

UPTOWN PLANNERS

Uptown Community Planning Group Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2024

Present: Martin Alonzo, John Barney, Mary Brown, Dylan Brynn, Matt Driver, Patty Ducey-Brooks, Juli Hyde, Laura Kuffner, Don Liddell, Stu McGraw, Tami Ratliffe, Mike Singleton, Mat Wahlstrom, Jim Walsh, Susan White

Absent: Matthew Brown, Mary McKenzie

I. Parliamentary Items/Reports

(Opening of meeting presided by Stuart McGraw, Chair from preceding board year)

A. Introductions/Roll Call – seating of new board members

1. Call to order at 6:05PM
2. Welcome of newly elected members: Martin, John, Dylan, Matt D, Laura, Tami, Mike

B. Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order

MOTION to approve: Mat Wahlstrom, second Jim Walsh
Approved unanimously

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes (March 5, 2024)

MOTION to approve: Susan White, second Tami Ratliffe
FOR: Mary Brown, Patty Ducey-Brooks, Don Liddell, Stu McGraw, Mat Wahlstrom, Susan White
ABSTAIN: Jim Walsh, Juli Hyde (due to election responsibilities), all new board members
APPROVED

D. Treasurer's Report - Mary Brown, bank balance \$33.95

City gives us an annual allotment of \$500. June 15 deadline to submit receipts for City reimbursement of board purchases. Receipts received to date submitted and City indicated reimbursement checks will be mailed shortly.

E. Balboa Park Committee Report – None

F. Airport Noise Advisory Committee Report – None

G. CPC Report. – Mat Wahlstrom

- Environmental Justice - Action delayed until next month, to allow CPG's time for review. Concern that giving "priority" to some communities will mean a few locations get all the funds, with little left for other communities.
- Update to Council Policy 600-24 and CPG Recognition - One provision is the requirement for an election within 90 days of a new group being recognized. Also, a procedure for who plans the election.
- Blueprint San Diego – There will be two sub-committee meetings on this important program, one will be in April.

Chair's Report. – Stu McGraw

- HAP 2.0 in effect as of March 17
- Guidance pending re: phone-in speakers at in-person public meetings
- Requests to city re: streets and buildings – from January still pending
- Status of CPG recognition and policy amendments – see attachments to Agenda

TRANSITION TO NEW BOARD

H. Election of Chair (to preside immediately after election)

MOTION to elect Stuart McGraw as Chair – Mat Wahlstrom, second Patty Ducey-Brooks

Proposed SUBSTITUTE MOTION to elect Jim Walsh Chair – Juli Hyde, second Patty Ducey-Brooks

FOR Substitute Motion: Martin Alonzo, John Barney, Mary Brown, Dylan Brynn, Matt Driver, Patty Ducey-Brooks, Juli Hyde, Laura Kuffner, Don Liddell, Stu McGraw, Tami Ratliffe, Mike Singleton, Jim Walsh, Susan White

ABSTAIN: Mat Wahlstrom (wanted to support nomination of Stu McGraw)

APPROVED

I. Election of other officers:

Vice-Chair: Stu McGraw

MOTION to elect Stu McGraw as Vice Chair – Patty Ducey-Brooks, second Mary Brown

APPROVED unanimously

Secretary: Juli Hyde

MOTION to elect Juli Hyde as Secretary – Susan White, second Patty Ducey-Brooks

APPROVED unanimously

Treasurer: Mary Brown

MOTION to elect Mary Brown as Treasurer – Patty Ducey-Brooks, second Susan White

APPROVED unanimously

J. Approval of Chairs of standing/ad hoc Committees:

1. Design Review: Patty Ducey-Brooks
2. Public Facilities: Tami Ratliffe
3. Historic Resources: Patty Ducey-Brooks
4. Operations & Outreach (and Outreach Mgr): Mat Wahlstrom

Chair of continuing ad hoc committee:

- Plan Hillcrest: Mat Wahlstrom

Members of all five committees (standing and ad hoc) approved:

1. Design Review: Mary, Mike, Don, Laura, Juli, Tami
2. Public Facilities: Matt D, Mike, Laura, John, Martin, John
3. Historic Resources: Dylan, Matt D, Juli, Susan, Don, Mary, Tami
4. Operations & Outreach: Don, John, Jim

5. Plan Hillcrest: Dylan, Don, Stu

- CPC representative: Mat Wahlstrom, alternate Don Liddell

--- Next Agenda to include appointments to: Balboa Park Committee, Airport Advisory Committee

K. Completion of required member roster information – completed by all members present.

L. Anonymous completion and collection of demographic survey info – completed by all members present. Chair will obtain info from absent members, enter all info on summary form and submit to City for inclusion in Annual Report.

M. Reminder of requirement to complete Brown Act Training – Chair reminded all members of required completion of Brown Act training online by June 2024.

II. Non-agenda Public Comment – two minutes per person, Susan White timekeeper

Tom Mullaney – at CPC meeting discussion of “Blueprint” came up, there will be a sub-committee this month. It is 850 pages long and 45 days for feedback. It is a program affecting entire city, it comes with a programmatic EIR that may be used to justify all manner of future density increases, zoning waivers, lane closures, etc. Let others know about the meeting, it’s extremely important.

Michael Donovan – there’s a group of community organizations: Vibrant Uptown, Hillcrest Business Assoc, HTC, Impulse, Hillcrest San Diego sponsoring a town hall on Wed, April 10 from 6 - 8pm at LGBTQ Center, subject matter is ‘Hillcrest’, will be having a presentation from the city on that and then dividing people up at tables to provide comment. Will collect the comments and provide back to the city. Hope to see some of you there. Councilmember Whitburn will attend. Primary purpose is to allow people to provide public comment around the tables. We invited groups we’ve worked with. All welcome.

Lu Rehling – at last meeting announced Chris Ward was going to have a Town Hall on new DMV bill, he had it 3/27/24. Stuart and Lu attended, it was informative and there were a lot of comments from the public. Stu recorded it if anyone would like to hear the recording to know what was discussed, he has offered to share. Next step is to vote on this bill in Sacramento if approved, RFPs will be requested by the Housing Authority.

Lisa Mortensen – insurance companies are pulling out of San Diego to cover property and fire insurance on high density locations. Has there been any discussion with the projects in the pipeline or being approved by the city including Plan Hillcrest re: insurability of these projects? Or are the developers going to self-insure? There must be insurance or no financing. It’s not just high fire-risk areas, it’s also high-density areas. Will this affect affordability?

Jim Walsh REQUESTED Shannon Corr – come back to Uptown Planners Meeting soon with information about this insurance coverage issue as it relates to density.

Susan White – at Bankers Hill Community Group Meeting on April 15 there will be a presentation on the very topic of homeowner’s insurance.

Patty Ducey-Brooks – will ask Assemblymember Ward to address this insurance issue.

III. Representatives of Elected Officials, Agencies, and Institutions. Agenda Item

Comment:

No Elected Officials present.

Introduction and welcome to members of Planning Department present:

Shannon Corr, Claudia Brizuela, Coby Tomlins, Phil Trom, Shelby Buso

IV. Consent items. (none)

V. Action Items

1. Map waiver of tentative parcel map. Requested approval of condominium conversion at s/w corner W. Lewis and Stephens (no new construction). Stephen Bossi, Principal Project Manager, Atlantis Group Land Use Consultants. This is a map waiver to change one fee-ownership to three separate condominium units on the site. No development or structural changes to buildings proposed.

Public Comment / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Sharon Gehl – why can't you do a lot split, others have done it recently?

ANS: doesn't qualify for a lot split per city

Ian Epley – have any of the new laws SB9/10 been applied with map waivers? Or is sub-division act the sub-division act? It's discretionary not ministerial right?

ANS: it's process 3 and goes to hearing officer and if appealed goes to Planning Commission

Board Comment / / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Susan – confused by ADA compliance in commercial building, something with the door

ANS: there will be upgrades required to bring bldg. up to ADA standards

Juli – will the 2 houses on Stephens stay as they are, they're in good shape

ANS: will stay as they are, have been renovated extensively

Mat – are there plans to have Powers Plumbing take over their bldg?

ANS: yes

MOTION to approve proposed map waiver: Stu McGraw, second Patty Ducey-Brooks

ABSTAIN: Jim Walsh, Chair

APPROVED unanimously

2. **CPG annual report.** Due 14 days after approval of 3/5 minutes. Lu Rehling, (former Chair), Operations & Outreach Committee
Draft report attached to Agenda. City has established an online portal for this report that requires specific information be submitted in a certain way including a review of all minutes to identify dates of votes and the vote. Lu volunteered to complete these details to finalize report.

Public Comment / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Clifford Weiler - At CPC meeting, I thought Marlon said you just had to attach minutes?

ANS: you do have to attach minutes, but they also now have a form you must fill in online.

Jim Walsh, Chair, will follow up with Marlon to clarify requirement.

Board Comment / / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Mat – thank you to Lu for volunteering to complete the report, it's incredibly helpful.

MOTION to approve the report pending addition of required information: Mat W, second Patty D-B
ABSTAIN: Jim Walsh, Chair
APPROVED unanimously

VI. Information Items

1. Plan Hillcrest. Overview of second draft of proposed Community Plan Amendment, including summary of changes to 2016 Community Plan. Shannon Corr, Senior Planner /Project Mgr of Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment and Claudia Brizuela, Senior Traffic Engineer with Sustainability & Mobility Dept. Introduced other members of Plan Hillcrest Team: Shelby Buso, Coby Tomlins, Phil Trom, Scott Zendel, Genevieve Romero-Marquette.

Deadline for public feedback on Plan, including environmental impact, is April 29, 2024. Will take feedback into consideration and then prepare final draft plan to take through the public hearing process for City Council decision in summer 2024.

Can download the DRAFT plan at PlanHillcrest.org. A couple copies will be available at Mission Hills/ Hillcrest Knox Library.

Key themes heard on discussion of the DRAFT:

- Reduction in density
- Need to encourage economic prosperity/support for legacy businesses
- Noise noticing regulations
- Need for additional mobility analysis
- Need for more flexibility around supplemental development regulations

Public Comment / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Roy Dahl – the SANDAG plan taking out trolley line on Park Blvd which is critical piece for handling global warming, density and getting people downtown is an issue. Diverting that down University makes no sense, it means it would have to be a tram vs trolley. By approving this plan you're cementing the bad decisions of SANDAG into the plan, you are creating a bad transportation decision. What you did not show are the failures of our current street network that get worse ---**it's in the footnotes!** If you make things terrible for people driving around, you will have the Houston model which is do whatever you want.

Tom Mullaney – we worked 7 years on the Uptown Community Plan and went over every block. It's not true that it didn't add density. The 2016 Community Plan allows 50% increase in density. The plan started out to redo the core of Hillcrest 6-9 blocks, this new plan is 14X larger. I'd like to see: 1) Plan Hillcrest Committee meet soon, because need more than one mtg, 2) ask for presentation on behalf of Uptown United to counteract what we just heard, please don't have another long presentation by the city without an opposing presentation of equal length, a lot of what was just presented is factually untrue, 3) on transportation, global level of service D, E, F is failing level of service, request Board to ask: what happens when a bunch of cars driving through the community are hardly moving at all? Air pollution and green house gases increase. Request 60 days for review, as University City was allowed 60 days for review of their plan.

Lu Rehling – procedural comments, as former member of Plan Hillcrest Committee - the Planning Dept was responsive to this Board’s request for printed copies of the 2nd Draft be available to all Board Members, pls take your copy. Will make it easier to go through and analyze.

The Committee’s recommendation was that there be two meetings between now and our next board meeting because at our next board meeting, unless there’s an extension of the time allowed, the board will have this as an action item. One mtg on weekend or in evening or Zoom Mtg to allow more people to participate, plenty of opportunity for input and second meeting in April where city staff would be invited to provide input.

Paul Jamason - I like that you addressed housing needs, we’re behind the state’s requirements. Daylighting intersections, lowering speed limits. Buses should have priority over single occupancy vehicles.

Michael Donovan – two concerns: discontinuous promenades, need to make sure policies address that; 6th avenue regardless of what signs say it’s at least a 40mph zone, least protected bike lane in that space on the path to Balboa Park, would really like to see that re-thought.

Alex Wong – recently SANDAG has been studying an aerial gondola between Hillcrest Medical Center and Fashion Valley, it is critical we accelerate this.

Omar Paredes – cities are for people not cars

Sharon Gehl – in the past we’ve just concentrated on people driving cars and now we must focus on all forms of transportation. Hillcrest is the place to put more housing, the 2016 plan didn’t provide enough housing. Encourage everyone to read the plan.

Ian Epley – this is the dream I’ve been waiting for in central Hillcrest it’s been a blighted area. One concern: is there a legislative way to keep asset management from buying up all the housing we’re producing because affordable housing will go out the window. Need a facility for shared parking like Carvana . I’m disheartened that there’s a historical district, if developers have the restrictions of a historical district they won’t come. Be prepared to get sued.

Karen Ebner – not against development, I liked 50% of what you presented. You stated 17,000 new homes and 35,000 more people will be coming into Hillcrest and then you stated 290 dwelling units per acre not sure what that applies to? Want to address the traffic, noontime traffic on University going East is very bad, bumper to bumper. It’s very narrow and traffic very impacted. People will be coming on and off freeway. How will this work with the addition of 35,000 people.

ANS: 290 dwelling units per acre is just the highest density allowance we have, it’s dark red on map

Board Comment // Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Dylan – live on 8th Ave, one way onto University would be hard to navigate. Supportive of Historical Cultural District, there isn’t a lot of detail need to flush it out.

Mike – since plan increases density and population, I’m uncomfortable with what the plan offers for park and recreation, not much presented about park & rec, but the plan shows a huge deficiency. Used to be able to count on developer impact fees (DIF) to be used here, but the truth is a very high percentage of that money is going to other parts of the city. There were no DIFs offered to Uptown in this particular year, but Uptown has seen some of the most major development of anywhere in the city of San Diego and no money has been pushed to this. How can we be assured that money that’s

been generated as DIFs in the Uptown area, at least most of it, gets used here to solve the problems that development is creating. Don't see any type of implementation that would assure a financing mechanism. I think it's all going to be up to City Council discretion. I'm a Parks Planner I've done 30 city-wide park master plans, nobody in any of those 30 cities does it the way the city of San Diego does it, and it really leaves a major deficiency here. I'd like to see how we can get something into the Hillcrest Focused Plan that assures that money comes back here to address the park deficiencies, but they are still going to be very major.

Susan – not hearing a lot about infrastructure, where are the new grocery stores going? Where are we getting the funds for the additional police and fire people required, and new fire stations? Where is the water coming from? Where is the power coming from?

ANS: there is a chapter on public facilities and implementation

Patty – echo Mike Singleton 's concern about lack of park and recreation areas, people need park/rec space to stay healthy. Seeing studies indicating more businesses are moving north, will result in more traffic. Agree with Roy Dahl's comments about the need for a trolley on Park Blvd, it works in places like San Francisco. We're losing DIFs because Complete Communities allows developers to build without paying DIFs.

Laura – I live in Hillcrest and work downtown and don't have a car, I walk and bike everywhere. I bike downtown to work, but don't bike to North Park, streetcar between Hillcrest and N Pk would support pedestrian access.

Tami – is it possible to bring back a streetcar since it was original to our Uptown area. It's much more reasonable to think people would hop on that than a bus because easier to do and streets are set up for it.

ANS: in our transit figure there's a blue line, the route is supposed to connect downtown, Hillcrest, N Pk, Golden Hill. We continue to coordinate with SANDAG as to what that's going to look like.

Mat W – appreciate you coming here tonight, you haven't said anything about this since November. Why do we have to wrap up everything by April 29th when It's not going to Planning Commission until May 30th? University City is getting 60 days. Practically we only have 30 days because we have to vote on this at our May meeting. Please get this on the website asap. Echo the concerns especially regarding mobility, DIF fees, 35k people is going to significantly increase our population with no plans for more new libraries, no plans for more fire stations, police services and the mobility issue. Considering 2 of the 3 regional trauma centers are in Hillcrest and making streets one way in context of the medical complex and Hillcrest as a nexus, is very problematic. Heartened there are still plans for a historical district and decreased density a little bit from 19k to 17k units. Feels like it's being rushed and not helpful. Heard the city is not expecting SANDAG to move forward on any kind of trolley until 2050, yet this plan is predicated upon allowing density pre-supposing that the trolley exists. It seems any additional density being allowed for by a trolley, needs to be backed out of this plan and then looked at again when there is a trolley, and we have the infrastructure and mobility option. This plan is only supposed to go to about 2050, yet it is allowing density that is not going to have the needed services.

ANS: I must check; I haven't been made aware that 60 days has been granted. The requirement is 45 days and that's what we're offering. We will be available to Board and Plan Hillcrest Committee.

Matt D – concern about the mobility issue. We're talking about adding 35k people. People are going to have cars, how are they going to get on and off the freeway. Already the traffic situation here is

squeezed down to a 4-lane highway on the 163, it's really the one way in and out for pretty much everyone. University is 4-lanes and will go down to 2 lanes with one way traffic and Robinson is just 2 lanes. Are you going to make some major infrastructure changes to Robinson? Seems there has to be some coordination with Caltrans and the on-and-off ramps to make it work properly. Sounds like the streetcar is out of your purview. In lieu of that need to create more dedicated bus lanes or something.

Stu – (former Chair, Plan Hillcrest) it's been a great pleasure working with you: Shannon, Claudia, Coby, Phil. We had workshops where we got into the details and worked on some of the problems. My concerns that haven't been addressed: slide 25 - didn't see any roundabouts so you don't have to merge bike lanes into car lanes. Historic bridges spanning 163 are like a rock in the boot of this whole mobility plan, need to deal with these bridges. If you can't help, let us know who we can talk with. Slide 28 - commuter rail, we need transit centers for this commuter rail. Whether it's paid with DIF fees or otherwise, it's going to take some space to accommodate this. Slide 32 – pedestrian connectivity on Washington E between 8th and Lincoln, dangerous for everyone including bicyclists, it's literally a sidewalk to nowhere. These are concerns.

2. People mover. Overview of concept to connect downtown with airport. Alex Wong, Data Researcher, RideSD. Vancouver has been great success story of people movers. Ask for your support for People Mover, if interested can send letter to SANDAG and Councilmember Whitburn, Chair of MTS, to highlight why it's beneficial. Could be extended beyond airport.

Public Comment / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Roy Dahl – how many hotels does it hit, that's going to be your real marketplace

Omar Paredes – less cars

Alice Kulkofski (sp?) – where is terminus?

ANS: Civic Center

Lu Rehling – what is timeline? Direct impact on Uptown?

ANS: phase one airport to downtown, no direct impact on Uptown

Board Comment / / Answers (ANS) by Presenter

Mike – technology used? accustomed to taking the people mover from airport to Oakland. It's like a cable pull bar.

ANS: won't get one like that

Matt D – will this be elevated? Will it impact sightline by water downtown?

ANS: yes, elevated, some impacts

Mat W – who stated people mover is best option? Who is RideSD and connection to plan?

ANS: RideSD is a non-profit for transportation advocacy

MOTION to extend meeting 15 minutes – Stu McGraw / Second Juli Hyde

FOR: Martin Alonzo, John Barney, Dylan Brynn, Matt Driver, Patty Ducey-Brooks, Juli Hyde, Laura Kuffner, Stu McGraw, Tami Ratliffe, Mike Singleton, Mat Wahlstrom, Susan White

AGAINST: Don Liddell, Mary Brown

ABSTAIN: Jim Walsh, Chair

APPROVED

3. Hillcrest Sewer. Project will include replacement and rehabilitation of some mains; abandonment or installation of others; and changes to manholes, sidewalks, and curb ramps.

VII. Administrative Action Items. 8:45 PM

Chair reports and set dates for meetings

- 1 Election (Ad Hoc) - Jim/volunteers of former committee will assemble election procedures
- 2 Operations & Outreach –Mat W/ met 3/30 to prepare info for Annual Report
- 3 Public Facilities – Tami/to reach out to Stu/Jim for more info
- 4 Design Review -Patty/nothing to report
- 5 Historic Resources – Patty/to contact Logan for update on status of old MH Library
- 6 Plan Hillcrest (Ad Hoc) – Mat W/want to have zoom and in-person meetings, more info soon

VII. Request for agenda suggestions, and confirmation of next regular board meeting

May 7, 2024, Joyce Beers Community Center

Agenda Suggestions: reps B Pk Com and Airport Advisory, Hybrid Meeting Guidance

VIII. Adjourn 9:08 PM