

Greater Rockridge NCPC (12Y/13X) - Agenda
Thursday, August 8, 2013
Rockridge Library, College and Manila, Oakland
General Public: 7:00-8:30PM

NCPC:

Frank Castro – Chair
Barbara Minton – Vice Chair (absent)
Molly Singer - Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

7:05 PM Frank Castro opened the meeting. 23 people attended. The NCPC officers and the Neighborhood Services Coordinator introduced themselves. Frank explained that Neighborhood Services Coordinators also help with issues that aren't necessarily police related – they can help people navigate the maze of city bureaucracy. Officers del Rosario and Trode were not present. Officers Harold Castro, PSO beat 11, and Donald Lane, PSO beat 10, covered for them. Officer Steve Toribio, PSO beat 9, also attended.

Frank asked how many people were first time attendees. Approximately 7 hands went up. Frank went on to explain NCPCs. Oakland has 57 community policing beats, each with a Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council; our council is responsible for beats 12Y and 13X. Frank explained the beat boundaries. Attendance was about even between 12Y and 13X on 8/8, a little higher for residents of 12Y. We discuss the crime statistics since the last meeting, and get reports from the PSOs on progress on the priorities. We discuss any additional concerns residents may have about neighborhood issues. You talk to us about reason you're here.

A resident said that Chris Jackson told him to come down and talk to Officer del Rosario. Can we do that? Frank said yes, we'll discuss priorities a bit later.

Crime Stats – Frank Castro

Frank compiles info from OPD public and non-public releases. The current report covers the dates 7/11 – 8/7. He breaks the items down by beats, then color codes them by type of crime. The legend is on the second page. The types are: crimes against the person, crimes against property (not automobile), vehicle crimes, and quality of life crimes. We're ramping up the quarterly Google maps of reported crimes within our beats. Karen Ivy commented that we're going to automate it, it's slow and tedious to do by hand.

The legend on the last page shows the number of crimes and the number of days in the period for each beat, and compares that with the previous month. We hope someday to be able to do year-on-year comparisons. It's noticeable that the number of robberies is not going down. We had 11 crimes against the person last month, 10 this month; we're seeing too many robberies. Frank's neighborhood had a lot of residential burglaries: we had 27 property crimes this month (9 of them residential burglaries) against 14 last month (and 3 residential burglaries). The house across the street from him is blanketed with trees and bushes, and that's where they broke in; the thieves were only foiled by a dowel in the window frame. Burglars like dark, hard to see areas.

Officer Toribio said that overall crime is down compared to last year. It's not low enough, but residential burglaries happen a lot. You need to make your house less attractive to burglars. OPD encourages people to look into CPTED - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. This method explains how to set up lighting, trim shrubbery, and so on. If you can't see your neighbor's doors and windows, or he can't see yours, that's a burglar magnet.

Q: is crime down elsewhere in city because it's displaced to Rockridge?

Officer Toribio: OPD evaluated the high impact areas, then they just drove down streets there, showing presence. When they were showing presence, burglaries dropped in those beats, and went up slightly in neighboring beats. The more operations they can do, the better. The new district arrangement, with dedicated captains, means the captain can focus on problems in specific areas. Area 2 is smaller, and has a little more discretion on resource use. He said that Officer

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Trode asked him to discuss overall crime in beat 13. Officer Trode plans on setting out bait cars, with items visible in the car, in various areas around beat 13, to try to nab some of the car burglars. Officer Toribio said he prefers not to talk about operations but was asked to describe this one. When they catch burglars, robberies tend to go down too.

A resident asked how useful are silent house alarms. Officer Toribio explained that, when a silent alarm goes off, the call to 911 goes to a dispatcher who logs the silent alarm, then routes the incident to *another* dispatcher, who calls an officer to go to the house. Loud audible alarms are a much bigger deterrent because they attract attention. It's also a good idea to put longer screws on the deadbolts and strike plates on your front door, 3-4" long at least. This makes it much harder to kick the door in. Many burglaries are kick-ins.

Frank Castro asked, on the subject of CPTED, whether PSOs will still do environmental evaluations on request? Officer Toribio responded yes, they do; ask your PSO about it. OPD has a person who does only that but he's way backed up. A resident reported that her block had an evaluation with the Neighborhood Services Coordinator and the PSO, but they didn't have the nerve to talk to the neighbors about shrubbery and so on! Frank noted that if you're not happy calling the neighbors yourself, the NCPC officers can help.

Officer Toribio had to leave. Officers Castro and Lane didn't have current status on last month's priorities.

A resident asked what time of day burglaries happen. Officer Castro said they happen during daytime work hours. He explained that he used to be a deputy sheriff, and he talked to burglars. They go out between 6AM and noon. They knock on doors to see who's home. They sometimes wear fake UPS uniforms; if you see a stranger in a UPS uniform but no UPS truck, call that in. That's a suspicious incident. Burglars don't want to go in after dark when you're home.

A resident complained that an ice cream truck is prowling their neighborhood and they "aren't an ice-cream-truck neighborhood." Is this truck casing the neighborhood? Another resident responded that if it's a little pink truck driven by a Sikh man, he's a normal vendor, their neighbors buy from him. But if he makes you nervous, call him in to OPD. Frank Castro emphasized, if you see something suspicious in the neighborhood, call it in. The more people call about a suspicious incident, the more likely a policeman will roll by.

A resident complained that street people loiter on her property, at Hillegass & 62nd. They sit on the steps or on the grass, eat lunch, and leave garbage. She said she has asked them to leave, and they get offended. She doesn't call the police because "they don't answer." She also said someone has left a steel plate in the road, and asked whom she should see about that. The street light at night is lit; when she drives up at night and park, it goes off. And she hears gunshots at night. Should she call? She doesn't want to get up at 2 AM and entertain an officer.

Frank Castro said that she should call Public Works about the streetlight, and also about the metal plate in the road. Officer Castro said that when you hear gunshots, call 911. Shotspotter is active in this neighborhood. All the officers can log on to ShotSpotter and see where it thinks the gunshots are. Where this property is located, the gunshots also may be in Berkeley, and Oakland doesn't get Berkeley ShotSpotter calls.

Frank Castro said, if the loitering is that serious, and all your neighbors feel the same, have everybody come to our next meeting and we can make it a priority. As for trespassing, if they're on your property, you should call OPD and they'll come by and sweep them. Often when you talk to them, they'll go away. The resident noted that they used to call in anything unusual, and it worked very well. The loitering and people coming onto the property has increased hugely in the last

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couple of years. Officer Lane reminded her, if you don't call an incident in to dispatch, it didn't happen. Emailing the neighborhood list is not reporting a crime.

A resident complained that the non-emergency number is *really* variable; when it gets overloaded, you spend forever on hold. (Ed. note: many non-emergency crimes can be reported at [OPD's online crime report site](#). Suspicious person incidents can't, so try to report other non-emergency incidents online to reduce voice traffic.)

Officer Lane commented that if you tell Dispatch, "no contact," it really limits what the officer can do – they can't even ask a suspicious person for their name. On an anonymous report, they can't stop the guy unless they personally see him do something illegal. They have to have a citizen's name who says they saw something, in order to take action.

Frank Castro urged people not to say to themselves, "We know more important things are happening in Oakland." If it's happening in your neighborhood, it's important enough to make the call. The command staff allocates resources based on hot spots and calls for service. The more calls for service, the more resources we'll get. Officer Lane noted that will be different with district policing. District 2 should have a fully operational Crime Reduction Team by end of August, 8 officers and a sergeant, doing search warrants and so on. We're the only district right now that doesn't have a CRT, but we will soon.

Residents from Emeryville reported their pug dog was stolen from in front of the Rockridge Library. They have filed a police report. The library staff said the thief, a woman, had been in the library behaving oddly for about 1.5 hours, they weren't sure if they should call her in. Then when she left, she stole the dog. About 6 people saw her steal it, they have a description. The woman had just used a library phone to call OPD to report a stolen car between 2:45 – 3:00 PM on 8/7. Might OPD have information about her? Can they cross check that phone record, and see if that report has any information on her? A second resident asked, what about cameras? The dog owner said that the thief left the library and walked east on Manila, and they don't know if there are any cameras.

A resident identified herself as a property manager of apartments on the 5300 block of Broadway. She reported that, on 7/30, a tenant walking home from BART, around 11 pm, was followed and robbed at gunpoint. The robber took her purse and ran to a waiting car. At National Night Out, she heard of another similar incident at another BART station. Lots of her tenants walk to and from BART. Also, a new tenant moving in said that her boyfriend lives across the street and attends California College of the Arts. Walking home from CCA yesterday, the boyfriend and another young man were jumped and badly beaten by 3-4 African American men, who didn't even rob them. The victim hasn't reported it. The apartment building was robbed within last 3-4 years; the burglar went in and out through an open first floor window. In another burglary, a bathroom screen was missing. In both cases, a black bicycle was parked under stairs. The third time time, she had a sign up, the guy showed up in the hall, she saw him and confronted him and he ran. She called the incident in but he was gone. Is it a known fact that robberies go up around CCA when students go back to school – do you increase patrols at that time? An officer asked, does the college have security? The apartment manager said, not really, they only have 1 dorm, most students live off campus.

A resident asked for status on a plan we discussed at the last NCPC meeting, to put cameras at the freeway entrances. Frank Castro responded that, while we can put cameras on our own properties, we can't put cameras on public property. The resident asked if we could identify householders in a position to get good photos of freeway entrances, and all chip in for the cameras? No one volunteered to coordinate an effort.

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The resident who was robbed asked if we have the list of people bought the Logitech cameras? Karen Ivy responded that the volunteer who organized the program has the list, and she'll ask the woman to send it along.

New priorities for 12Y or 13X

Add as a new priority for both beats, because it's right on the border between them: street robberies around California College of the Arts at beginning of classes.

A resident commented that the 400 block of 51st Street would be a really good place to put bait cars. There's a big empty lot with a wide border, next to the parking lot by Children's Hospital. The lot has 3 huge piles of broken auto window glass. She thinks customers at Bakesale Betty's leave stuff in their cars and then people break into the cars. These car burglaries may not have been reported.

Two new residents, on Sheridan, reported that they noticed 2 young girls walking around, standing by a parked car and taking photos of each other. The man took photos of them and got the car license plate. Are those of any use to OPD? Officer Castro said, not unless they were doing something obviously illegal. It isn't illegal to take pictures of each other next to a parked car. The couple reported that another house on the street has a pile of furniture in the driveway. Officer Lane suggested they take a photo of that, and email it to Officer Trode; this could be an example of blight or eyesore, which should be reported to code enforcement.

The person who complained about the illegal auto repair operation wasn't present. The PSOs reported that they ran the license plates, and the mechanic owns all those cars, he isn't doing work for others; he fixes them up and sells them. The PSOs cruised by the location relentlessly. At this point it's a he-said she-said thing; it may be more a noise issue than anything else. They did inspections, but unless you see money changing hands, you can't say it's a business. The NCPC will contact the complainer and pass this on; for now we'll remove that priority.

The speaker at next month's NCPC meeting is Council Member Dan Kalb. Come and ask him what he's doing about public safety - is it his top priority? If not, why not?

Tell the NCPC officers what *you'd* like to see the NCPC do? Can you volunteer any time with us? A resident asked, how do you market yourselves? Could you put flyers in business windows? An easel at the BART station? A booth at Rockridge Out & About? NCPC officers responded that we've done all of those from time to time, but our biggest barrier is that we have no funding for publicity. Frank Castro said, if you want to sit and talk to him about publicity, he'll buy the coffee.

NCPC Priorities for August 2013: **12Y;**

1. Robberies and burglaries in 12Y generally
2. Robberies in Shafter corridor (Miles, Shafter, Locksley), the street lighting is very poor. (NB: the city is replacing *all* the street lights with LEDs.)
3. Residents near California College of the Arts report increasing street robberies as students move back in for fall classes.

13X:

1. Auto burglaries near the school around Golden Gate and Ocean View.
2. Parking past the *No Parking* limit sign on Golden Gate, makes it really hard to drive up the street.
3. Auto burglaries, smashed car windows near south entrance of Lake Temescal.
4. Residents near California College of the Arts report increasing street robberies as students move back in for fall classes.

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*NCPC meetings are normally the SECOND Thursday of the month.
Next NCPC meeting is **Thursday, September 12, 2013** at 7:00 PM
Rockridge Library Community Room, College & Manila
See you there and stay safe!*

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