



Montclair Safety and Improvement Council (MSIC) Community Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 2, 2017, Montclair Presbyterian Church, 5701 Thornhill Drive

Steering Committee Members Present: Carolyn Winters (Chairperson), Michael Tigges (Vice Chairperson), Jim Clardy (Treasurer), Nick Vigilante (Secretary), Doug Mosher (Community Representative), Stan Weisner (Community Organization Representative), Daniel Swafford (Community Representative), Josh Shaw (Community Representative), and Roberto Stinga (Community Representative – temporary appointment).

Steering Committee Members Absent: Jeff Diamond (Community Organization Representative), and Jason Purdy (Community Representative – temporary appointment).

Advisory Members Present: Ms. Patricia Rose, Oakland Police Department (OPD) Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC), and Ms. Iowayna Pena of Councilmember Annie Campbell-Washington's Office, City of Oakland.

Special Guest Speaker Present: Oakland City Councilmember Ms. Annie Campbell-Washington.

Other Attendees Present: 6

Chairperson Winters called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. after a quorum of Steering Committee Members (SCMs) was achieved.

1. Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Clardy provided a comprehensive Treasurer's Report. MSIC currently has \$10,396.92 in its funds accounts with the U.S. Bank and PayPal. Of that amount, \$8,894.57 is earmarked for the Railroad Mural Project and \$86.83 is earmarked for the Pocket Park.

2. Approval of Minutes from the October 6, 2016 Community Meeting:

Secretary Vigilante stated that the draft proposed minutes from the October 6, 2016 Community Meeting were posted for public review and comment on January 27, 2017

via an e-mail notice to the MSIC Yahoo! Alert Group. He noted that he had a hard copy of the proposed minutes available to anyone wishing to read them at the meeting. He asked if attendees had any feedback to offer regarding the proposed minutes. No feedback was offered.

Chairperson Winters submitted a motion to accept the minutes and the motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Tigges. The motion was then voted on by the Steering Committee and a majority of SCMs present voted to accept the minutes.

3. Montclair Crime Reports and Priority Updates:

OPD Community Resource Officer (CRO) Kristine Jurgens-Duenas, who was not available to attend the meeting, had prepared crime statistics for Beat 13Z (Montclair Area) for the period from November 1, 2016 through January 17, 2017 versus the same period in 2015-2016. Chairperson Winters presented the crime statistics as follows:

- Auto Burglaries: 21 versus 20 during the same period in 2015-2016.
- Residential Burglaries: Five versus 16 during the same period in 2015-2016.
- Auto Thefts: Ten versus 15 during the same period in 2015-2016.
- Robberies: Three versus one during the same period in 2015-2016.

Chairperson Winters stated that in January 2017, there were three robberies in the Montclair area. Of that number, two were at local Banks (Chase Bank, and Bank of the West) and one was in a residential area (Johnston Drive). It is believed that the suspect who robbed the two Banks is the same person who is responsible for other Bank robberies in Alameda County. The bank robbery suspect was seen in Montclair Village on both robbery occasions dressed in what appeared to be a security uniform.

Chairperson Winters stated that MSIC and the Montclair Village Association (MVA) partnered in November 2016 to address the continuing “smash and grab” auto burglary problem in Montclair Village by placing alert decals on all public parking meters and kiosks to educate Village patrons about the problem and to ask them to remove valuables from their vehicles. Most poles have two decals, one facing inward towards the front of the meter and one facing outward towards the parking space. The kiosks have one decal on the front of the meters.

Secretary Vigilante stated that there are two private parking lots in Montclair. One is next to Camber Restaurant and the other is next to Red Oak Realty. They occasionally experience “smash and grabs” in those parking lots. No safety alert decals were placed on meter poles at those locations because they are private property. Permission from the property owners is needed before decals can be placed there. Secretary Vigilante will make contact with the property owners regarding placement of decals on those meters.

Several residents expressed concerns about speeding in and near the four school zones in Montclair during commute hours, as well as along Moraga Avenue on the

Piedmont side of Montclair. Both areas have experienced speeding problems for many years. One resident asked a question about whether OPD was still issuing speeding tickets.

Another resident asked a question about whether radar guns were still available for use by community members to monitor vehicle speed and, thereafter, for OPD to issue caution letters to drivers observed exceeding posted speed limits (Background Information – In 2007 and 2008, there was a community and OPD partnership project which allowed residents to monitor vehicle speeds on their streets with a radar gun furnished by OPD, collect vehicle license number and description information for vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit, and provide that information to OPD so OPD could issue caution letters to drivers who had exceeded the posted speed limit. Community volunteers were required to take and successfully pass a training course provided by OPD to participate in the partnership project).

Another resident asked a question about whether flashing speed warning trailers and electronic warning signs were still available for street placements to caution drivers about their rate of speed when they exceed the posted speed limit.

Chairperson Winters stated that she would contact OPD to see if Traffic Officers could be deployed regularly to monitor the above problem areas to caution, or issue citations to, drivers who are exceeding the posted speed limits.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that she will work with Chairperson Winters to coordinate the use of temporary speed warning trailers to be used throughout the Montclair school zones (Montclair, Thornhill, and Joaquin Miller and Montera which are located next to each other). One moveable speed warning trailer can be used in weekly intervals.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that she has asked OPD about the availability of radar guns for community use which was allowed in 2007 and 2008 (as noted above). OPD advised her that they were unable to locate the one radar gun used for this purpose in the past.¹ Councilmember Campbell-Washington and her staff will continue to follow-up on the possible re-introduction of the community and OPD partnership project conducted in 2007 and 2008.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that a speed survey by the City of Oakland Transportation Office is necessary to document the speeding problem before flashing speed warning signs can be deployed on streets. Deployment of flashing speed warning signs has become somewhat difficult for that reason.

¹ During the community comment period on these minutes, a resident who had attended the meeting wrote MSIC that former Councilmember Jean Quan had said publicly in one of her regular Newsletters that her office bought a radar gun. Following the training in the use of the radar gun and the use of the radar gun by three residents on Moraga Avenue, the radar gun was returned by one of those residents to former Councilmember Quan's office at Oakland City Hall.

4. “Parking In the Hills” Pilot Safety Awareness Project:

Councilmember Campbell-Washington provided an update regarding the status of the “Parking in the Hills” pilot safety awareness project.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that she and her staff, along with District 1 Councilmember Dan Kalb’s office, have been working with the City of Oakland’s Transportation Department on this project. The following four streets have been identified as test areas based upon current parking challenges at those locations:

Capricorn Avenue
Merriewood Drive
Butters Drive
Westover Drive

These streets were identified based upon access and egress problems reported by the Oakland Fire Department, a continuous street width of less than 20 feet, and a community-wide survey that Councilmembers Campbell-Washington and Kalb conducted in 2016.

The Transportation Department has reviewed each test area to determine what type of parking restrictions should be imposed at each location. The Transportation Department has begun sending letters to residents in the test areas to notify them about the project, the proposed parking restrictions being imposed, and to solicit their feedback which will be considered in project implementation. The goals of the project are to build awareness about parking problems and change parking behavior so that fire trucks, ambulances, and other public safety vehicles can reach all homes on the streets. In the future, the project will be expanded to other streets with similar access and egress problems.

In January 2017, project implementation commenced on Westover Drive. In late 2016, an emergency ambulance carrying a 14 year-old living on Westover Drive to a local hospital due to a life threatening condition was delayed 15 minutes on Westover Drive because a garbage truck and several parked cars were blocking the street. This delay contributed to the death of the 14 year-old.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that with the heavy rains experienced last month (January 2017), there have been many flooding and landslide problems throughout Oakland, including seven in Montclair. All streets impacted by these slides are now open, except one.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington thanked SCM Mosher for his recent inquiry about the noticing process on Nixle for advising residents about streets closures. Notices were only being sent to Nixle subscribers within a half mile radius of the closed streets. That radius was not large enough, especially in the Oakland Hills, where a street is often long and winding and the only street used to get to other streets in the

area. As a result of SCM Mosher's inquiry, the City of Oakland has expanded the radius to two miles.

Secretary Vigilante recommended that the City of Oakland use Nextdoor and other communications media outlets more often to advise the public about street closures and storm-related problems and services available to the public.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that she has raised this with the City Administrator's Office (CAO) and with the Public Works Agency (PWA) to improve communication with the community.

SCM Shaw asked about the status of the City of Oakland Park Prioritization Project.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that three local parks in and near Montclair have been identified for funding prioritization – they are Montclair Park, Joaquin Miller Park, and Dimond Park. In 2016, City staff held community meetings at each park to educate the community about the funding prioritization process and obtain community feedback to be used to write assessments for each park about problems, repairs and improvements. Funding will be available in the future for each park, but it is not known yet when the funding will be available.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington stated that she is concerned about the deplorable condition of the restrooms near the Montclair Park Basketball Court because of complaints her office has received about them, and because she looked at the conditions of the restrooms herself. She has made several inquiries within the City of Oakland about getting the restrooms repaired, or refurbished, as soon as possible without having to wait for prioritization funding.

Councilmember Campbell-Washington encouraged residents to continue to use the City of Oakland on-line complaint procedure, “**see, click, and fix**” to report any type of city infrastructure problem (e.g., parks, streets, sewage, nuisance, blight, street light problems, etc...) available from the City of Oakland website at www.oaklandnet.com (see the Public Works Agency page for more information). Problems can also be reported by calling the Public Works Agency at (510) 615-5566, or by sending an e-mail to pwacallcenter@oaklandnet.com.

5. MSIC Re-branding:

(Background)

At the MSIC Steering Committee meeting on August 4, 2016, SCM Purdy volunteered to review the MSIC website and MSIC's use of social media for communication with the community, and then present proposals for improvements in those areas.

At the January 5, 2017 Steering Committee meeting, SCM Purdy provided the Steering Committee with a presentation which included a review of the current MSIC website

and MSIC's use of social media for communication with the community. SCM Purdy also provided the Steering Committee with the following six improvement proposals:

(#1) - Rebrand/re-name the MSIC to make it easier to understand and find on the internet (he found it difficult to find on the internet unless you correctly type in the MSIC name), and so it will not be confused with the MVA. Some residents are unaware of the MSIC and/or confused about what the MSIC does versus what the MVA does.

(#2) - Redesign the current website (which is about 13 years old in form and content), with an emphasis on streamlining and simplifying it, with focus areas such as crime prevention, emergency preparedness, calendar, news and events, about, and donate (to make it easier to use and in a format more familiar to the current generation of computer users).

(#3) - Enhance the use of social media outlets, such as Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, Yahoo! Groups, etc...

(#4) - Target outreach with new residents about what MSIC is, what it does, how residents can participate, and provide links to social media outlets where they can receive regular information and updates.

(#5) - Merge/unify the social media postings using "Auto Post" processes so information shows up in each media source in a timely and standardized manner. This will effectively link disconnected media sources to communicate with the community.

(#6) - Define the Montclair Organized Neighborhoods (MONS) units/areas in a geographic manner similar to that used by Nextdoor.

Chairperson Winters opened the discussion on this meeting agenda item by briefly identifying and explaining the proposals. Regarding re-branding MSIC, she explained that with the Steering Committee's permission at the January 5, 2017 Steering Committee meeting, a vote was thereafter taken in mid-January 2017 regarding re-naming MSIC (including keeping the current name). A majority of SCMs voted to change the name to Montclair Neighborhood Council (MNC). The MSIC was already working on bylaws changes which will be presented soon for public review and approval. Hence, the new name (MNC) had to be added to the proposed new bylaws. The proposed new bylaws, including the name change, are all subject to review and approval by the public. The review and approval of each is planned for a MSIC Community meeting sometime in March 2017. It is believed that a name change if approved will have no impact on current projects.

NSC Rose confirmed that a name change, and any bylaws changes, would require public approval at a future MSIC Community meeting.

Chairperson Winters stated that this item was on the agenda to give the community an opportunity to know about the proposed changes and provide MSIC with feedback to be

used in implementing changes.

Four residents provided specific feedback.²

One resident stated that she was against the name change. She stated that many residents know MSIC by that name which it has had since 2003 and saw no need for a name change. It might have unanticipated consequences for two current projects underway, and it might obscure the history of the organization. She asked that the name change be delayed for six months while the Mountain Boulevard Railroad Trestle mural is fundraising with foundations and the public.³

Secretary Vigilante asked a question if anyone was aware of any consequences to the two projects due to a name change. No one present at the meeting offered any responses to the question.

One other resident was also against the proposed name change. The resident believed that the name Montclair Community Council was preferable to Montclair Neighborhood Council because to the resident it implied a larger more inclusive area than the words Montclair neighborhood which in the resident's mind probably would not include upper Rockridge which is where the resident lives.

Secretary Vigilante pointed out that the area of coverage for MSIC is defined by the geographic boundaries of Police Beat 13z which are from the City of Oakland. If a residence is located in that geographic area, it is included. The name of the organization does not change the Beat boundaries.⁴

Two other residents spoke in favor the proposed changes, including re-naming of MSIC to MNC. They felt it would make it easier for residents find the organization on the internet and learn about the organization. Some residents have stated that they do not like the MSIC name because of the "SIC" in the name (an association to the word "sick"). A re-designed website would give everyone easier access to information and links to other resources. It would improve the organization's ability to get residents (in particular new residents) active in volunteer public safety and other improvement efforts. And, it would improve communication of important information using current disconnected media outlets in a coordinated and timely manner.

SCM Stinga recommended that the current draft proposed bylaws with the MNC name also contain reference to the former MSIC name. Although a vote was not taken on this

² The OPD Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC) has advised MSIC in the past to not include names of residents in MSIC meeting minutes for privacy reasons.

³ During the community comment period, the resident wrote MSIC that she asked that the name change be delayed for six month. The MSIC Chairperson recalls the resident asking for a delay but not the duration.

⁴ The two sections containing Secretary Vigilante's statements in response to the two residents who opposed the name change were added to these minutes on February 26, 2017 after those residents provided written comments which prompted Secretary Vigilante to recall making those statements publicly during the meeting.

recommendation, there was a consensus of agreement among SCMs and meeting attendees that this was a good idea.

Secretary Vigilante stated that he will revise the current draft proposed bylaws to include a statement that the MNC is formerly known as and is commonly referred to as the MSIC. If the public does not approve the new MNC name, the public will review and vote on the draft proposed bylaws that contains only the MSIC name.

Lastly, Chairperson Winters stated that the MSIC March Community meeting will also be held to introduce the new City of Oakland Police Chief, Ms. Anne Kirkpatrick, to the community. The community will have an excellent venue to provide feedback to Chief Kirkpatrick about crime which will certainly impact future police services that Montclair receives from OPD. This meeting should attract a lot of residents.

6. MSIC Project Updates:

(Montclair Railroad Mural Project)

SCM Shaw stated that this Spring, the Railroad Mural Committee will roll out a robust local fundraising effort to raise an additional 10K. This should help the project meet the 25K funds raised level. At that funding level, the project specifications would be scaled back to a basic mural with few background details.

SCM Shaw stated that the Committee is also waiting for decisions on pending large grants requested from two foundations. Those grants could add an additional 35K to the final amount of funds raised.

SCM Shaw stated that the Committee is always looking for more volunteers to help with various tasks, including fundraising.

(Antioch Court Project and Proposed New Building at 2080 Mountain Boulevard)

Chairperson Winters stated that she, Treasurer Clardy, and SCM Swafford have been intimately involved with planning, management, and fundraising for the Antioch Court project since around 2010. Anyone interested in volunteering to help out is welcome and donations are welcome as well. Donations can be made at the MVA website at www.montclairvillage.com.

Chairperson Winters stated that there is a proposal and plan to tear down the existing building at 2080 Mountain Boulevard and build a multi-story building with mixed retail space and a restaurant on the top floor. Mr. Basil Christopoulos is the architect/builder. This project will have impact on Antioch Court because one side of the building faces Antioch Court.

Chairperson Winters stated that she and SCM Swafford will be intimately involved with the new building project at 2080 Mountain Boulevard because of the impact on Antioch

Court, and because there may be opportunities to partner and collaborate with the builder and business owners to improve the surrounding area even more. They are attempting to synchronize the work on both projects to occur at the same time. There will be days when nearby streets will be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and the community will need to know about this before it happens. Communication with the community on both projects will be extremely important.

(Community Survey)

Background: At the MSIC Steering Committee meeting on November 30, 2016, Chairperson Winters, Vice Chairperson Tigges, and SCM Mosher (members of the MSIC Communication Committee) offered to develop a proposed survey for review and consideration at the January 2017 Steering Committee meeting, and then issuance to the community for their feedback. The results of the survey would be discussed at the next community meeting and, thereafter, used by the MSIC to select community projects to work on beginning in 2017. At the January 5, 2017 Steering Committee meeting, Chairperson Winters and SCM Mosher submitted a proposed survey for issuance on the MSIC Yahoo! Groups and on Nextdoor. There was a consensus of agreement among SCMs that the survey was acceptable and ready for issuance as proposed.

Regarding this meeting agenda item, SCM Mosher stated that in mid-January 2017, the survey was issued on Nextdoor and on the MSIC Yahoo! Alert Group. Thirty responses were received from Montclair residents. Residents identified the following 14 issues in priority order: (1) Crime prevention/reduction, patrols in Montclair Village and neighborhoods, and addressing the “smash and grab” car burglary problem in the Village. (2) fix potholes and repave streets. (3) Parking along narrow streets, ingress/egress for emergency vehicles, enforce parking laws. (4) Montclair Village/Montclair Park/Gateway beautification projects (multiple).⁵ (5) Emergency preparedness, emergency services, power pole maintenance, emergency alerts, emergency training. (6) Dog park/run in Montclair Park. (7) School traffic, child pick-up improvements, school pedestrian safety. (8) Organized Neighborhoods/MONS (aka Neighborhood Watch and CORE groups), responsible for local issues. (9) AC Transit Bus transit stop in front of Safeway (reconfiguration thereof). (10) Community events in Montclair Village. (11) Pedestrian safety in neighborhoods. (12) Fire Prevention. (13) Street light at Snake and Mountain. (14) Airplane noise due to current FAA NextGeneration (alternation to airspace) corridor over Montclair.

There were no Open Forum speakers.

⁵ The use of the word “multiple” refers to the items noted and is recorded here based on the hand-out that Steering Committee Member Mosher prepared and presented at the meeting.

Inasmuch as all agenda items were now completed, Chairperson Winters adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:52 p.m.

Nick Vigilante

Nick Vigilante
MSIC Recording Secretary