



Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance  
Riverside, California

## **Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance** Meeting Minutes

Izaak Walton Club, Fairmount Park  
Monday, May 19, 2008  
7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

### **Attendees (per sign-in sheet):**

Chani Beeman, Mike Gardner, Lynn Anderson, Keith Alex, Laurie DeFrance, Jim Talcott, Jack Larsen, Nanci Larsen, Nicki Sands, Janet Clegg, Dick Wing, Donna Wing, Bonnie Reynolds, Bruce Reynolds, Pete Kallinger, Dorette Petersen, Erich Lewis, Frances Fernandes, Mary Jerdeman, Damon Castillo, Pat Stewart, Kim Hodges, Jennifer Gamble, Dave McNiel, Jane Block, Debbie Reed, Molly Dougherty (present, but not on sign in sheet).

### **1. Meeting called to order by DANA Chair Chani Beeman at 7:01 p.m.**

Welcome and Introductions.

### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2008.**

✓ Motion to approve minutes

M/S/V: DeFrance/McNiel/Carried

### **3. Councilman's Report—Mike Gardner**

Councilman Gardner discussed the recent increase in the number of mosquitoes; local bodies of water such as the retention basin will need to be kept free of mosquito larvae.

Several large balloons were floated over the area slated for the Fox Plaza project, to give an idea of how tall the building will be. Public comments will be heard at the Cultural Heritage Board and City Council; Mike says the project is not yet a “done deal.”

There were several questions for the Councilman on these issues:

- Fox Plaza: What is the status of the Stalder Building and other properties scheduled for demolition? The Stalder Building has been emptied of tenants and is owned by Redevelopment. Not all the properties on or near Market and Fairmount have been acquired; some landowners are not yet interested in selling. There would be consequences for failure of the project: the city would have to pay \$1 to \$3 million to the developer if approval is withdrawn.
- Fire Station site: The buildings proposed for the current downtown fire station site are between 5 to 8 stories. A parking structure would be built adjacent.
- Fox Theatre: Work continues, and the theatre is on track to be completed in the third quarter of 2009.
- Bus Station relocation: A public meeting on this issue has been rescheduled, but it will come before the council soon with time for public comments. Greyhound is asking the council to override the Planning Commission's vote against the Northside location. The lease is up in July.
- Lake Evans is looking great after the dredging, but there's still a problem with trash ending up in the lake. Kayaks, boats, etc. for a small monthly permit fee.
- The library expansion committee meetings are ongoing, and Mike expects their recommendations on June 9. A public meeting on the issue will be held on June 18, and recommendations by a hired consultant are due on June 23.
- Downtown parking: Some meters will be changed to coin-operated models instead of the automated versions.
- "Sworn officer" at Fairmount Park: The current rangers are not "POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) certified" and there are no funds available to give them the training they'd need to be certified.
- CCTV in Fairmount Park: The closed-circuit TV monitoring is not yet operational due to some Wi-fi glitches; it could be up by late summer.

4. **Homeless Outreach Team presentation—Don Smith**

Director Don Smith updated the group on the activities of the Homeless Outreach Team.

Plans for a centralized location for homeless resources on Hublin Place—employment services, housing, medical services, a drop-in center—are on track. Don said a pilot project to help homeless people living in the riverbottom near Fairmount Park get permanent housing has had some success; a couple who lived in the riverbottom for 10 years is now living in an apartment. Don feels that it is far more cost effective to help people get into permanent housing and then help them with supportive services, instead of the other way around.

Don addressed a question about reports that some people who feed in the park are telling the homeless not to listen to or cooperate with the outreach team. Don and the team try to work in a positive way with the homeless feeding groups, steering them into the "guest chef" program at the shelters instead of feeding at the park. For the

most part, those who do ad hoc feeding programs are genuinely interested in helping people regardless of the venue, and will cooperate. However, there are two “ministers” who refuse to stop feeding in the park, and there are no legal grounds on which to stop them.

Some business owners near the Hublin Place shelter have reported seeing residents urinating outside, but it hasn’t been an ongoing problem.

Don discussed a program implemented by some municipalities in which old parking meters are refitted and labeled to take donations for homeless programs. Instead of giving to panhandlers, people could contribute directly through the old parking meters. San Francisco and other cities are considering it.

Pete Kallinger commented that the team needs to work more on the weekends instead of just during the week; Don said though the need definitely exists, because there are no services available to the homeless on the weekend there’s not much that the outreach team can do for them.

It was suggested that a professional mediator be brought in to broker a conversation with the individuals or groups determined to feed in the park and local residents and others who wish they would stop. The county’s Community Action agency has a free mediation service; Don said it sounded like an interesting idea and would check into it.

Ride-alongs with the outreach team are available anytime; just call 826-2200 if you’re interested. Don can be reached at 826-5615.

##### **5. Riverside Police Department—Sgt. Phil Neglia**

Sgt. Neglia reported on several news/issues encountered by the police in the last month:

- RPD has been spending quite a bit of time in the library/museum area due to some recent as well as ongoing problems with the homeless.
- The community walk on Beacon Way went well—except Phil nearly got run over. But other than that.....
- Phil suggested that one way to make the park less attractive to the homeless is by changing local ordinances affecting how dogs are tethered, not allowing bicycles on the grassy areas, and limiting or prohibiting luggage or even tobacco. These measures could make the park less “comfortable.”
- The “Click It or Ticket” seatbelt campaign is going on now.
- No arrests have been made for the Ladera burglaries but some suspects have been identified.

Jim Talcott asked if we could get follow up on the code compliance issues found during the community walks. Phil said it might be possible, but there are some privacy issues.

The next neighborhood walk will be held June 12 at Heritage Square at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Orange at 6 p.m.

**6. Chair's Report—Chani Beeman**

Chani announced that DANA will be given a Neighborhood Spirit Award during the Neighborhood Conference at Cal Baptist on May 31.

The DANA Pride awards will be given out at the June meeting. Nominations are still being taken.

Volunteers are needed at the Evergreen Cemetery Founders' event to set up in morning and tear down in the evening. Members are also needed to staff the DANA table at the event; Frances Fernandes volunteered.

**7. Reports from Representatives**

- Riverside Downtown Partnership—Janice Penner was not able to attend, but Chani announced for her that the summer series of concerts in White Park will begin on June 8. Also a Fresh N Easy store at First and Market has been proposed, but it's still in the very early planning stages.
- Jane Block reported that the Riverside Land Conservancy would like to create a model of the Santa Ana River watershed near Fairmount Park, like the popular Mud Island River Park in Memphis. To get an idea of the size and scale of the model, Google "Mud Island + Memphis" and you'll find several links.

- 8. Future Agenda Items:** Molly suggested an update on the Fairmount Park renovation project be placed on next month's agenda.

**Adjourned at 8:35 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Molly Dougherty, DANA Secretary**