

SANTA CLARA COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

General meeting notes - January 5, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. There were 22 present, including Board members Russ Bevans, Jerry Finigan, Peter Thurston, Ed MacMahon, George Price, and Gary Wildish. People in attendance introduced themselves.

-Discussion of Homeless Camp Issues: We heard first from people who had recently visited the safe spot sites: Barbara, George, Gary, and Peter. The following points were presented during the discussion:

1. Barbara described the way the Nightingale and safe spot site work, and offered to take anyone to see them.
2. George- these sites are an effective way to manage the need for homeless people. Question: What is the city planning? Are there improved policing and results?
3. Gary W- These homeless people need help and this is a good way. Meals can be prepared and running water is important.
4. Peter described the size of the sites (1/4 to ½ acre) and the Santa Clara site on Lone Oak can handle a safe site in a small corner by the Power transformer site.
5. Barbara Denlis described homeless camping sites on church properties, including car camping, and facilities sponsored by St. Vincent de Paul. There are many sites managed in different ways.
6. Patrick Kerr described the safe sites a very well managed, and asked what is our need in Santa Clara.
7. City involvement in the issue was described by Regan Watjus from the city managers office. There is not enough affordable housing in the city. Rest stops fit part of the need. Goal: (2013) was set to provide a place for homeless to be safe. Help is provided for a wide range of folks. There are other housing solution agencies. Rest stops are improving. Establishment of the ordinance was based on a successful program. They want to disperse the safe sites to other neighborhoods (one site in each Ward). To make sites permanent there needs to be a change in the ordinance to remove the end date. The Nightingale site needs to be relocated by February 17.
8. Ed McMahon - Distribution of site to all Wards in the city is important. What about the 13th and Chambers site?
9. We need more information shared with the community about how these safe sites work so neighbors throughout the city will support establishment of sites.
10. We need a list of the available sites. Are there criteria for the ordinance to select sites? The process so far has identified dozens of potential sites that have been narrowed down to a current list of 3 sites, including the Lone Oak site.
11. The city program needs to work with neighborhood associations to inform neighbors about how safe site are managed, how long they will be located, etc.
12. Gary H - Property values are a concern of Lone Oak neighbors. A dog park could be a good use of other parts of the Lone Oak site.
13. Louie recommended people visit the current sites and write letters to the editor.

14. Barbara- The North Eugene Homeless Advocacy group is ready to work with SCCO and other neighborhoods. Jerry said we have a committee to work on outreach, including the current letter to businesses. There needs to be an on-going effort to work with neighborhood groups to evaluate results and find ways to keep it going and improving.
15. Question: Does the proposed Ordinance require that every Ward have a safe site. Not now.
16. Sites do not have to be on city property.
17. Mary Ellen Riley asked if there is a second site in Santa Clara. Apparently not.
18. Barbara - Success breeds success, and there are many people who need access to a safe site.
19. Greg Kaminski, Pastor of the Westside Baptist Church at the former Eagles, site said the housing project has demonstrated successful ways to support homeless folks. They have about 10 folks at their church site.
20. Regan said the city manager's office will send updates on how the city is proceeding.

-December meeting minutes will be taken up at the next meeting

-Treasurer's report - \$843 total, with \$644 of it in the garden fund

-2016 Year in Review - Jerry handed out the Annual Report for 2016 and summarized. Peter moved to adopt the report. Seconded by Gary Wildish. Discussion: Add Awbrey park grant award to accomplishments. Add Community Center as a 2017 goal and note that it is a goal to improve livability in Santa Clara by implementation of SCRIPT. Note that the city is now ready to work with SCCO to create and Santa Clara Area Plan.

-Land use - Jerry mentioned a couple notices. No discussion

-Awbrey Park - Gary noted that a large number of limbs had come down in the ice storm.

-SCCO Homeless Committee - The letter to local businesses is approved and ready to go on the web site. It was agreed there would be no reason Gary couldn't post it on the SCCO facebook page.

-Elections to SCCO board - Jerry read the names of board members up for a vote. Gary Wildish and Ed McMahon offered to let their positions be filled by other interested neighbors. Patrick Kerr and Louie Vidmar were voted by the members present to fill Gary and Ed's board positions along with the other current board members who were voted to continue on the board.

-Mary Ellen Riley - Reported that she had received negative letters recently from a person representing "Irvington Neighbors" - does not know who it is sending these letters.

The meeting ended at 8:33 pm

Notes by Peter Thurston

SCCO meeting-1-5-17