before the increase in permit fees, PW was losing close to \$200,000 annually. Refunds of fees collected and not used were promised to participating neighborhoods. Mr. Durband is working on sorting this out.

After O'Dowd asked Sheila Hoban (former SHNA board member and ParkWise monitor for the Board) to join the discussion, Sheila was able to elaborate on what had been promised. According to Sheila, PW promised separate accounting for each neighborhood. Any fees collected that went over the cost of the permit program in a particular neighborhood would go into a separate account. A percentage of the ticket revenue would then go back to a neighborhood (either in reduced fees or some other way) once the PW costs were covered for that neighborhood.

In addition, Ms. Hoban pointed out that the small number of PW employees working in SH Neighborhood spent more time on providing directional information than on issuing tickets to violators of the parking regulations. Sheila has suggested that PW provide the SH permit participants with the same type of "parking rules" door-hangers that were distributed in the West University neighborhood last season. Sheila also suggested that rather than refunding the excess money in the SH Neighborhood's account, PW should reduce the fees charged each participant.

Mr. Durband responded that reducing fees is an option. So is the reinvestment in a neighborhood's infrastructure. To this Sheila pointed out that only a part of the SH neighborhood participates in the program. The neighbors who over-pay the fees and are impacted by the parking problems are those who deserve the rebate.

O'Dowd asked Mr. Durband to consider Ms. Hoban's input and to invite SHNA to the PW commission's meetings. To this Mr. Durband said that they meet every third Tuesday at 7:30 AM. In addition, there will be two public meetings in August, which will focus on boundary areas and on enforcement of particular codes. This prompted Sheila to point out that the different agencies that impact SH neighborhood (PW, TPD, and the courts) actually have different definitions for what constitutes certain violations!

At Ms. Hoban's request, Mr. Durband provided an after-hours PW phone no. (237-2076), which is to be posted on the SNHA listserv. SH neighborhood participants have needed a way to contact PW after normal office hours to request help when violators block their

PRESENTATION : Urban Overlay in West University Neighborhood (Chris Gans, Pres. of WUNA)

(<http://www.westuniversityneighborhood.org/>)

Before beginning his presentation, Mr. Gans informed the SHNA board about how WUNA handled a request from a fraternity wishing to establish a house in the West University neighborhood. This was done in anticipation of the later agenda item, a similar request from the UA's Theta Chi Chapter. Mr. Gans said WUNA attached several conditions on granting the letter of support. In particular, WUNA requires the fraternity's representation at WUNA board meetings, and its participation in the neighborhood. O'Dowd asked for a copy of WUNA's letter.

O'Dowd then asked Mr. Gans to talk about the impact of the "University transition area"/urban overlay on the WU Neighborhood's historic preservation zone (HPZ). As an historic neighborhood, SHNA is concerned about the long-term impact on SH if the City Council approves urban overlays in HP Zones.

Mr. Gans sees the trend in the urban overlay process of disregarding the neighborhood's voice. Despite WUNA's serious opposition to a recent overlay project that ignored the HPZ and WUNA's concerns, the City's director of Developmental Services approved the overlay. These current urban overlays as written are not residential neighborhood friendly. Under current zoning, WU Neighborhood, which is designated an HPZ, cannot be any more protected by the City than it is now. Mr. Gans expressed grave concerns for historic neighborhoods impacted by the current overlay process, which can supersede existing zonings such as the HPZ. In the 30 years that HPZs have existed in Tucson, Mayor and Council have never before taken an action such as this. Mr. Gans thinks that this precedent may be part of a plan.

O'Dowd said that the City is justifying the overlays on economic grounds because the City needs the money. The plan is for denser population around the new streetcar line. To this Mr. Gans said the WUNA suggested to the City that they build more housing and mixed-use in the downtown area, and that that would promote streetcar use.

SHNA in conjunction with WUNA is paying for legal assistance from a lawyer, who has handled these types of cases, to see if there is a way to stop the urban overlays. O'Dowd also offered SHNA's help (financial and other) to WUNA in its fight to stop this type of development. O'Dowd expressed concern that SH neighborhood does not even have HPZ protection.

Mr. Gans concluded by stating that WUNA is not opposed to more density or to reasonable development that takes in to consideration concerns for historic preservation. O'Dowd thanked Mr. Gans and WUNA for their support.

QUORUM PRESENT: Christine Curtis arrived, resulting in a quorum.

Christine moved to modify the agenda to allow for the Board to next discuss the request for a letter of support for the UA's Theta Chi fraternity. Corey Reidy seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor.

THETA CHI REQUEST: (Rahul Seth and other members of Theta Chi <http://www.arizonathetachi.com>)

Mr. Seth, a recent graduate of UA and active Theta Chi alumnus, offered to answer any questions about the fraternity and its proposed presence as an official UA fraternal house in SH Neighborhood.

O'Dowd prefaced Mr. Seth's remarks by saying that he has been discussing with the Board the ramifications of an official fraternity in SH Neighborhood. O'Dowd then asked for clarification on what Theta Chi needed from SHNA.

Mr. Seth said that a letter of support is needed by the UA's Fraternity and Sorority Programs Office (<http://arizonagreek.orgsync.com/>). The letter would be part of a packet of materials to be submitted to several departments, which in turn would need to sign off on the request.

To O'Dowd's question about the number of members that the fraternity planned to house at the proposed site (6th and Campbell), Mr. Seth said that they will comply with all City ordinances and lease agreements.

To Christine's question about who is leasing the building, Mr. Seth said that a five year lease will be signed by Theta Chi with Town West Realty (<http://www.townwestrealty.com>). Mr. Horvath, the owner of Town West, never consulted with SHNA about parking for this project or with his previous 6th and Campbell development.

A question about parking arrangements was asked by a SH neighbor in the audience. Mr. Seth acknowledged that parking will be an issue. He also said that the fraternity's housing manager will monitor this, and that many members will also have parking permits for campus.

Suzy Isselin and another SH neighbor in the audience spoke in favor of the fraternity's request.

Corey Reidy asked about service projects and how Theta Chis will address the negative perception of frat houses. Mr. Seth responded that the fraternity wants to get involved in projects that will serve the neighborhood, and that Theta Chi has robust standards and bylaws that will be enforced. He said that their housing manager will be attending SHNA meetings.

O'Dowd stated that he would like to entertain a motion stating that SHNA has "no objection" to the Theta Chi chapter's request, and that they will fulfill their promise to become one of the best fraternities on the UA campus.

Christine Curtis stated, "I so move."

John Wilder asked about adding stipulations to the letter. O'Dowd responded that he would like to let UA enforce the agreement, and to allow the fraternity to develop ways to improve relations with SH neighbors and the Board.

Mr. Seth said that besides being regulated by UA, he believes that the University will also require annual recognition of Theta Chi.

Along with more questions and input from the audience about what conditions should be added to the letter to UA, there was discussion of the exact wording of the motion on the table. O'Dowd stated that he thinks SHNA should neither approve nor disapprove the request. Instead, he would like SHNA to state "no objection."

Christine Curtis asked for the exact wording of the rule about fraternal houses in neighborhoods. Mr. Seth did not know the exact rule. He said that there are 8 or 9 line items that Theta Chi needs to fulfill to become a recognized fraternal house. One of these requirements is that they become part of the neighborhood association. The letter of approval from SHNA is another required item.

The motion on the table was then amended to say that the following letter of support drafted by Christine be approved:

RE: Teta Chi Fraternity
(Address)

Thank you for attending our Neighborhood Association meeting tonight and introducing your fraternity, its values, and its goal of high standards of scholarship and deportment.

Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association welcomes your fraternity to our neighborhood, supports your recognition by the University of Arizona as a formal fraternity house regulated by the Greek Life Office.

We look forward to working together over many years, and annually reviewing the comportment and community service activities of Theta Chi so that we can renew our support annually.

Sincerely,
John O'Dowd, President

The motion was seconded by Corey Reidy. The motion passed with a vote of all in favor to approve the letter.

ELECTION OF BOARD TREASURER

Treasurer Steve Gilsdorf has resigned his Board position due to illness. O'Dowd has been handling the check book in the interim. Corey Reidy has agreed to serve if elected. Steve would work with Corey during the transition. Rick Bell asked Corey about Membership financials, which led to a discussion of those line items.

O'Dowd nominated Corey to serve as treasurer. Christine made a motion to nominate Corey to serve as treasurer. Gail Schuessler seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor.

O'Dowd has written letters to Vantage West Credit Union and to Washington Federal to authorize the replacement of Steve with Corey as second signer on the SHNA accounts.

SPRING 2013 HOME TOUR (HT)

Initial discussion revolved around the Home Tour Committee's reasons for turning down a request to come and speak to the Board about what they are planning for the coming home tour.

There seems to be some issue that has put off the committee. There was speculation about membership discounts and membership sales during the last HT. Also, O'Dowd wondered if the Water Tower is an issue with the

committee since the project has not moved forward even though HT revenues have been earmarked for the project and the money is waiting to be used.

The agenda issue for this meeting is a discussion of how to get the committee to the table to work with the Board.

Christine asked the Board if there were any objections to the list of the committee's requests that went out in a recent email. (The text of the email was not available.) Rick objects to charging SHNA members an admission fee. John Wilder thought that the problem may be how the membership sales were handled at the event.

Rick reminded the Board that O'Dowd had designated him the contact person for the HT Committee, but that so far he has not heard from them.

Several Board members offered numerous suggestions on how to approach the HT Committee about this impasse. O'Dowd is concerned that the HT Committee does not seem willing to meet with the Board. Gail Schuessler suggested a positive approach. Christine volunteered to call Denise Blake, long-time HT organizer, to discuss her committee's needs and wishes.

The inclusion of the Benedictine Monastery in the tour was discussed. This is a disputed idea since the Monastery is not in SH Neighborhood.

AUGUST BOARD DINNER MEETING

The Board discussed where and when to meet for the annual dinner meeting in August (Tuesday 8/21). Christine made a motion that the meeting be held at 6:00PM at the Championship Grill, Sam Hughes Place. Corey seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor.

WATER TOWER RESTORATION PROJECT

O'Dowd reported on the current status of the negotiations with Verizon on the use of the Water Tower site for a cell tower. The architectural design is a concern. Verizon is not responding to either O'Dowd or to the architect. At Corey's suggestion of involving UA, the consensus was that UA would not be a good partner. Molly Thrasher from the Ward 6 Office told the Board that UA is in the process of disposing of small properties.

O'Dowd will talk to the architect, Bob Vint, about getting an engineering report that would confirm whether or not the tower can be restored, and what it would cost.

Molly and O'Dowd and the Board speculated on the future location of the Verizon cell tower, and on the future use of the Water Tower.

QUORUM NO LONGER PRESENT: John Wilder left the meeting at 9:16 PM.

SEPTEMBER AGENDA

Corey asked that a dog lease ordinance for Himmel Park be added to the Sept agenda. Discussion followed about the SHNA history with this issue, and about individual Board members experiences with dogs in the park.

Rick asked that the next meeting address the issue of the discrepancy in the treasurer's report vs. the past minutes in regard to the SHNA donation to Jefferson Park. This led to a discussion between Rick and Corey, the new treasurer, and the other Board members. O'Dowd injected that this would be put on the agenda for the September meeting. A contentious discussion based on differing recollections followed.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Minutes prepared by Madelyn Cook, AZdex Information Services, 2822 E. 1st St. 321-4619 (cook@dakotacom.net)