



Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance
Riverside, California

Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance Meeting Minutes

Izaak Walton Club, Fairmount Park
Monday, February 19, 2007
7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Attendees (per sign-in sheet):

Keith Alex, Dave McNeil, Chani Beeman, Bettina Brotzen, Pete Kallinger, Norm Gritton, Molly Dougherty, Janice Penner, Joan Donahue, Chuck Griffiths, Laurie DeFrance, Jim Talcott, Damon Castillo, David Lucas, Jane Block, Gerry Douglas, Suzanne Cesari, Angelo Cesari, Jack Larson, Nanci Larson, Robbie Kennedy, Martha Meighoc, Ron Kushner, Jerry Crouch, Heather Troxel, Steven Kirkpatrick, Tina Lang, Laurie Haessly.

1. Meeting called to order by DANA Chairman Keith Alex at 7:01 p.m.

Welcome and introductions

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2007.

✓ Motion to approve Minutes as submitted

M/S/V: Kallinger/Caesari/Carried

3. Report from Councilman Betro

- Third Street improvements are complete.
The Mt. Rubidoux Task Force has submitted their report, including findings and suggested improvements.
- Public improvements to Evergreen Cemetery are underway. It's hoped that private funding will kick in soon.
- Fairmount Park improvements will begin soon, starting with dredging of Lake Evans. The frontage on Market Street will not be sold (despite rumors to the contrary), and uses will be compatible with the park (single-story, California-style buildings). The Armory will be removed, and a community advisory committee

- Plans for improvement for the Downtown Mall include adding trees, more green space, and a plaza near California Tower with eating areas, events, and a winter ice rink. The plans are available online at www.riversidedowntown.org. Plans will be discussed at a public meeting in six weeks.
- Downtown Fire Station: Dom wants the fire station to stay at its current location, says it's not practical to move it, and the money which would be needed to buy land for a relocated station could be better used elsewhere. The station could be used for education and to display historical items, such as the firehouse pole, which new fire stations usually don't have.
- Public Utilities: David Wright, general manager of Riverside Public Utilities, reported on the street lighting program, giving an overview of the different styles of lampposts to be used in the city. There will be different types for pedestrian vs. driving areas, and styles that will be in keeping with the houses in each neighborhood. He estimated that it will take 4-5 years to complete the replacement program. David said there might be fewer poles in some areas, but they will cast more light and be more energy efficient than previous models.

Questions/concerns:

- No new lights have been installed on Ladera Lane, although several have been removed. David said PUC is aware of the situation, and work is in progress on Ladera.
- Will old poles be available for sale? Yes – and the public will be notified of such sales in advance.
- The bulbs on the Raincross lampposts go out a lot – what can be done? David said that the types of bulbs used in those posts are not long-lasting, but PUC will continue to monitor them and respond when the bulbs go out.

Dom said the light program is just a part of the overall improvement program like Fairmount Park, Downtown Mall, etc.

Questions/issues for Dom:

- Will the locomotive at the park stay at its present spot? Yes.
- Will sailing return to the lake? Yes, when the lake dredging is completed.
- There are huge ruts in the road at the University/Redwood traffic circle area: the road is scheduled to be resurfaced.
- DANA wants to give Steve Libring a plaque thanking him for his work on the Pine/Redwood traffic calming project. Dom will check on the best time for presenting the plaque at a city council meeting.
- Will the change in plans for Tequesquite Park (the loss of the estimated \$10M the city would have received for the land) affect Fairmount Park? Dom said no – Ab Brown and Hunter parks would be affected. Both parks are in the redevelopment area, and Dom said he will recommend that redevelopment funds go to the two parks instead of sewers, sidewalks, etc. Property tax income has increased \$3M due to improvements and increased property values in the downtown area. Redevelopment should use some of these funds for Ab Brown and Hunter.

- Tequesquite Park will be a park of some kind, not sure what form it will take yet, but Dom is giving staff till the end of the year to come up with a plan.
 - Will DANA have a representative on the proposed Tequesquite task force? Possibly, but the task force will be run by the Park and Rec Commission.
 - Motion to request that DANA send a letter to Park and Rec asking that DANA be allowed a representative to sit on the committee. Molly will draft a letter, and once letter is approved by DANA, Tina Lang will pass it along to Park and Rec.
- M/S/V: Castillo/Kallinger/Carried

4. Report Riverside Police Department: Chuck Griffiths, Area Commander, North Policing Center

- Victoria Market is now closed, and the demolition contract is out for bid. The Swiss Inn has also been demolished and the residents relocated.
- There's a renewed emphasis on policing the bus depot – lots of drug sales have been occurring lately, and RPD has made several arrests.
- The Transitional Housing Task Force is still in existence; please contact them regarding 6-pack housing issues, etc.
- Some groups are still feeding the homeless, but they get in and get out as quickly as possible. If anyone sees groups doing homeless feedings, please call the Homeless Outreach Team with the license number of the vehicle as soon as possible. Phone number is 826-2200. The city may not be legally able to stop the feedings, but the Outreach Team wants to try to educate groups about alternatives (feeding at the shelter, for instance).
- Mt. Rubidoux car burglaries: About 30 cars have been broken into recently. RPD staked out the area and made several arrests, which led back to a sober living house on Dewey. The house has been closed and the occupants are in jail.
- A skateboard shop downtown is drawing skateboarders to the mall, and RPD is letting them know that it is not OK to skateboard on the mall. Question (later): Will there be a place for skateboarders to go? Reid Park is being considered as a possible location, but nothing is definite.
- Pete noted more graffiti near the Mt. Rubidoux bridge area, wondered if the homeless are back in the riverbottom. They are, and RPD has been working to disperse the camps, giving them a week to pack and move. Homeless Outreach also goes along to offer services: help with housing, bus tickets home, etc. It was suggested that someone from the Homeless Outreach Team attend a future DANA meeting.
- DANA members brought up various issues with crime downtown: homeless bothering customers at Starbucks, continuing problems with a group home on Second Street.
- With Daylight Savings Time going into effect in March, its time to think about starting up the Neighborhood Walks again.
- Stats: Crime is down 11.4% across the board.

5. Treasurer's Report by Heather Troxel

Heather distributed a statement of accounts/treasurer's report: the group has \$2,731.31, less \$231 for the roses planted at Fairmount Park.

- Roses were planted by Keith, Nanci, Heather, Pete and others around the Gazebo, along with Ralph Nunez from Parks and Rec, and existing roses were pruned. It was a really good event, and Ralph was impressed by DANA's hard work and commitment to the Park. Major kudos to Heather for working so hard on this project: hunting down and procuring the roses, even bringing them to the Park herself. Yay Heather!
- Pete Kallinger said the group should consider helping replace some of the roses that were stolen from the Park. He also noted that the city had purchased a skimmer to pick up debris that blows onto the lake.

6. New / Old Issues

- Inviting other downtown groups to DANA meetings: Are there other groups downtown to invite (other than the Women's Club, Riverside Downtown Partnership, etc. who already have members in attendance); we need to identify and invite them. Possibilities:
 - Riverside Land Conservancy
 - Mt. Rubidoux Manor
 - Riverside Neighborhood Partnership
 - Neighborhood Watch groups

Joan from Dom's office will provide a list of contacts; RNP is also working to update their list.

- Goals and Projects: Members were asked to identify goals and projects DANA can work on in the coming year. Some ideas:
 - Community Garden
 - Seed grants
 - Partnering with Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful
 - Helping establish new historic district in Brockton area

Chani asked for point people to take up each project: Pete will work on the community garden/rose project; Molly will work on the seed grants; Keith/Nanci will restart the neighborhood walks; Keith will be the contact for Mt. Rubidoux issues. Damon and Nanci will work with Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful, and Pete will work with a subgroup of KRCB – Riverside Celebrates Trees. Heather has developed a relationship with Parks and Rec through the rose planting, and will take the lead on future projects with them. Laurie, JT, Suzanne, and Nanci will gather info and give an update on Evergreen Cemetery developments.

7. Ideas for next meeting: Damon would like to get an update from staff on planned/upcoming arts and cultural events in the city.

**Next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 19, 2007
Izaak Walton Club, Fairmount Park**

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Dougherty, DANA Secretary