

Minutes of the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council

The June 8, 2011 Marina Bay Neighborhood Council Meeting was called to order by Council President Stan Anderson at 7:35 p.m., followed by self-introductions of everyone present.

Monthly Crime Statistics: Sgt. Tod Opdyke spoke first to the group and reminded everyone that it is absolutely critical to call the Police immediately if you see anything at all suspicious. He addressed some incidents that occurred in Point Richmond because they just as easily could have occurred in Marina Bay. There were EIGHT “door-kicks” (residential burglaries) in Point Richmond (there were also several other similar incidents in Central and Northern Districts). An arrest was made because someone heard something and called the Police. The perpetrator was a forties, white female, possibly part of a team of two. Sgt. Opdyke emphasized the Police have their best chance to nab perpetrators if they are called TIMELY. Waiting a day or two never works. Ninety percent of all arrests (here and nationwide) occur because of citizen calls.

Next, our Beat 1 cop, Officer David Longacre, gave the monthly incident stats: On May 19, there was an identity theft on Bayside Court. On May 30, in the 70’s “block” of Marina Lakes Drive there was a theft; the thief removed a window screen and climbed through an already open window. Laptop and modem stolen.

NOTE: PROGRAMMING CHANGES TO 911 CALLS: thanks to GPS technology, a 911 call from your SmartPhone will now go directly to local dispatch centers. E.g.: if you are in Pinole and need to call 911, your call will automatically route to Pinole Police. Or if you are in El Sobrante, your call will go to El Sobrante, etc. Of course you can still dial 510-233-1214, then select “2” or “0” if you are not the owner of a SmartPhone or if you are dialing from a landline.

Harbor Master Steve Orosz: There are multiple projects slated for our harbor, organized to occur in four phases. Steve presented a detailed and informative PowerPoint; he will return and continue the presentation at another meeting as there was not enough time to cover all four phases.

Phase I: Dredging

Due to filling in of the channel (called “shoaling”) over the last ten years, the area available for boats to safely enter and leave the harbor has both narrowed and gotten shallower. Phase I of the projects will involve restoring channel width and channel depth; the last dredging occurred in 2001. In the ten years since then, the depth in some areas has been reduced to only 7’ – this can clearly lead to boat damage. Dredging will restore depth to 12’ at zero tide and will restore width to 175’. Work is expected to begin around early July and should last 30-45 days. There will be dredges, a barge and tugs active in the area, along with additional small boat traffic associated with the work (survey vessels, skiffs, etc.). Dredged matter will be disposed of fifty miles offshore past the Farallon

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Islands. Permissible noise levels are limited to 86 decibels during working hours. Working hours are all dependent on tides, versus typical land-based work hours of 9 to 5. NOTE: the entrance channel is owned by the City of Richmond and this must be done.

NOTE: once work begins, should you have any complaints or questions, please call 236-1013 or write ComplaintsInfo@MBYachtHarbor.com.

Phase II: Video Camera Installations

An earlier video camera installation project covered the actual boat Marina (done approximately one year ago). The 2nd, planned stage of camera installation will be covered by grants from the Department of Homeland Security as our "Tier One" Port of Richmond is considered a prime target for potential terrorist acts...due to tankers being moored there, a nearby oil refinery, etc. These cameras will also assist the City in its general anti-crime efforts. The system is compatible with the current Port of Richmond video surveillance system. What will be added in this phase are cameras in Vincent Park and the Bay Trail placed strategically to monitor water areas in the Port and surrounding waters (other new cameras in the large Melville Square parking lot will be aimed there where there has been an assortment of problems for several years; these particular cameras are programmed to black out nearby residential windows and slides were shown with examples of this feature).

Phase III: Floating Wave Attenuator

This will likely take up to two years to complete. A video clip showed significant wave force particularly in the outermost boat slips when waves are strong. The damage to boats can be considerable making the outermost boat slips unrentable. This means a loss of \$250,000 in annual revenues. The planned 900' wide, 2' high wave attenuator will create a sheltered area in the lee to "knock down" the force of those strong waves. Notes: [1] before any work is done there will be an engineering study; [2] almost all structures will be underwater; [3] the part of the attenuator above water that would be visible from shore is negligible as the closest physical view points are 800' away from the unit. The attenuator will be discussed in greater detail at a future meeting.

Phase IV: America's Cup 34 Key Dates & Mega-yacht mooring field

As the next speaker arrived around 8:30, Steve ended his presentation and will cover this phase in another meeting, as well as provide updates on Phases I thru III. But until that happens, a short note about this: consideration is being given to developing a "mooring field" within Marina Bay for mega-yachts visiting for the 2013 America's Cup competition. In addition to 100' boats that can be handled in several existing dock areas, the mooring field would accommodate boats up to 200' long. Their presence is expected to contribute significantly to the local economy, as crews come ashore to buy supplies, dine, patronize businesses, etc.

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County Supervisor John Gioia

In a nutshell, here are the economic realities of the county: costs are soaring and tax revenues are way down. Additional state and federal funding are down. Property tax revenues for Contra Costa County are the worst in the area...for the first time since the "Great Depression", property tax assessments were lowered. There was an overall average 11% drop in the dollar amounts of assessments levied. Nevertheless, the county is trying to preserve services and is renegotiating with employee unions on benefits, pensions, and is also lowering wages, etc. There have been layoffs across all departments. The county is adjusting to all these changed circumstances, but, as John stated, the fiscal relationship between local and state government is completely broken. He said, "We need substantial reform; we are living in a changed world." Also, the real estate market is NOT expected to turn around anytime soon and many more foreclosures are expected, which will further depress the real estate market and assessable levels as property values fall.

Other matters: BCDC was originally formed (<http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/>) to address issues of rising sea levels and the impact in the Bay Area. According to Gioia, Marina Bay is not subject to inundation (current maps show we are not subject to sea level rise in this area) but work and studies will be done. There is talk of building a sea wall around Treasure Island, as plans are under way to do a substantial amount of development there, including high rises.

Gioia addressed various other issues: SF Bay Restoration Authority is working on how to finance projects to clean up and restore SF Bay shorelines. In August there will be an informational tour or walk on the Bay Trail to understand this type of restoration work.

Doctors Hospital may be closing due to financial strains.

Due to mandates to reduce prison populations, we may get some released inmates sent to our jails where we have capacity BUT we don't have the money to support the increase in jail population.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next month's meeting is July 13, same time, same place. Please check home page of website for details.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ruth Zablotsky, Secretary
Marina Bay Neighborhood Council