

**Greater Rockridge  
Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (12Y/13X) – Minutes  
Thursday, December 8, 2022  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
General Public: 7:00-8:30 PM**

**Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC):**

Michael Ubell – Chair  
Jon Travis –Vice Chair  
Eric Neville - Treasurer  
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer  
Officer Meeran Gichki – Community Resource Officer, beat 12Y  
Officer Silvestre Triana - Community Resource Officer, beat 13X

1. 7:00 – 7:10 PM – Introductions
2. 7:10 – 7:30 PM – Oakland Police Dept. (OPD) Status Reports, beats 12Y and 13X
3. 7:30 – 8:00 PM – Joe DeVries, Deputy City Administrator, will discuss 2023 direction and plans for the Neighborhood Services Division, followed by a Q and A.
4. 8:00 – 8:30 PM – Neighborhood discussion and Oakland Police Q and A, including new priorities

Mike Ubell opened the meeting at a little after 7:00 PM and introduced the NCPC officers, including Karen Ivy (secretary) and Eric Neville (treasurer). Eventually 10 people logged in to Zoom, including the speaker.

## **OPD reports**

Oakland Police Sgt. Alain Manguy attended, as the Community Resource Officers (CROs) are still assigned to the Violent Crime Operations Center through the end of 2022. He asked if we had any major issues.

*Karen Ivy:* What's the status of car break-ins on College Avenue, which is our priority?

*Sergeant Manguy:* Most resources are assigned to car break-ins citywide, not specifically to Rockridge. The areas out east have been hit much harder. This is addressed maybe 1 day per week or 1 day every 2 weeks. OPD is bringing back the overtime officers, that may help. Please keep reporting car break-ins. OPD doesn't know where they're happening unless citizens report them.

*Karen Ivy:* What's happening with traffic enforcement? After they announced they were bringing it back, I read a long discussion of the subject on NextDoor.

*Sergeant Manguy:* Officers are out on the radio and are directed to areas of high traffic accidents. There are some intersections with a lot of accidents. These are not new officers, they've done the job before.

*Joe DeVries:* Can I ask a question? There have been break-ins on Lakeshore today. People are leaving stuff in their cars, they're very soft targets. Are the thieves seeing things to take or just taking a chance? Do we need some public education?

## **IMPORTANT RESOURCES:**

RockridgeNCPC.com & OaklandPolice.com

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*Sergeant Manguy:* They have a way of identifying active electronic devices (phones, laptops) in the cars even if they can't see them. With a positive reading, they'll break in and dig for them. And tourists leave bags and stuff on the back seat. The break-ins are *really* fast, maybe 20 seconds, then they drive off; and OPD can't pursue them when they drive off fast, it's against policy. We need to pull resources together to hit the locations and try to catch the thieves. We'll work with the NSCs to do outreach, along with other approaches.

*Mike Ubell:* They were really brazen earlier this year, breaking into a car in front of George & Walt's bar, with people sitting in front of the bar, yelling at them to knock it off.

*Sergeant Manguy:* We're working on auto burglaries in Jack London Square. Right now I'm sitting with a vehicle we stopped, which was casing cars; we're waiting for Contra Costa County which is interested in the same car, they'll come and tow it.

*Karen Ivy:* We don't have the usual 60 day crime breakdown, because the CROs are on assignment, but the crime stats I just did are on the [NCPC web site](#) for the last 2 months. Crime in this neighborhood is mainly property crime, although we had one massive incident in November on College Avenue with 5 charges including 3 battery charges.

## **Joe DeVries, Neighborhood Services – Department Directions for 2023**

Mike Ubell introduced Joe DeVries, the Assistant City Administrator who is now in charge of Neighborhood Services.

*Joe DeVries:* I'm actually a Deputy City Administrator, now in charge of Neighborhood Services. In 2020 there was an effort to reimagine public safety and reduce the OPD budget and footprint. That's why they moved Neighborhood Services to the City Administrator's office under my leadership. It was a slow transition. The move was also because a lot of Neighborhood Councils are projects not related to crime and public safety. They're dealing with illegal dumping, or unsafe streets, or homeless encampments. I think it was a good idea to move the group. Neighborhood Councils need the entire city's attention.

Neighborhood Service Coordinator (NSC) staffing is also an issue. The unit was small and had several vacancies, then we lost some long-standing members to retirement, and some to promotion. We have just named our 2 permanent supervisors (this hasn't been announced yet). For the last year they've been acting supervisors, waiting for HR to approve the promotions. Araina Richards is now permanent supervisor for BFO 2, covering East Oakland; and Angela Moore is now permanent supervisor for North and West Oakland. I will now immediately hire people to backfill 3 NSC vacancies and hire for a 4<sup>th</sup> NSC in next budget cycle. This will be a huge staffing increase. We're very small but we'll get larger. Having 4 new NSCs, 2 permanent supervisors, and two PSTs, is a big improvement. Once all that happens, we can reconsider local support levels. Because we were so short-handed, we focused support on councils with the most violence problems (International Blvd. and

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West Oakland), even though it left places like Rockridge without an NSC, and I apologize. We hope the added staff will let us give more support to all Neighborhood Councils, even those without a permanent NSC.

Our priorities for 2023 start with a staff retreat in early January, to set goals and measurable expectations. We haven't had clear expectations for the last few years. Where are we trying to go? How do we measure that? That will lead to work plans. Our big goal is to increase participation in Neighborhood Councils. Participation varies wildly across the city – some councils have increased attendance on Zoom, some have dropped way off. Our goal is to meet in person where we can (masked of course) and where people want to. I want to invest in a new technology – called “owl” technology, it's a camera that spins around and looks at people in the room, with high-powered microphones to pick up what they say. It would allow hybrid meetings with some people on Zoom and some in person.

We also have NEST – Neighborhood Enhanced Services Teams, focused on the most violent neighborhoods. We have on in East Oakland team launched about a year ago, one in West Oakland launched about 5 months ago, and today they launched Central Oakland NEST in the Little Saigon/San Antonio area. These are multi-department teams including public works, PSTs, OakDOT, Human Services, and economic workforce development. These teams aren't for Rockridge, but for neighborhoods with higher risks, and lower income.

We want NSCs to feel more empowered to deal with neighborhood issues. When they were embedded in OPD, they had less effect when working with Public Works or OakDOT. They were asking from a lateral position; now that they're in the City Administrator's office they're calling from a position of power.

*Mike Ubell:* If anyone has questions just pop in.

*Resident:* What's a PST? You said you had 2.

*Joe DeVries:* This is a holdover, they're Police Service Technician. We have two, Marlon Guzman and Brian Cassidy. They do security surveys; they train on Neighborhood Watch programs. I want to build Neighborhood Watch back up; they have reconvened the Neighborhood Watch steering committee. They are re-editing the manual which was last edited (by me!) in 2006. They have new titles now they're no longer in the Police Dept. (HR is working on it) but the same duties. They told me about the device that would identify a cellphone in someone's car. I also want them to work with the Fire Department more. I'll stop now and take questions.

*Resident:* What about fireworks on New Year's Eve? There will probably be a lot of fireworks. We used to have good support from our NSC to get the word out that they're illegal! I don't worry so much when it's raining. But it would be good to get it on the radar. It helps to get that out officially.

*Joe DeVries:* The fire dept. has put out some new information. I'll remind the NSCs to get that out. July 4 is worse. We've shut down Grizzly Peak the last couple of years, which helped a lot.

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*Mike Ubell:* Glad to hear you're actively supporting hybrid meetings. We'd like to go back to the library, if we can get someone to run the "owl." It's hard to do the technology and also run the meeting.

*Joe DeVries:* The owl device is very useful, and very simple. We need to buy more of those. It's very simple, runs on Bluetooth, you plug it into your laptop. It has high-powered microphones, and when it hears a voice it swivels to put that person on the camera and records what they say. It only really works over about 30 feet, we'll have to play with it; right now it's better for smaller groups. For larger groups you'd need a mike that people would come up to use. You could use a laptop and a projector to show who's on Zoom from home.

*Mike Ubell:* We'd like to try that in February.

*Resident:* We have low turnout in this neighborhood because there aren't any catastrophes. We appreciate what you're trying to do. On less serious issues - I hear sideshows almost every week, from my second floor bedroom.

*Joe DeVries:* We're trying engineering solutions to sideshows. The city is spending \$650K on intersection treatments to stop them. We can't do every intersection. OPD spends \$1.8mil /year on sideshows. Go to the city web site and type "[sideshow](#)" and you'll see what we're doing. We met with San Jose; they have a sideshow ordinance which we've copied and submitted to the City Council. Councilmember Kalb raised a question about ambiguity in the language, whether mere spectators would be cited or arrested. The ordinance is aimed at sideshow promoters, to help the city gather their online data and social media presence, to stop them. The second part of the ordinance aims at "facilitators" (the word Kalb's staff came up with) – people who are blocking intersections, etc., not just watchers. We're still working on the wording. The proposal will be back at the city council on 12/20. Please call in and give your opinion. There are opinions on both sides. We're recrafting the ordinance to make this work for Oakland. San Jose cited 700 people on sideshows last month, which is not what we want. We want a more targeted approach. We hope OPD can use this new tool for at least some sideshows. We hope the news that we're trying new things will give them pause.

*Karen Ivy:* A lot of the traffic enforcement discussion on NextDoor which I mentioned talked about sideshows. I think we've had sideshows on a couple of Broadway intersections.

*Joe DeVries:* Two-thirds of the people arrested last year at Oakland sideshows were not from Oakland.

*Resident:* Is there consideration of a place where you can do sideshows legally? I saw something about that, maybe in Spain?

*Joe DeVries:* You can do that in Sonoma and I think in Sacramento. But attendees don't want to go to a legal event. At the legal events, they spread the word, let's go to Oakland and have some fun. If a private person has

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property and wants to make money letting sideshows happen on it, we could work with them, but let's not do it on city property and streets. Let entrepreneurs take on the risks and the costs.

*Resident:* One night I heard a lot of cars, I don't know where the sideshow was, but a convoy of maybe 50-60 cars came down from College and 63rd and back on Hillegass to Claremont, around 11:00 o'clock at night. It was quite a display.

*Joe DeVries:* I want to throw something out there. We hope Neighborhood Councils (not NCPCs) can broaden what they do, to bring more people in: community greening projects, etc. We want them to attract people who want to be engaged but not talk about crime. Some groups are starting to do that. Rockridge doesn't have much to worry about in crime.

*Karen Ivy:* But Rockridge has the RCPC (Rockridge Community Planning Council) doing all that. The Rockridge NCPC was spun off from RCPC years ago, if we got into that, we'd be stepping on their toes.

*Resident:* If I'm walking down College Ave and see someone just sitting on the curb or the sidewalk and just totally out of it – what do I do? Give them a dollar? Get them food? What? If they're just "not doing well?" Do I call 911?

*Joe DeVries:* We have the MACRO teams, but they aren't city wide yet. They're an alternative response team, part of the Fire Department, aimed at people with mental problems who are not necessarily a violent threat. They've been doing really good work but only for about 6 months. If you call the Fire Department about someone like this, fire dispatch will send a MACRO team, with clinicians who engage with people and try to get them help and services. People with PTSD or mental disorders don't always respond well to police officers. If you see someone in distress, call 911 and say "a person seems to be in mental distress", they'll send MACRO. Of course, if they're violent, then you call the police. Don't call 911 for just "not doing well." 211 has a lot of services.

*Sergeant Manguy:* You can call 211 and say, there's someone here who needs help but not emergency help. You can also try [homeless@ca.gov](mailto:homeless@ca.gov) and give them guidance; the person needs help but not emergency help. MACRO isn't officially available in Rockridge yet but Chris Jackson (of the Rockridge District Association) has had some success getting them here to help some of the homeless.

*Resident:* What do I do if I just see someone sitting on the street? She's got 2 bottles of Coke, or she's passed out? Do I get engaged? Ask if she needs help?

*Joe DeVries:* It's really hard to give advice in this situation. If someone is passed out and seems to need medical attention, that's a Fire Department issue. 211 is a good resource. We do have [Operation Dignity](#). The county offers [Health Care For The Homeless](#), they may be able to send someone. That might be better.

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*Mike Ubell:* Getting personally engaged is up to you – nobody can tell you you must. Do what you think you can and feel comfortable doing.

*Resident:* About MACRO: Everybody running for mayor or city council has said they'll fully fund it and give it a special number. I expect to see it fully funded soon and working in all areas. Don't call 911 – we don't want to flood 911 with things that aren't real emergencies. But most of us can only remember one number! I only call if I think it's an emergency, then I call 911, but that's just me. But MACRO is what you want in that situation.

*Mike Ubell:* call the Fire Department directly for a medical emergency. I think their emergency number is on our web site.

*Karen Ivy:* It is on our web site. [Ed. Note: it's **510-444-1616**.]

*Mike Ubell:* We're discussing meeting in the library next year and will try to do a hybrid meeting in February. No priorities were changed. The meeting closed at 7:58 PM.

## **Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priorities for December 2022**

### **Beat 12Y:**

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* Car break-ins on College Ave., especially in the library parking lot.

### **Beat 13X:**

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* No current priority.

*Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council meetings  
are normally the SECOND Thursday of even-numbered months.  
Next meeting **Thursday, February 9, 2023** at 7:00 PM in the  
Rockridge Library upstairs conference room. We're also trying hybrid:  
Zoom link is available at <https://rockridgencpc.com>, NEXT NCPC MEETING*

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