

Greater Rockridge NCPC - Minutes (12Y/13X)
Thursday, September 24, 2009
Rockridge Library 5366 College Avenue
General Public: 7:00-9:00PM

NCPC:

Chris Jackson – Co-chair & Moderator
Denise Boisvert Jorgensen – Co-Chair & Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

PSOs: Beat 12Y Officer Patrick Gerrans; Beat 13X Officer Randall Chew

NSC: Paul Brekke-Miesner; Debbie Ramirez (on vacation)

General Introductions

7:03 PM Chris Jackson called the meeting to order, and the NCPC officers introduced themselves. Paul Brekke-Miesner attended his last NCPC meeting – he's retiring Tuesday 9/29! Our new NSC will be Debbie Ramirez, who is currently on vacation.

Presentation on crime statistics (Vivek Bhatia)

Vivek noted that he was scaling the presentation back to make room for NCPC elections. July was a really bad crime month for Rockridge; we were worse than Fruitvale in absolute crime numbers. In August we've reverted to the mean. We still have crime, we're still worse than 2005, but it's better than July. A resident asked: can you see a seasonal pattern? Vivek said he can't see one, he thinks these are crimes of opportunity. A lot of the action in July was commercial burglaries on College Ave. The ongoing recommendation: Be aware, don't be a target. A resident asked if we have crime data for Walnut Creek and/or Lafayette, for comparison? No, we don't.

OPD Report

Officer Gerrans agreed that last month was rough, with guys stealing cars and robbing people. OPD has one of those guys in custody (w/in the last week or so), the other is still loose. Chris Jackson asked, was it the gunman or the driver? Officer Gerrans wasn't sure. OPD has been prowling the area watching for trouble, in an unmarked car; they were easily able to sneak up on people, many pedestrians were *not* aware of their surroundings. Vivek commented that the crimespotter maps show that almost nothing happens on College or near BART, it's all on the side street. Officer Gerrans reminded the group that these crimes happened in early evening, hitting solitary walkers.

College Avenue suffered over 40 commercial burglaries in about a month; OPD pulled over a couple of suspects and the number of commercial burglaries has dropped, they're not sure yet if this was cause and effect. The burglaries are still under investigation, 37-plus cases takes a long time to work through. A resident asked about Officer Chimpky – Officer Gerrans said he's still on disability. The local PSOs and the Temescal walking officer are covering College as best they can.

The Kales problem house is still in litigation; the tenants are fighting the eviction. Officer Gerrans asked the neighbors please to report any crimes from the house. This action could be long drawn out. A resident noted that the tenants have restrained themselves somewhat but they can't seem to keep it down. The neighbors have called the police because of direct threats. Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen reminded the group that the more calls OPD gets from a given area, the higher up the scale it looks to OPD. Another OPD officer in attendance emphasized that callers should give all the information they can, officers often work alone, they need to know what's going on when they respond to a call – what people said, who was threatened, etc.

Frank Castro noted that if an eviction action has been filed, if someone will get him the case number, he can follow up on the action and report at next month's meeting.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

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Chris Jackson reported following a woman around today who's been going around scamming money, with the story "my daughter was in a bad car accident." He knows where she lives and called OPD, but he couldn't get through to dispatch.

Officer Chew introduced himself as the PSO in beat 13X. He's mostly been working traffic problems - 24th & Broadway to 51st covers about 3 beats. On the issue of graffiti around Lawton & Broadway, he has some suggestions for neighbors, but he hasn't seen anything new in the last month or so. Chris Jackson noted that Bank of America mixes Mop 'n Glo and water, 50-50, and washes the walls down with it; the mixture repels graffiti.

NCPC elections:

The NCPC has scheduled annual elections for this meeting. Open positions are Chair, Vice-Chair (not currently occupied), Secretary and Treasurer. Frank Castro (a resident of Desmond near Clifton) offered to run for Vice-Chair; Chris Jackson will run for Chair; Karen Ivy will run for Secretary; Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen will run only for Treasurer. This will end the "co-chair" arrangement of the last year. A resident moved that the group elect all the candidates by acclamation; another resident seconded the motion; the vote was unanimous.

A resident asked about NCPC funding. Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen reported that we have about \$500 in cash – we had some gift cards from Home Depot, which Vivek bought; we've sold some graffiti remover to merchants. We don't have a bank account. Karen Ivy offered to find out if Barbara Goldenberg of beat 13Z was ever able to set up the bank account she was working on.

Neighborhood Issues

Possible priority: A resident complained about constant accidents and near misses at the Forest / Claremont / Colby intersection, a very dangerous area because of a 5 way intersection bisected by a stretch of Claremont where everyone speeds.

A resident asked if we have a list of block captains. Paul Brekke-Miesner was going to try to get the list. It's hard to get people interested.

A resident commented on pedestrian safety: College Avenue is *dangerous*. He suggested drivers turn on their headlights, even in daylight; pedestrians must be careful.

An OPD officer suggested that, when you leave a business, check out your exit route before you start to move. Mentally map where you'll go if something goes wrong; get your keys out, be ready. Watch for weirdness; don't hesitate to go back into the shop and ask for help. Chris Jackson suggested doing the same when you get home, check out the area. Don't get out of the car unless you feel safe, don't hesitate to pull out of the driveway and drive around a while.

Chris Jackson noted that the main neighborhood issues seem to be traffic related this month.

A resident asked about Claremont Middle School. Chris Jackson reported that the business group is meeting with them. New principal is really cracking down at Claremont; but Far West is causing some problems. Also a teacher at Oakland Tech High has set up a student patrol, to help keep things calm. The Rockridge BID contributes money for afterschool patrols.

A resident reported calling OPD because of somebody on the roof of the building at 1:30 AM. OPD didn't come; at 5:30 AM they called back and asked, do you still need a car? The resident asked if the delay was because of finance cutbacks. They told dispatch they didn't think they were in danger. Chris Jackson asked the officers, has OPD been affected by cutbacks? Paul Brekke-Miesner said, not yet; the city council is trying hard not to affect OPD, but staffing has dropped below the 803 required by Measure Y. The resident acknowledged the call was on a Saturday night, which is always a bad night.

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Merchants' Issues

Karen Ivy read an email sent to the Merchant Watch list about the capture of a woman who's been shoplifting on College Ave. for over a year. Coordination among Chris Jackson, OPD, and various merchants enabled the arrest. The main issue for merchants right now is not enough business. Several new businesses are coming in to the avenue.

Review of Previous Month's Priorities and Setting of New Ones (10 minutes)

A resident asked if we can do something about light timing at the Colby/Forest/Claremont intersection – the light at Colby is very short and people speed to get through. NCPC will follow up with the city about retiming the light, which backs traffic up at commute hour.

Priorities (three allowed per beat)

Beat 12Y

1. OHA property on 5800 block Canning – drug activity seems to be acting up again, also having graffiti trouble.
2. Monitor problem house on Kales for tenant misbehavior.

Beat 13X

1. None

Traffic Priority - 12Y (one traffic priority per beat)

- Speeding and not yielding to pedestrians on Claremont at the Forest/Colby intersection.

Traffic Priority – 13X (one traffic priority per beat)

- Weekend traffic at top of Broadway Terrace, not yielding to pedestrians.

Next meeting is Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 7:00 PM, in the Rockridge Library Community Room, College and Manila. See you there and stay safe!

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