

Minutes of the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council

The July 11, 2012 meeting of the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council was called to order by MBNC President Stan Anderson at 7:30 p.m. Round-robin self-introductions were made.

Stan reported that the decision by the State of California to withdraw \$6,000,000 in funding for the Bradley A. Moody Memorial Underpass on Marina Bay Parkway seems to be irreversible. He noted that statistics show that the roadway can be blocked for 2.5 to 4 hours per day and the lack of open access presented very real safety concerns. Stan also thanked the many members of the community who had submitted letters and petitions on behalf of the project. He noted that the City and the utility companies had already expended about \$3 million for project related expenses and the City had indicated that it may bring a lawsuit against the State in the hope that the decision will be reversed. However, at this point it appears that the Underpass will not go forward as scheduled. The good news is that the Meade Street Bypass Road Project is already well underway.

Stan also reminded the group that Marina Bay Community Association is once again hosting the annual National Night Out event on August 7; all subdivisions are invited to attend. The MBNC has been asked to set up a table as it has done in previous years.

BEAT COP REPORT: Officer David Longacre, our “Beat 1” Beat Officer, reported on the request for installing a crosswalk across the Parkway where The Shores and Marina Bay Community Association entryways face each other. Following the last meeting, he had gone to the location based on a request from a homeowner attending our last meeting and agreed that a crosswalk and/or a flashing indicator were needed. He had passed this request on to the City Engineer’s office but had not yet received a response. Officer Longacre promised to follow up and report on any additional progress at our August meeting. He also reported that there had been only one reported crime incident in Marina Bay during the last 30 days. There were a number of questions regarding bicycle thefts which had been reported to the police (specifically in Marina Bay Community Association), but had not been included in his report. He said he would check to determine if they had been properly logged and inquired if other communities had suffered similar losses. There was no indication that other communities had lost bicycles during this period. A comment was made that Marina Bay Community Association may be the only subdivision that has bike racks in their parking area; the bike racks may be acting as a magnet for thieves.

WRITER’S COACH CONNECTION: Bob Menzimer, Executive Director of Writer’s Coach Connection, presented an overview of the organization’s history and its goals. It is a non-profit which trains volunteers to work one-on-one with high school students to help them improve their writing skills. From a base in Berkeley, they have expanded to Oakland and El Cerrito. This year WCC is beginning a program at Richmond High School. In each of the schools, the program has produced remarkable improvements in the writing skills of students. One of the keys to its success is that the program works with all of the students in a class regardless of their writing skills so that there is no stigma associated with having a “writing coach”. They are seeking volunteers for this Fall and will be holding training classes in August. If

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you are interested, or know someone who might be, go to their website: www.writercoachconnection.org or call 510-524-2319.

RICHMOND PACIFIC RAILROAD: Joel Torres described the operation of the shortline railroad which serves the Port of Richmond and carries a variety of commodities for export as well as for distributors and processors who are located in the area. Although they operate only a few miles of track, they are responsible for the movement of a substantial quantity of raw materials as well as finished products.

He noted that the railroad was concerned and disappointed that the aforementioned Underpass was not going to proceed as planned, but offered some hopeful news in that the recently enacted State measure funding high speed rail had also included funds for a local rail project which would allow the major railroads to switch their trains directly from one main line to another, thereby reducing number of very long trains which pass through our community. He acknowledged that the process of building trains can be very frustrating to motorists but that the design and location of the yard limit the railroad's options since there are grade crossings at each end of the yard.

He announced that the railroad would be testing a new locomotive designed to meet more stringent emission standards within the next year and that it would also reduce the noise level associated with the existing operations. Their trains are easily recognized by their black and bright blue locomotives; he showed the two types in his PowerPoint presentation and detailed the differences in the two.

The next MNBC meeting is scheduled for August 8 and will focus on the Richmond City Council proposal to impose a tax on sugared soft drinks.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bob Carr, Secretary
Marina Bay Neighborhood Council