



# UPTOWN PLANNERS

Community Planning Group Meeting  
Feb. 1, 2022

## DRAFT MINUTES

In attendance: Helen Rowe Allen, Michael Brennan, Mary Brown, Stephen Cline, Christopher Cole, Roy Dahl, Clint Daniels, Gail Friedt, Brer Marsh, Stuart McGraw, Mary McKenzie, Matt Medeiros, Tom Mullaney, Lu Rehling, William Smith, Mat Wahlstrom.

Absent: Clint Daniels.

### I. **Call to Order 6:00 pm**

1. **Introductions**: Attendance was informally taken before the meeting was called to order, so introductions were dispensed with.
2. **Adoption of Agenda**:
  - a. Lu Rehling suggested three additions to the agenda:
    - i. Report on the Secretary position,
    - ii. Treasurer's Report, and
    - iii. Report from the Uptown Neighborhood Representative to the Balboa Park Committee.
  - b. Chris Cole made a motion to adopt the agenda with the three additions, Roy Dahl seconded the motion, the board unanimously approved the motion. 14-0
3. **Report of the Secretary position**: Tom Mullaney announced that Mary McKenzie will step down from the Secretary position until April 5, and Mary Brown has agreed to fill the position until then. Mary Brown accepted the position.

#### Board Comment

Several members expressed their thanks to Mary.

Mat Wahlstrom made a motion to accept the appointment of Mary Brown as interim secretary, Steven Cline seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved the motion. 14-0

### 4. **Treasurer's Report.**

- a. Mary Brown reported that the balance in our bank account remains at \$150.65. With no deposits or expenditures.
- b. Mary reported to the board that one response had been received to her request for suggestions on how to use the money remaining in our bank account and the \$500.00 that will be available in this fiscal year. Lu Rehling suggested that we purchase a Blue Yeti to be used to record hybrid meetings. If the board agrees, we should look into this.

### Board Comment

Mary McKenzie mentioned that Ben Nichols with the Hillcrest Business Association holds hybrid meetings and might be able to guide us. Mary will contact Ben.

Lu reminded the board that the money must be spent by June 30, 2022.

Mat Wahlstrom made a motion that the board authorize an expense of up to \$500 to purchase hybrid meeting equipment, Chris Cole seconded the motion and the board agreed unanimously. 14-0

### **5. Report from the Uptown Representative to the Balboa Park Committee.**

- a. Brer Marsh reported that the restoration of the Botanical Building has begun. He has not heard of any controversy regarding the restoration.
- b. The Balboa Park Committee has approved a new quickbuild roundabout for the intersection of Florida Street and Morley Field Drive.
- c. The committee has also approved a motion to prioritize the restoration of Florida Canyon. The alternative to this restoration would be to make Florida Canyon a higher volume, higher speed road.
- d. The Committee of 100 is leading an effort to update and build new restaurants in Balboa Park.

### Board Comment

Lu Rehling announced that February is Museum Month and that admissions are half off. She also noted that the controversy regarding the Botanical Building is plans to make it a self-sustaining venue with weddings and events which may reduce plant space and public hours in the building.

Mat Wahlstrom noted that the possible use of the Botanical Building as an event venue is a very contentious issue. If this issue comes before the Balboa Park Committee, Brer should bring this issue to Uptown Planners

Brer noted that he is an appointee of the mayor and while he will let Uptown Planners know of any issues, he does not represent the group on the Balboa Park Committee.

Helen Rowe Allen expressed concern about the unlicensed vendors on the promenade and asked if this issue has come before the Balboa Park Committee.

Brer reported that a procedure is being developed by San Diego Parks & Recreation staff. It may come before the Balboa Park Committee at a later date.

### Public Comment

Sharon Gehl approved of the self-sustaining use of the Botanical Building.

Caiti Borruso supported the restoration of Florida Canyon and self-sustaining use of the Botanical Building. Other cities do this successfully.

6. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** None to approve.

7. **Community Planners Committee (CPC). January 25, 2022 meeting report**

- a. Tom Mullaney reported that Joe LaCava spoke at the meeting. Councilmember LaCava described compromises which are believed to be acceptable to city officials.
  - i. The City will require a participation plan from each CPG to report how they are performing outreach to their community.
  - ii. The City will continue to provide a basic webpage to CPGs.
  - iii. The City will continue to allow CPGs to meet in City facilities (Libraries, Recreation Centers, etc.)
  - iv. Expense reimbursement will continue.

**Public Comment**

Paul Jamison expressed concern that CPG membership is not representative of diverse community interests and asked if Uptown Planners has demographic information for our area.

Tom said that information may be difficult to gather at this point. But it should be a goal.

Amanda Nelson urged Uptown Planners to support the reform. She stated that the current board members have nothing in common with her.

Oscar Tavera echoed Amanda's comments regarding diversity. He also said that we need more outreach so community members know about Uptown Planners and what the group does. Oscar believes the meeting requirement for candidates should be eliminated. He supports all of Councilmember LaCava's changes.

**Board Comment**

Helen Rowe Allen reported that at the most recent Planning Commission, Vice Chair Whelan and Commissioner Ken Marlborough spoke about their experiences on Community Planning Groups and the need for candidates to show interest and commitment to the group before running for a seat.

Lu Rehling had questions regarding whether developers will still come before CPGs after the changes are made and what the timing of the changes is.

Tom said that, per Joe LaCava's office, Development Services will still recommend that developers contact CPGs and schedule a hearing. However, this will not be required by DSD. Implementation of new rules should begin in summer 2022. In the meantime, we can review the "Terms and Conditions" document which is intended to replace bylaws.

8. **Verification of Attendance (optional):** Participants can enter their name and "present" in the Zoom Chat column, if desired.

## II. Representatives of Elected Officials

Abbey Reuter from Supervisor Nathan Fletcher's office provided an update:

1. Supervisor Fletcher was unanimously re-elected as Board chair,
2. The State of the County will be given in March,
3. As of January 15, County district lines shifted, based on redistricting.
4. Abbey has another community meeting each month that conflicts with ours. She will alternate attendance,
5. Omicron testing appointments have been increased,
6. Watch for unauthorized testing sites,
7. Up to 2-weeks of Covid paid sick leave has been restored
8. Supervisor Fletcher will not support a current candidate for Sheriff Gore's position as interim-Sheriff.
9. The office has completed a 3-year impact report of accomplishments.

## III. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Amanda Nelson announced that the Mission Hills Town Council will hold a candidate forum at the town hall meeting on February 15.

Oscar Tavera was happy to see increased use of the new bike lanes on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Mat Wahlstrom noted that our meetings keep running long and that we are not following our agenda. He also commented that the old Uptown Planners website is still up and asked about letter sent to GoDaddy.

Tom agreed that we need to stick closer to agenda but should also allow sufficient public comment. Tom to follow up on letter sent to GoDaddy.

## IV. Information Items

1. **"The Battle over Rooftop Solar Power: Threats, opportunities, and how you can engage,"** presented by Bill Powers and Lori Saldana with [protectourcommunities.org](http://protectourcommunities.org)
  - a. Bill Powers and Lori Saldana presented a program regarding the current threat to rooftop solar in California.
  - b. Presenters requested that the audience contact their state representatives.

### Public Comment:

Carol Emerick strongly endorsed rooftop solar.

### Board Comment

Chris Cole asked if credits for rooftop solar will transfer to San Diego Community Power. Mat Wahlstrom encouraged them to come back with a proposal for an action item we could endorse.

Helen Rowe Allen agreed that solar makes sense. She has called her representatives, but will call again.

### Presenter's Responses

Credits will be largely the same.

Immediate action is needed regarding the issue, please call your state representatives.

## **2. Election Committee Update**

Steve emphasized that tonight's meeting was the last opportunity to meet the meeting requirement for candidates. He currently has only one candidate application.

Steve mentioned the candidate forum to be held February 15 at 6:00 pm at the Mission Hills Library.

Election deadlines:

February 4, last day for candidate applications

February 16, deadline for candidate statements

February 24, first date of voting (Joyce Beers Center)

February 28, second date of voting (Mission Hills Library)

March 1, final date of voting (Joyce Beers Center)

Steve noted that the election committee is ready for the election.

### Public Comment

None.

### Board Comment

Lu Rehling mentioned that, per the bylaws, the newly elected members cannot be seated until the April meeting.

Lu also mentioned that there is no information on the Uptown Planners website regarding the deadline for candidate statements.

Lu offered to post the candidate statements to the website when they are received.

Helen Rowe Allen, member of the Election Committee, acknowledged Chair Steve Cline's leadership and excellent job communicating with the committee members. She also recognized the commitment of the committee members. The opportunity to have a voting site at the Mission Hills Library was also appreciated.

Bill Smith wanted confirmation that only one candidate application had been received with the deadline only three days away. Confirmed.

Lu Rehling asked about safety protocols at the voting sites.

Steve said actual voting would be inside but, very few people would be inside at any one time. The waiting area would be out in the fresh air.

Tom Mullaney shared the Election page in the Uptown Planners website and asked about outreach. Lu Rehling said she had posted information on the website regarding running for office and the election. Notices were sent out to the 200 people on our distribution list and were posted to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**3. Navigating DSD. How to find project information from the Development Services Department.**

Tom Mullaney demonstrated how to find available information regarding a particular project.

**V. Confirmation of next regular meeting. March 1, 2022.**

**VI. Adjournment**