

**Greater Rockridge NCPC Meeting Minutes (12Y/13X)**  
**Thursday, November 4, 2010**  
**The College Preparatory School, 6100 Broadway, Oakland**  
**General Public: 7:00-8:30PM**

**NCPC:**

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

At 7:07 PM Frank Castro opened the meeting and invited attendees to help themselves to the potluck for 10 minutes before the start of business. Sixteen citizens attended, plus our new NSC, Karen Harris, and 5 OPD officers.

There was not a quorum of citizens, so the NCPC was unable to vote on the proposed bylaws changes.

Caldecott Tunnel mitigation meetings

Ronnie Spitzer of the Rockridge Community Planning Council was given time for a brief announcement. There's a mitigation settlement in discussion, related to the Caldecott 4<sup>th</sup> bore project. CalTrans denied any impact to Rockridge, and then settled for \$8 million. Proposed actions involve numerous intersection and pedestrian crossing upgrades; some are in Rockridge/Temescal, some are not. These are *proposed* changes, not yet final. There is a public meeting on Nov. 8 at Kaiser Elementary, 25 South Hill Court (in Hiller Highlands); City of Oakland will take public comments through Nov. 22. Comments can be written or emailed. The list is posted at [www.fourthbore.org](http://www.fourthbore.org), and on the RCPC site. Review the projects, and write in for changes you want, and let the city know what you want. The RCPC originated a lot of these changes, for all the known problem intersections. CalTrans decided what they'd do. This is the only way Rockridge would ever get soundwalls for the new freeway. Soundwall studies are \$900K.

Frank Castro noted that with no more NCPC traffic priorities, due to the officer layoffs, this is the only input we'll have on some of these issues. He encouraged people to participate.

Introductions

After the announcements, attendees introduced themselves. The neighborhood watch captain of Kales attended. Frank Castro thanked the College Preparatory School in absentia for the use of the room.

Crime Stats report by Frank Castro

Frank explained his new tack on crime reporting, using maps from the CrimeSpotting site ([oakland.crimespotting.org](http://oakland.crimespotting.org)). Suzanne Sargentini has helped by double-checking OPD's weekly reports against CrimeSpotting, and subscribing to the RSS feed. We will put the RSS feeds for our beats on the NCPC web site as soon as the Secretary can figure out how. Frank Castro asked for comments on the way we present the statistics, please tell us what you want. He works with four categories:

1. crimes against people
2. crimes against property – auto
3. crimes against property – non-auto
4. quality of life crimes (DUI, drugs, public intoxication)

*Crimes against person:* There were random crimes against the person during October, with no particular pattern except for a group of 3 violent robberies in the second week, in the neighborhood of Shafter and Hudson.

**IMPORTANT RESOURCES:**

- [RockridgeNCPC.com](http://RockridgeNCPC.com) & [OaklandPolice.com](http://OaklandPolice.com)
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*Property crimes:* The maps show 4-6 property crimes per week, but in a different area each week. The crimes were mainly thefts and burglaries, with one vandalism.

Denise Boisvert asked the OPD officers present if these crimes were done by known groups? Sgt. Elder responded that Patrol doesn't get info on recently committed crimes, that goes straight to Investigation. She added that hill area burglaries happen because the thieves know when you're away. It's hard to say if it's a group or not.

What can we do to be safer? If a crime is reported in your neighborhood you should be especially vigilant, a group may be working the area.

A resident asked if the dots representing crimes could be color coded by day of the week. At that point Sgt. Elder asked if the officers present could report and get back to work, so Frank suspended the crime stats presentation.

Officer Lee handed out a sheet of tips on avoiding being a victim. He mentioned some recent robberies near the Boston Market (Rockridge Center). If you think you're being followed or someone is suspicious, and you have a cell phone, call 777-3211 (OPD emergency number). Patrol can come out and talk to the guys. Be aware of who's around you.

Theresa Nelson reported to Sgt. Elder the homeless people in FROG Park, which is closed for renovation. They break through the fence and hide in the shrubbery. She asked if Patrol could go by that park after dark and look for people hanging in the parks? Sgt. Elder said that Officer Oscar Abacay has been checking the parks and driving the streets near the BART station. A resident asked what people should look for? If there are heaps of clothing should they leave it? What about cardboard? The Sergeant responded, call the non-emergency number for that, 777-3333. Yes, remove their stuff, make the park uncomfortable for them. Lighting is good, keep it as well lit as possible. She noted that OPD doesn't arrest people for sleeping in the park. They refer the person to shelters the first time, issue a citation the second time, and then arrest if no compliance. A resident asked about parolees; Sgt. Elder noted that homeless people aren't all parolees. Also, parole now has certain rules, if you stay within those rules, and they're pretty broad, you aren't violating parole by sleeping in a park.

Officer Lee reported that the guys who were robbing with a shotgun in the Shafter/Hudson area are now in custody in Berkeley.

*Dispatcher issues:* Denise Boisvert said she had talked to Chief Batts about the issue of dispatchers giving people in this area trouble about calling in African-American suspicious persons. Chief Batts said if this happens to you, get the incident number, and he will personally look it up and find out which dispatcher did that.

Capt. Allison turned up just before 8 PM and introduced himself as the new Area 1 commander. He explained his strong community policing background, has worked with Lt. Green. He said that Sgt. Elder, who had just left, has a CID background.

*Question:* what's happened in the last 3 months since the layoffs?

*Capt. Allison:* Crime is going down nationwide and no one's sure why. They've been trying innovative policing methods, intelligence led; they'd like strong community involvement. Juveniles are becoming more brazen; criminals come from other cities and areas to rob here in Oakland. When OPD arrests a group, crime goes down for a bit, then comes back; it goes in waves. Personal protection is very important. Away from the main streets, Rockridge neighborhoods aren't well lit; people walk around plugged in, or on the phone, and not looking around. He suggested people should walk in groups around the block – nobody wants to mess with a large group. Take back the street. The passage of Measure BB will change OPD in ways other people are planning.

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*Question:* What about the Mehserle sentencing? Will any trouble get this far north?

*Capt. Allison:* It never has gotten this far north. They have called in serious reserves.

Denise Boisvert asked about the pot house on Manila.

*Capt. Allison:* if they're following the stated guidelines, there's little OPD can do. Prop. 215 was a constitutional vote, it set no limits on grows. SB420 tried to set limits but was attacked as unconstitutional. Cities can set guidelines and weight limits; doctors can trump them. The State Attorney Gen. web site has lists of guidelines, enforcement actions, etc. He's not done with the property on Manila. He's working with city attorney on nuisance proceedings, health and safety regulations. But they're legal. Everyone who works North Oakland knows about that house, but he's trying to focus his people on the robberies and use other means with the Manila house. OPD is watching. Keep calling the drug line – calls to the drug line are evidence in the nuisance proceedings.

*Question:* isn't a medical pot co-op a business, which would require a business license and a zoning variance?

*Capt. Allison:* we'll look into that, it might be a productive approach. The average street cop doesn't know the details of medical marijuana licensing, and OPD is being closely watched in this area. Residents say they've seen people loading bales of pot into a truck – can someone get video of that?

*Question:* Should beat 13X be linked with 12Y or with the Montclair beats?

*Capt. Allison:* we're not sure, and January is the watch change, they will reassign officers. Karen Ivy noted that all the other 13 beats are uphill from Highway 13.

The Captain went on to say that they need people to learn how to protect themselves, because OPD is resource challenged. We need to work together.

*Question:* What about surveillance video? Some areas in Montclair are doing it.

*Capt. Allison:* the big issues with surveillance video are: who monitors it; who backs it up; who gets it to where it can be used in evidence. Karen Ivy noted that the video equipment which will produce clear photos in poor light is very expensive. Personal video cameras on your house can be useful – show you who's at the door, etc. Video is a much better tool for personal safety than for crime evidence.

Denise Boisvert asked how we will know who (from OPD) will attend the meeting? We show statistics of crimes committed, but we never know if anyone was caught. Before measure BB passed, we no longer had the PSOs. Captain Allison said he would try to have one beat officer attends NCPC meeting every other month, the other 5 officers would attend once a quarter. Post-measure BB, we *may* get a PSO back. He wants a point-of-contact officer who will attend every other meeting. He'll meet bimonthly with the NCPC chairs.

Frank Castro complained that this is all in flux with the passage of measure BB. Measure BB doesn't mean we'll get the PSOs back; there's no money. It's up to the city council how to fund the police. What do we do with these NCPC meetings? Do we keep having them? Can we give priorities to OPD for tracking? A resident said he thought we should have the meetings, set the priorities, email them to the cops, and track them ourselves. Denise Boisvert agreed.

The Block Captain from Kales reported that the block captain program is falling by the wayside because the person who ran it no longer works for the city, and nobody's picked it up. She flyers the block twice a year. They have a block party once a year and have a tight email group; she screens the crime stuff, and only gives them really relevant incidents. They had a guy who stole

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packages off doorsteps for a while. But there's usually not much crime. She didn't feel that having a Neighborhood Watch sign did much to prevent crime, it seemed to happen anyway.

Frank Castro stated that we want to continue having the meetings, want people to come, to share and spread information. A resident objected that it's really hard to get people to come to meetings unless something is going on. She suggested that we need to go out into the neighborhood and contact people in place, connect with them where they are.

New Priorities for upcoming month

The meeting ended without any specific new priorities for November.

*In 2010 all meetings will be the SECOND Thursday of the month.*

*Next meeting will be **Thursday, December 9, 2010** at 7:00 PM at Rockridge Library Community Room. See you there and stay safe!*

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