

McDuffie-Twin Parks Neighborhood Association
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, January 14, 2009, 6:30pm
Highland Senior Activities Center – 131 Monroe NE, Albuquerque

Board Members Present: Bill Hoch, Carla Kugler, Charlene Brown, Gary Harrison, John Scariano, Kathleen Kimler Altobelli, Laurie Moye, Maya Gallegos. Absent: Mark Hyland

About 12 visitors were also present – including City Councilor Sally Mayer (District 7), Gilbert Montaña, and Sgt. Terre Molander of the Albuquerque Police Department.

The meeting began at 6:32 pm with a welcome by Bill followed by self-introductions. Laurie moved to amend the agenda to be “3. Approval of November minutes.” Gary seconded and motion carried. The minutes of the Nov 12, 2008 meeting were approved on a motion by Laurie with a second by Gary.

Charlene reported that our current balance is \$231.03 and that we are up to 67 households. Renewal notices need to be sent out – Laurie suggested monthly notices for renewals. Charlene reported that Ann Lerner of City Film Office is trying to help resolve the *Crash* checks that were returned for insufficient funds-- about \$300 in donations for filming in the neighborhood. John suggested contacting the consumer advocacy group in the Attorney General’s office. Although the checks were a donation, all felt that the production company was still obligated to pay, as part of the arrangement with the city. Charlene will continue working to resolve the bounced checks.

Recent criminal activity in the neighborhood was reported: a bike stolen from a garage, a robbery at top of Twin Park, a near home-invasion (Maya); a robbery at Morningside and La Hacienda one afternoon last week with electronics and jewelry taken (Kay Maize); vandalism at Twin Parks, on Avenida Mañana and both sides of the park, with 10 cars paint-balled in early December (Ian)

City Councilor Sally Mayer was introduced and spoke on how she likes to come to Neighborhood Association meetings and find out about issues (weeds, junk cars, improvements, traffic mitigation, parks, etc). The Feb 19th Heart of the Heights Neighborhood Association Coalition Meeting will focus on unsolved traffic problems and will include APD representatives (7 pm Sheraton Uptown) – there will be a short presentation by speakers and then audience questions. She has an email list-serve, which anyone can sign up for (smayer@cabq.gov). Gilbert Montaña handles constituent services for her. The 311 phone service was praised as an incredible service. The issue of park improvements was discussed – Snow Heights is an example of park development that she has helped with. She would want to know how people who back up to McDuffie Park feel about any proposed development before working for such – there have been suggestions for McDuffie to become a dog park, and also opposition voiced to this idea. Someone mentioned that there used to be trashcans at McDuffie at the cut-throughs on Solano – Mayer and Montaña will look into getting them replaced. Benches and tables are available for parks in District 7 – and easy to get installed if the request comes from a neighborhood association. Laurie asked about Neighborhood Identity signs, which is a Councilor initiative. Ms. Mayer originally thought of big signs, but now banners on light poles and smaller freestanding signs are being considered – the idea was to create a sense of space, while still reflecting the different neighborhoods. Neighborhoods will have some options (colors, etc) and the signs will probably be of a retro design. Traffic department will be in touch with us. Kathy asked about the downtown arena: Mayer does not support an arena but does support a convention complex – a 500-room flagship hotel with a multi-purpose event center as part of the hotel development. She is looking for ways to increase revenue to the city (\$20 million in hole in city budget, construction permits are way down). She favors the hotel because she has been told that a city needs to have 1000 rooms within walking distance of a convention center to get large conventions and trade shows – Albuquerque doesn’t have those rooms and the convention center can’t handle trade shows. Construction jobs and tourism are great revenue sources. A complex – and 1/8 cent tax -- will be put to a public vote. She will vote against the \$400 million arena plan. Next topic was transit corridors and bus routes: Mayer doesn’t support light rail down Central and since the 1/8 cent transportation tax sunsets in January 2010 and will need to be renewed by voters, she doesn’t think routes should be added now since not sure the tax will be renewed. The 21st Century Task Force did recommend small circulator systems – so people are supposed to be working on that. New routes come from the Mayor, so contact him (with a cc to Mayer). It was asked why the Social Security and Food Stamps buildings are NOT on public transit – allegations of discrimination against non-downtown land owners was partly responsible for their placement. Darlene thanked Councilor Mayer for her work for animals and on the Styrofoam issue. Councilor Mayer reported that the Uptown Sector Plan passed the Council on a 9-0 vote and

that she will be up at legislature working for TIDDs for Winrock. We thanked Councilor Mayer for her attendance, help, and insights.

Sgt. Molander addressed crime issues in our neighborhood, stating that this neighborhood is a very nice neighborhood and he is more concerned about fear of fear. He clarified terminology – burglary is of a home, while robbery is of an individual. He advises that garage door openers NOT be kept in the visor slot in a car (if the car is stolen while parked at a store, the registration provides the home address and the opener lets the thief into your house before you even know your car has been stolen). If you have to have a garage door opener, he recommends the keypad type of opener. He recommends that we keep our garages closed and our cars inside them. The paint-ball incident mentioned earlier was probably bored high school students, not gang activity. The police have been working on cleaning the city busses up over the last 2 years and residents should feel safe riding the busses now. It is not necessary with modern cars to warm them up in winter – just drive slowly for a couple houses when starting up. There is a huge auto theft problem in New Mexico – police feel that it is partly because people “choose” to be victims by their actions (such as warming a car up unattended with keys in it) – he asked us to please not do that. Sandy Pino can be contacted with crime information (256-2050, or 256-2044 Fax). Having a nosy neighbor across the street is the best source of protection for a neighborhood – he suggested that everyone become that nosy neighbor, knowing names and home and cell phone numbers for 3 houses to the left and to the right and the 7 houses across the street. Asked about speeding on the freeways, he said there are dedicated traffic officers patrolling the interstates. Asked about speed bumps – many times people ask to have them removed within 6 months of installation; removal costs more than installation (about \$5000). Councilor Mayer said that 67% of residents on the street of the proposed hump have to okay it before approval is given. Mayer also mentioned that if someone comes to your door and you suspect they might try to break in, let them know that you are home to discourage them. Sgt Molander was thanked for coming.

Bill gave a brief report on the Office of the District Attorney crime reports for our neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods.

Bill announced that there is to be a meeting on Feb 7 (9 am – noon) to apply for funding from a grant program for neighborhood beautification, litter control and/or streetscape projects. There is a total of \$4000 for the city, and matching monetary or in-kind donations are required. Carla will try to attend meeting to find out more – for future planning as well as for this round of funding.

Kathy reported that she talked to Patrick Montoya in the City's Neighborhood Office about the need or advisability of incorporating the neighborhood association. He knew of only one lawsuit in the last 2 years against a neighborhood association's Board of Directors – and that lawsuit was dismissed. If incorporated, then only the assets of the association (and not those of the individual board members) would be vulnerable. He referred us to the state's Public Regulation Commission – the person there said that neighborhood associations are quasi-governmental and that about 15% have filed with the commission. There is a \$25 (or possibly \$100) fee for filing with the state corporation commission as a “nonprofit corporation” – need to have articles of incorporation and name 3 directors, 1 officer, and a registered agent – then need to continue to file an annual report every year and pay \$10 annual fee. It would also be necessary to file a request for tax exemption with the IRS. Councilor Mayer suggested we call Julie Jones, CPA, with the Jerry Kline Neighborhood Association, who has experience with this issue – Kathy volunteered to do that.

Charlene mentioned that there used to be a sign on Carlisle between Lomas and Constitution that limited truck traffic, but the sign has disappeared – Councilor Mayer will look into it.

Councilor Mayer also said that it is harder nowadays for the city to condemn property – but that the city can rezone and cause property to lose value.

Councilor Mayer praised Laurie for doing a great job on the City's Environmental Planning Commission!

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Carla, seconded by Laurie and Gary simultaneously, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Kimler Altobelli