

**Greater Rockridge NCPC Meeting Minutes (12Y/13X)**  
**Thursday, December 9, 2010**  
**Rockridge Library Community Room, College & Manila, Oakland**  
**General Public: 7:00-8:30PM**

**NCPC:**

Frank Castro – Chair  
Barbara Minton - Vice Chair  
Denise Jorgensen – Treasurer  
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

Frank Castro opened the meeting at 7:10 PM with a promise to be done by 8:30 PM. Attendees introduced themselves. Fourteen people attended, including Jim Dexter, NCPC chairman for beat 13Y. Lauren LaPlante, a BART Police civilian liaison officer, attended on behalf of the BART Police Department.

Frank commented that the NCPCs are in a state of flux, no one knows when or whether OPD officers will show up at NCPC meetings. We used to have a PSO for each of our 2 beats, but not since the layoffs in July. Measure BB passed but the PSOs are not back yet. Jim Dexter commented that PSOs have been assigned as well as possible with current staff; look for announcements in January. No one is quite sure what that will mean; OPD is very short staffed and getting worse. Also, Claudia Albano recently wrote Frank Castro that Neighborhood Services Division has laid off a lot of Neighborhood Services Coordinators, so NSCs have to pick and choose which meetings they can go to. Our current NSC has other meetings on this date.

OPD Status Report

There was no OPD status report because no OPD officers were present.

BART Police Department Report

Lauren LaPlante, of the BART Community Oriented Policing Office, reported that the BART Police force is expanding. She's a civilian; she formerly did patrol, code enforcement, eyes-and-ears for BART PD. She's now doing liaison work. The new chief, Kenton Rainey, started in June, he is very serious about community involvement. Her unit includes her, plus a sworn officer and a lieutenant, and it may expand. Oakland's NSCs have reached out to BART in past, they're trying to be part of community. BART PD intends to have officers attend NCPC meetings; she was referred to us by BART's crime analyst. OPD has asked for expanded BART patrols. The borders between OPD and BART jurisdictions very clear, but OPD has asked BART to reach out in the Rockridge area for BART-area issues. BART has hired some former OPD officers. BART PD's jurisdiction is all BART property, including stations, parking lots and trackways. Since BART property *includes the trackways*, residents may see them cruising neighborhoods along the tracks.

*Question:* What about recent rash of robberies around Rockridge BART?

*LaPlante:* OPD forwards crime reports to BART PD if the crimes are in or around BART property. There was a rash of robberies around Rockridge from August to October, generally between 7 PM and midnight, all strong-arm robberies with either a gun or a knife. There have been fewer in November.

*Jim Dexter:* OPD data indicates that BART stations are a nexus of crime, including burglaries. Are BART police moving out to patrol the area around BART stations? Also, when criminals are caught, do we get feedback from suspects that they are targeting BART areas?

*LaPlante:* BART's "beat 13" covers MacArthur & Rockridge stations. They have 3-shift sworn coverage, plus civilians, on each beat. Beat officers now use varying side routes, instead of main streets, to go from station to station. Of course, when they're patrolling the streets, they're not on the trains. BART PD may add coverage to Rockridge. When BART Police personnel see something suspicious, they *can and do* stop and question (including the civilians on patrol). BART officers can arrest suspects. BART PD works with OPD crime units to analyze feedback from criminals.

**IMPORTANT RESOURCES:**

- RockridgeNCPC.com & OaklandPolice.com
- <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RockridgeNCPC/> & <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RockridgeNeighborhoodWatchNetwork/>

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BART police are just assisting if they're off BART property, they stay until OPD arrives to take over, and OPD keeps the crime records. If they're on BART property, they can arrest, they have jail cells at several locations, they keep separate records. A crime report for an incident in a BART parking lot would *not* be in OPD's records. Frank Castro asked, how do we get those stats? Ms. Laplante said that BART crime stats are managed by Ken Dam ([kdam@bart.gov](mailto:kdam@bart.gov)). BART Crime stats are not currently available online, but they are public information. Ms. LaPlante said that the NCPC could also call her at any time for statistics.

A recent BART crime trend is to steal a credit card, use it to buy a large-value BART ticket, and sell the ticket on eBay.

The biggest BART crime is fare evasion. This sounds unrelated to street crime, but fare evaders frequently have outstanding warrants, or other reasons you don't want them on the street. Roughly 22% of BART crime happens on the trains, roughly 40% happens on stations and 39% in parking lots. Berkeley has also been having a rash of violent street crimes in/around BART stations in North Berkeley.

BART will hold a **Safety Awareness Event** from 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM on Monday, December 20, 2010, at the Rockridge BART Station. Extra BART officers will be on hand to pass out safety tips, and give walking escorts to vehicles. If you exit a train *at any time* and don't feel safe, you can ask the station agent for a walking escort to your car; it might take a while depending on where the officers are. You can also call the BART toll-free number to request this, 1-877-679-7000. Karen Ivy offered to send an email to the Rockridge Yahoo Groups to publicize the event.

#### November Crime Stats:

We'll put a spreadsheet on the web site which will support this report for both beats. Tonight, we're only reporting on beat 12Y but the spreadsheet will include beat 13X.

Jim Dexter commented that a lot of the recent issues in beat 13X are auto break-ins and are up around the top of Broadway Terrace near the Highway 13 entrance.

Crimes against person averaged about 4/week in beat 12Y. The time crimes were committed is not available; all we have is the time the *report was completed*. The week before Thanksgiving had the fewest crimes. The maps show a pattern: Cars wait on Coronado behind Wendy's, presumably with a bag of Wendy's hamburgers, watching for people to cut through the alley next to Wendy's to get from Broadway to Coronado; then the people in the car mug the pedestrian.

There was a lot of property crime in November, mostly on or west of College Ave. November also saw a few vandalism incidents. Burglaries cluster in a radius around Rockridge BART station.

Only 2 quality of life crimes were reported in November, both narcotics related.

Jim Dexter asked if we had any idea how many crimes are not reported. Frank Castro replied that we have no way to tell. Residents have had conflicting signals on what crimes we should call in, versus what to report online. OPD is now supposed to come out to take burglary reports again.

#### Neighborhood Issues

A resident of upper Rockridge (the area around Cochrane Ave. and Sheridan Road in beat 13X) reported that her car was rifled, her purse stolen from it, and she's had a fraudulent charge on her

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credit card. The area has had at least 8 such incidents in last month. People have left car doors unlocked, thieves have rifled the cars and stolen the garage door openers, and then used them to enter the house. A thief kicked in a door (the burglar alarm was not turned on), and stole \$30,000 worth of jewelry. Some of these incidents may not have been reported to OPD.

Several people in that neighborhood have been agitating for surveillance cameras in the neighborhood. Someone found a central unit and 10 cameras for \$500 at Costco. The neighbors had emailed Vivek Bhatia (who did not attend the meeting) asking for feedback. They brought his email response to the meeting, which said that a system that cheap couldn't possibly capture much useful information, especially at night. Vivek reported that his much more expensive security system barely gets recognizable night photos, and requires constant attendance because birds and animals knock the cameras off alignment.

Jim Dexter pointed out that cheap cameras in Montclair nailed a home burglary (the out of work painter) by getting photos of the burglar and his truck, including a photo of him carrying a 52" TV out of the house. However, we think this was a daytime robbery. Residents of Harbord are setting up a video surveillance system that can read a license plate in the dark at 40 feet (cost: \$700 for 4 cameras).

Frank Castro suggested, do the cheap stuff first. Don't put up a video surveillance system and then think you're safe. Learn how not to be a victim. Lock the doors and windows, don't leave items visible in the car. Capt. Toribio told the NCPC that OPD always asks the suspects, why did you mug that particular person? The answer is always the same: because they were easy. They looked and acted like a victim. Lauren LaPlante added that video surveillance systems can give you a false sense of security. People walk down the street checking door handles. Think like a burglar when you evaluate your house's security.

A resident asked, what pressure can the NCPCs bring on the new mayor to staff OPD? We don't have a good answer yet.

We may not have a meeting in January on the usual date, we're having trouble finding a meeting room. The next meeting will probably be 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in February.

## **Priorities**

### **12Y Priority**

- Muggers lurking on Coronado to catch people taking the alley shortcut from Broadway to Coronado, using bags of Wendy's food as an excuse to sit there.

### **13X Priority**

- Recent rash of auto and home burglaries on Sheridan and Cochrane.

*In 2011 all meetings EXCEPT JANUARY will be the SECOND Thursday of the month.*

*The January meeting will be on Saturday, January 22, 2010 at 3:00 PM at the Rockridge Library Community Room, College and Manila.*

*See you there and stay safe!*

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