



Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association Newsletter

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The Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association is made up of residents interested in preserving the quality of life in our neighborhood. Together we can make a difference—join us.

Come to the Second OMOVNA General Meeting

We're holding the second general meeting of the Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association on **Sunday, August 20th at 2pm, at St. Joseph's Church** (at Hope and Church, the same location as the first meeting). Everyone living in the area bounded by El Camino, Shoreline, Evelyn, and Highways 85/237 is invited to attend. You'll be able to find out what's been happening at the Neighborhood Preservation Plan Workshops—by talking to people who've attended, and looking at the large maps created for the workshops. There will also be plenty of time to chat. The OMOVNA organizers will bring fruit juice. How about bringing a plate of cookies or other goodies? We're looking forward to seeing you there.

Neighborhood Preservation Milestone Reached

The three Neighborhood Preservation Plan Workshops held so far complete the first phase of the process approved by the City Council in April. On July 27th, the City Council Neighborhoods Committee reviewed the progress so far, and voted to recommend to the full Council that funds be appropriated for the final phase, which will result in the creation of a detailed, written plan. The City Council is expected to take this up at its next meeting. You can help demonstrate our neighborhood's support for developing the Neighborhood Preservation Plan by attending that Council meeting. (We appreciate the fact that several people attended the Neighborhoods Committee meeting.) We will know the exact day of the City Council meeting by the August 20th OMOVNA General Meeting.

3rd Neighborhood Preservation Workshop a Success

Judging by the large turnout, the quality of consultant Terry Bottomley's presentations, and the enthusiastic discussions that followed, the 3rd Neighborhood Preservation Workshop was a big success. Some 60 people attended, which is the most so far in the series of workshops. Bottomley presented his work on several topics of importance to our neighborhood: a plan for traffic control, architectural guidelines, street tree plantings, and a look at the west-of-Castro area.

Keeping Traffic Under Our Thumb

When we first start thinking about traffic, it's natural to take a local view: my street, my problems. But trying to fix an isolated traffic problem usually doesn't work, it just moves the problem somewhere else. That's why we need a plan for the entire old Mountain View neighborhood.

At the workshop, we agreed that people who aren't driving to or from our neighborhood should travel around it, rather than "percolating" through our residential streets. East-west traffic should use El Camino, Evelyn, or Villa; north-south traffic should use Castro, Shoreline, 237, or 85.

People traveling to or from our neighborhood should drive at safe speeds, and shouldn't be subjected to frustrating delays. Streets such as Church and Calderon serve a dual purpose: many of us drive on them every day to leave and enter the neighborhood, and a number of us live along them. As drivers, we want easy access; as residents, we want safety and quiet.

At the workshop, Bottomley illustrated a number of techniques for maintaining appropriate traffic flow. Some effective measures such as diverters and stop signs are being considered. An interesting idea is that extensive plantings of street trees placed so as to visually narrow long, straight streets causes drivers to be more aware of their immediate surroundings and to drive more slowly.

Growing Families Need Growing Houses

A young family buying a first house often doesn't need—and can't afford—a large house. But as the family grows, more space is necessary. Due to sky-high real estate prices and Proposition 13, many people find it cheaper to add on to their old house rather than to buy a larger one. But the small sizes of many of the older houses in our area, coupled with Mountain View's current 45% Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limit, can make it difficult to design a viable addition. (The FAR is the ratio of the size of your house to the size of your lot.)

We are exploring the possibility of replacing the purely numeric FAR with a more flexible combination of architectural guidelines and design reviews. The goal is to

allow larger, well-designed additions that fit into their surroundings and meet basic requirements.

Everybody Needs Street Trees

The newer part of our neighborhood, centered between Calderon and 85/237, doesn't have nearly as many street trees as the older area west of Calderon. This imbalance could be eliminated with a comprehensive street tree program. Not only do trees create shade and add beauty and value, but they can even slow cars down!

West of Castro

The area between Castro and Shoreline has changed a lot over the years. For a time it was zoned for high-density housing, and a number of houses were replaced with apartment buildings. Now it is again zoned R1 (single-family houses), but no new houses have been built: people are leery of investing until they can be sure of what will happen in the future. Bottomley has suggested several actions the city could take to provide stability and encourage investment, including aggressively enforcing the building codes, planting more street trees, and adding more street lights. The city is considering setting up a home buyer's program to encourage purchase of the surplus city-owned homes by owner-occupants. Finally, Bottomley suggests that up-zoning to allow duplexes and small condos could result in new investments providing tasteful and affordable housing.

Many ideas were presented in a short time at the workshop. Whether or not you attended the workshop, you have another opportunity to discuss these ideas at the OMVNA general meeting on August 20th.

Evelyn Avenue Corridor Study Funded

On July 11th, the City Council approved \$80,000 for a study of the Evelyn Avenue Corridor, to be conducted by Freedman, Tung & Bottomley. The character of development along the Evelyn Corridor is so important to our neighborhood that several OMVNA members attended the Council meeting to lend support to the study.

PAL Site: Home of New Downtown Fire Station?

The downtown fire station is no longer large enough to house an adequate number of firefighters and their equipment, so the city is selecting a site for a new, larger station. At its July 12th meeting, the City Council Public Safety Committee voted to recommend to the full

Council that the Police Athletic League (PAL) site, at Shoreline and West Dana, be chosen. This vote followed presentations on the PAL site and two others: the northeast corner of Church and Shoreline, and a site off Villa adjacent to the current Police/Fire Administration building.

Presentations were made by City Manager Ralph Jaeck, Fire Chief Hugh Holden, consulting architects, and several neighborhood residents. All three sites had significant advantages and at least a few disadvantages, so the selection process required careful consideration.

An important advantage of the PAL site is that it would allow the shortest response times to fires throughout the area. Its construction costs were estimated as the lowest of the three sites, and the land is already owned by the city, so no residential property would have to be purchased. The site would offer the greatest opportunity to protect the surrounding residential neighborhood from the traffic and noise produced by the fire station.

The largest disadvantage of the PAL site is that the fire station would occupy land that might otherwise be used for a park or cultural center. However, based on the preliminary feasibility study, about 1/3 of the site would still be available for a park.

The City Council will make a final decision on the new fire station site in late August or September. We can insure that the new fire station becomes a positive addition to our neighborhood by becoming involved as the final site plans are developed.

Mountain View in the Year 2000

Just as we residents of the old Mountain View neighborhood are working on a plan for our future, the entire city of Mountain View is beginning the process of updating its General Plan. The General Plan contains overall policies and priorities that guide the city as it grows. The last update took place in 1982; this version will probably remain in use through the 1990's.

The process of updating the General Plan involves city staff, the Environmental Planning Commission, the City Council, and the citizens of Mountain View. To explain what the General Plan is and to identify issues that should be addressed in the updated version, the city held a workshop on July 18th. There will be additional workshops over the next year, so don't miss this chance to shape your city's future. Watch *The View* for details.

Write to OMVNA at P.O. Box 391328, Mountain View, CA 94309. Or call any of these people:

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