



UPTOWN PLANNERS

Uptown Community Planning Group Meeting
September 7, 2021

DRAFT MINUTES

In attendance: Michael Brennan, Mary Brown, Stephen Cline, Christopher Cole, Roy Dahl, Bob Daniel, Gail Friedt, Brer Marsh, Stuart McGraw, Mary McKenzie, Matt Medeiros, Tom Mullaney, Lu Rehling, Mat Wahlstrom

Absent: Helen Rowe Allen, Clint Daniels, Bill Smith

I. Call to Order 6:05 p.m.

1. Introductions

Attendance was informally taken before the meeting was called to order, so introductions were dispensed with.

2. Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Order

No changes requested.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for Aug. 3, 2021

Lu Rehling asked that the August minutes reflect that she approved the July minutes and did not abstain.

Mat Wahlstrom asked that the minutes reflect more adequately the statements made by Amanda Nelson.

Motion to approve the August minutes with Lu Rehling's amendment: Roy Dahl. Second by Gail Friedt.

In favor: Michael Brennan, Mary Brown, Stephen Cline, Christopher Cole, Roy Dahl, Gail Friedt, Brer Marsh, Stuart McGraw, Mary McKenzie, Lu Rehling.

Abstentions: Bob Daniel and Matt Medeiros abstain because they were not at the meeting. Mat Wahlstrom abstains because he believes the minutes should reflect more precisely public comments made.

Motion passes: 10-0-3.

4. CPC Update (Community Planners Committee)

Forming a committee to study the Mayor's Blueprint San Diego

5. Chair's report (Tom Mullaney)

Bob Daniel has served eight years on the Planners. His last meeting will be in September. UP will have a vacancy.

Matt Medeiros believes that Bob Daniel serves through October, and even though the City suggests immediate elections to fill vacant seats, it would be "dumb" to hold another election before March.

6. Airport Advisory and Balboa Park Committees

Chris Cole and Brer Marsh have no updates.

II. Representatives of Elected Officials

1. Benny Cartwright from Council President Pro-Tem, Stephen Whitburn.

Council has been on legislative recess. The Council will be virtual when it resumes in September.

Bob Daniel asked about CM Whitburn's positions on NAVWAR and SB 9 and 10. Benny asked to follow up with him, as he'd been on vacation and hadn't the chance to be briefed by the CM.

III. Non-Agenda Public Comment

1. Bill Keller. Spaces for Places. Mr. Keller expressed concern about the continued use of "parklets" and sidewalks for dining. The Planning Dept. is proposing new guidelines that he believes are nothing more than the city giving away public space to restaurants. He also noted concerns about guideline and code enforcement.

2. Clifford Wyler. Reiterates that NAVWAR lies within the Uptown Planners' authority, according to the bylaws.

3. Sharon Gehl. Midway area approves more development and housing.

4. Lu Rehling. Get your pronto card to ride free through September. The compass card won't work after October 1.

Encourages the public to bring issues to our attention.

5. Matt Medeiros. Making sure new members have taken the COW Training.

Several new Board members replied in the affirmative!

IV. Action Items 6:30 p.m.

1. Sprint cell site modification, at 666 Upas St.

Project No. 691449. Presenter Delilah Bruzee, representing MD7.

Motion to approve the project: Matt Medeiros. Second: Chris Cole.

Approved unanimously.

2. Appointment of Chair: Operations/ Outreach Committee.

Chair Tom Mullaney recommends that the Board approve Lu Rehling as chair of the Operations/Outreach committee.

Matt Medeiros stated he would like to continue as co-chair of this subcommittee to work on the bylaws.

He also stated that the Board did not appoint committee chairs in the past; that it was left to the committees themselves.

Tom expressed his preference for just one chair per committee.

Tom asks for the approval of the Board for Lu Rehling as Chair of O/O committee.

Stuart recommended that the committee itself decides on leadership structure of the subcommittee.

Matt Medeiros withdrew his name from consideration for serving as co-chair.

Vote on approval of Lu Rehling as chair of the Operations and Outreach committee.

Approve: Michael Brennan, Mary Brown, Stephen Cline, Christopher Cole, Roy Dahl, Gail Friedt, Brer Marsh, Stuart McGraw, Mary McKenzie, Lu Rehling, Mat Wahlstrom

Abstentions: Bob Daniel abstains because his term is ending. Matt Medeiros abstains because he has concerns about decision making on committee appointments.

Approved: 11-0-2

3. Membership of Committees.

The Chair had sent out a form for Board members to state their membership preference, but only eight replied.

Chris Cole was unsure of what the committees do exactly, so more information would be useful.

Brer Marsh stated that he believes we could assign committee members during the meeting. He remembers "Committees don't have members." Brer also asked why can't we have public members of the committee?

Lu Rehling explains that public membership of committees has been discussed and voted on in the past, and now is not the time to revisit the issue when there are many weightier concerns. There should be a baseline membership to avoid quorum issues.

Lu Rehling emphasized that our meetings need to be public, per the Brown Act.

Mat Wahlstrom. The public is always welcome to make comments. They should not have a vote. There are good reasons, though, that we limit voting to a core membership of elected members. We are indemnified by the City. We are trained on the rules of Planning Groups.

Matt Medeiros expressed opposition to standing committees. He believes the committee chair should decide the composition of each committee, recognizing the Brown Act. Discussions should welcome and listen to the public, and their comments need to be respected and encouraged.

Brer Marsh stated that he has attended both University Heights and North Park community meetings. North Park has very efficient standing committees that include non-Board members.

Mary Brown agreed. Is impressed with the North Park Planning Group and encouraged us to go more in depth and be more involved.

Mat Wahlstrom moves that the composition of subcommittees (with voting rights) consist only of elected Board members. Seconded by Roy Dahl.

Mat Wahlstrom: If we expand committee membership to non-Board members, there is no accountability. We are indemnified by the City and have been trained on the Brown Act, and other City rules, etc.

Brer Marsh: concerned about rules limiting the participation of the public, especially the inclusion of experts. Public membership in committees is allowed in our bylaws. Even if they vote on things, in the end, decisions are up to the Board. And it encourages participation.

Matt Medeiros. UP has welcomed non-Board members on committees for many years. It is only a benefit.

Roy Dahl: voting members need to have the training for legal reasons. But believes all should be heard.

Call the Question: The composition of subcommittees (with voting rights) consists only of elected UP Board members.

Chair emphasizes that this does not affect the Bylaws. This is a decision of the Board, and it can be changed in future if so decided.

In favor: Mary Brown, Mat Wahlstrom, Roy Dahl, Stu McGraw, Mary McKenzie, Lu Rehling, and Chris Cole.

Opposed: Brer Marsh, Gail Friedt, Matt Medeiros. Michael Brennan, Steve Cline

Abstentions: Bob Daniel because of his limited term.

Motion passed 7-5-1.

3.a. Assignment of committee memberships

Tom Mullaney: Who would like to serve on which committees?

Design Review Committee. Brer Marsh, Chair. Provides a service for applicants who need to come before UP for approval.

Members: Lu Rehling, Chris Cole, Michael Brennan, Gail Friedt, Matt Madeiros

Historic Preservation Committee. Mary Brown, Chair. The Committee will be involved with Plan Hillcrest and we'll be working with other Uptown historic organizations.

Members: Lu Rehling, Mat Wahlstrom, Helen Rowe Allen, Stuart McGraw.

Operations/Outreach. Lu Rehling, Chair. The committee deals with bylaws and rules, but also outreach. Need to build a bigger public presence and be sure to provide prompt information.

Members: Matt Medeiros, Mat Wahlstrom, Mary McKenzie, Stu McGraw

Plan Hillcrest. Roy Dahl, Chair. Reviews the work that the City is doing on the update to the community plan.

Members: Gail Friedt, Matt Medeiros, Mary McKenzie, Mat Wahlstrom, Lu Rehling, Brer Marsh, Tom Mullaney, Roy Dahl

Public Facilities. Stuart McGraw, Chair.

Members: Mary Brown, Mary McKenzie

Motion to Approve committee membership lists as discussed, by Roy Dahl. Seconded by Mary McKenzie

Proposed amendment by Matt Medeiros that members not present at tonight's meeting be allowed to voice their committee preferences.

Accepted as a friendly amendment.

Motion passed. 13-0-0

4. Recommendations in the July 27th Memo from the Election Committee Chair (Steve Cline)

Tom Mullaney asked Stuart McGraw to chair the meeting for the first recommendation, involving the Chair.

#1. "The Board having received and reviewed the complaint and investigation report related to the June 17, 2021 written complaint re: conduct of Tom Mullaney makes no finding of intentional wrongdoing and as such will take no further action on the matter before closing it."

Motion to accept #1 recommendation: Mary McKenzie. Second by Bob Daniel.

Approve: Mat Wahlstrom, Lu Rehling, Bob Daniel, Steve Cline, Mary McKenzie, Chris Cole, Roy Dahl, Mary Brown

Opposed: Brer Marsh, Gail Friedt.

Abstentions: Matt Medeiros. Does not feel the issues surrounding the complaint have been fully resolved.

Michael Brennan left the meeting at 7:46.

Motion Passed. 8-2-1

#2. "The Board should task the Bylaws Committee* with a full review of the current Bylaws to determine whether they properly and completely address current issues related to electioneering, funding for candidates/slates, and conduct of elections. The Bylaws Committee should be given a roughly ninety (90) day window to present findings/recommendations and/or proposed amendments for consideration of full Board."

Gail Friedt: Agrees that the Operations and Outreach Committee should examine the contentious issues surrounding the last election, particularly the role of funding.

Steve Cline: There are several issues that need to be addressed. The importance of slates, electronic voting, glossy mailers. We need to look at how these elections are going to be run, focusing on increasing participation.

Brer Marsh: we need to look at what other groups are doing about running elections.

Lu Rehling: objects to the idea that the election was based on fear-mongering. Why are we concerned about funding this year, when two years ago, it was clear that one slate had more money than the other.

Roy Dahl. Mischaracterization to say that this election was about who raised the most money.

Mary McKenzie: Divisiveness on the Board is a big concern. We need to stop acting "us versus them."

Mat Wahlstrom: We need to be as fair and inclusive as possible.

Matt Medeiros: Rise Uptown spent \$150 on the 2019 election. We were not corporate shells. Agrees with Mary McKenzie about the divisiveness on the Board, and believes it lessens the effectiveness of the CPG. It creates an unpleasant environment for people who might come to our BOD meetings.

Chris Cole: Very difficult to get involvement of the community in any setting. Would like to get rid of slates. Also we need to be sure to include all Uptown communities on the Board.

Matt Wahlstrom moves to approve recommendation #2. Second: Matt Medeiros.

In Favor: Chris Cole, Roy Dahl, Matt Medeiros, Steve Cline, Mary McKenzie, Bob Daniel, Gail Friedt, Brer Marsh, Matt Wahlstrom

Opposed: Lu Rehling, Mary Brown, Stuart McGraw

Motion passed 9-3-0

#3. "The Board should re-task the Election Committee (either in current form or newly formed) to identify the best methods currently available to expand eligible voter participation through electronic voter eligibility verification and voting. The Election Committee should build upon its recent research/investigation/testing of various electronic voting systems. The Election Committee should be given a roughly ninety (90) day window to present findings and proposed systems for consideration of full Board."

Mat Wahlstrom: believes this focus may take away from the proper conduct of the March elections.

Matt Medeiros: Put an election committee in place in October to address issues of March elections.

Steven Cline: We need to consider electronic voting, and start as soon as possible, but most likely not by the March elections.

Roy Dahl: would like vey much to increase participation. But we need to do it right and take our time.

Lu Rehling: The election committee does not need to be set up before December. Many groups are going forward with electronic voting, and maybe the City will come up with tools to help CPGs.

Mary Brown: Switching to an electronic system should be examined, but not in a rush.

Gail Friedt: COVID situation will not change. We should not wait until December to set up an Elections Committee.

Mary McKenzie: Somebody needs to take the time to examine the options to conduct the elections electronically. In favor of setting up a committee.

Bob Daniel: Maybe it shouldn't be called an Elections committee. But this could be an elections tools committee whose work would be passed on to an Elections committee.

Lu Rehling: We should vote against this recommendation.

Tom Mullaney: The Elections committee was ad hoc. We don't know what the City wants to do in terms of conducting elections. We need to discuss Blueprint San Diego and other such issues. Do we want to be focused on Bylaws wording when we have real issues to be worried about.

We should focus on increasing participation, not necessarily only focusing on electronic means to do so.

If we want to move toward electronic voting, we need to talk to other CPGs to evaluate their experiences. We need a complete review of pros and cons. Not sure we should move away from paper voting.

Tom Mullaney suggests that we set up an elections committee in November. As Chair, he will not vote.

Mat Wahlstrom moves that the Board not approve item #3 until #2 issues are resolved. No second.

Matt Medeiros: Moves that the Board convene an Election Committee in October to prepare for the March election and to examine any appropriate means (electronic and other) and recognizing the need for flexibility, if there are social-cultural issues that require.

Second: Bob Daniel.

Mat Wahlstrom: Believes #2 needs to be addressed before #3.

Matt Medeiros: we need to plan for all contingencies, and that takes time.

Mat Wahlstrom: Offers amendment. That we form the Elections Committee in October. The Committee will present its findings for review in December. Matt Medeiros agrees to friendly amendment.

In Favor: Mary McKenzie, Mat Wahlstrom, Roy Dahl, Bob Daniel, Steve Cline, Matt Medeiros, Chris Cole, Brer Marsh, Gail Friedt

Opposed: Lu Rehling, Stu McGraw

Mary Brown is no longer present.

Motion passes: 9-2-0

#4. Steve Cline withdraws this recommendation

VI. Confirmation of next meeting. October 5, 2021

VII. Adjournment

*Per the bylaws, the chair does not vote except in case of a tie.

Respectfully submitted by Mary M McKenzie, Secretary