

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June Minutes

Thursday, June 5, 2008, 7:00 PM

Rockridge Library

Meeting called to order to 7:20 with a quorum present.

Present: Stu Flashman, Annette Floystrup, Jon Gabel, Joan Martin, Ronnie Spitzer (7:25), Katy Taylor, Danica Truchlikova, Doug Patton; Ellen Peterson (7:30) Guest: Jennifer Cooper (representing FROG; left at 7:55); Peter St. John (8:30) John Gussman (8:30)

Absent: Margaret Walberg

Item 1: Administrative

a) Approval of May minutes.

MOTION: Move to approve minutes of May 1, 2008 BOD meeting, with the provision that the missing paragraph regarding FROG in the committee section will be incorporated and the amended minutes will be uploaded to the RCPC files. *Motion:* Gabel *Second:* Truchlikova (Approve: unanimously)

b) Discussion of details regarding filling existing board vacancies, an advertisement about the board vacancies in the Rockridge News. The deadline to submit applications will be June 30th.

Item 2: Annual presentation by FROG (Jennifer Cooper)

a) Background of FROG:

- The committee was formed in June of 2000 to find a park for the Rockridge area. The result of the work is today's greenbelt that connects the Rockridge BART station to the intersection of 51st and Temescal.
- Phase II was completed a year and half ago.
- Core steering committee is made up of 7 people but the committee is seeking new members.
- Ongoing maintenance of the two playgrounds is a part of FROG's work- with fall and spring maintenance days, as well as week to week maintenance carried out by volunteers. Danica asked if there is funding existing for maintenance. Jennifer explained that FROG has a maintenance man paid by the city.
- FROG pays for the bathroom and the sealing of the wood play structure. Danica asks how does FROG raise money? Brochures, t-shirts, etc.
- FROG accomplishment is not only in that it raised money for this park, but also saw to it that a unique park was designed and built.

b) Current Issues and Developments

- Next building phase includes public art (hopefully to take place this summer), made possible by measure DD funds. Artist Mark Breson Dempson has designed "viewing devices" that focus on animals and elements along the greenbelts, furthering the cohesiveness of the greenbelt experience. Another component of this phase is an accessible "tactile map" near the DMV. There is going to be an event plan for the end of summer of early fall to celebrate the art. A permanent bathroom is also being planned; funding has been allocated by the city and the project is likely to be completed by the end of next year. It is going to be a single stall, concrete block, pre-fabricated structure. It will be locked every night by a city staff person.

- BART seismic retrofit will impact FROG park. Areas under work will be fenced off temporarily. They have agreed that all surfaces will be replaced.
- FROG worked with the developers of Civique to include a greenbelt in this area along with the proposed development. FROG's interest is in seeing a compatible greenbelt included in the project with Hauser/Civique, including some kind of water element that makes a visual/experiential connection with the rest of the greenbelt, as well as improving the pedestrian experience.
- Updating FROG website: Ronnie is working on this project
- FROG is starting to send out monthly newsletters via constant contact
- Subcommittee of FROG is investigating extending the time of the creek flow; because it is dry part of the year there is no way for this to be "habitat". Obstacles include keeping the channel clear during the winter months.
- FROG is also a member of the fourth bore coalition, of special concern is the debris that literally falls from the freeway, and also of importance is the noise pollution from the freeway.
- There is also interest in the greenbelt continuing to the BART station
- Question from Stu: are you recruiting through the schools? Answer: No formal connections, although a new connection has been created with the girls Scouts. CPS does have ongoing volunteers. (Discussion of outreach to schools and daycare centers)
- There is some hope that the newsletter will create an ongoing presence and park users will become more aware of FROG. Danica suggests that a plaque be included in the park to make park users aware of the organization.

Item 3: Financial Report (Joan Martin, treasurer)

- a) Stu and Joan are now signers; Susan has been taken off most accounts because she is also doing the books. Susan is in the process of updating all accounts and removing signers that are no longer part of RCPC.
- b) Balance Sheet: May 2008. Details all accounts held and where they are located. Stu asked: is FORL covering their expenses with fundraising? Annette explains that they do cover their expenses
- c) Joan expressed concern that we don't have an approved board budget. Ronnie explained that normally budgets have been approved in Feb. and there was a change in the board during this time. It was decided to hold off on approving a budget until the new board was gathered.
 - Discussion regarding what approach to take creating a budget: begin with the previous budget and modify, or create an agenda and add numbers; priorities and budget will be refined at the next board retreat.
- d) Request that the financial report be uploaded to the website.

Item 4: Board Retreat Follow-up

- a) RCPC boundaries: The description of the boundaries accidentally left out two houses. There is another question regarding houses on Mystic. Rewriting the boundaries will need to be put off until this issue is resolved.
 - **ACTION:** Annette is going to go to the Registrar's website and determine the voting location for these home owners.
- b) Further discussion regarding Rockridge boundaries
- c) Another change to the Redbook: minor change of name: change PPRC into LUC. (Project Planning and Review Committee vs. Land Use Committee).
- d) Proposed Redbook Revisions: Ronnie presents issues with the redbook, including the information that is missing from the redbook. (The vice chair is officially in charge of all issues with the Redbook)
 - The proposal is to add content regarding the 501c3 status to the redbook. Jon Gussman is willing to do this.
 - Doug would like to develop an info sheet that covers 501c3; in general, the redbook needs to be made more accessible.

- Doug recommends that we obtain the book regarding “advising non-profit corporations”.
 - Ronnie will provide the board with a draft of a restructured redbook.
 - Doug’s question: is the redbook equal to the bylaws, Stu: hierarchy is articles, bylaws, then redbook; perhaps the redbook should clarify these issues.
 - Discussion point for next month: should the minutes be included on the website or limited to life in the library?
- e) Discussion regarding confusing points of the limitations of being a 501c3. doug thinks we might want to consider being a 501c4. Stu suggests that another option is to divide up into two different groups (Doug gives an example of the Sierra Club as having such a structure).
- f) Item for the retreat or future discussion: the 501c3 vs. 501c4 status
- g) Danica feels that the retreat agenda was too long and questions weren’t able to be answered.
- h) We want to schedule part II: with the subjects being budget, follow up discussion of 501c3 (Doug would like to write something up), a short history of RCPC of the past, (we should get Mary McDonald to get us a time line) when should we have this? (question regarding whether we can achieve these items within the format of the existing board meetings)
- i) It is generally agreed that the budget can be addressed by the finance committee and approved through a two meeting process
- j) The history of the RCPC and current projects may need to be compiled: Annette will be willing to put something together. (This will be available by July meeting) Ronnie will have a draft proposal for the redbook.
- k) Joan questioned the need for Retreat Part II- after some discussion it was agreed to not schedule a second retreat for now, but instead incorporate the retreat agenda items into board meeting agendas.

ACTION : Annette moves that we hold the July board meeting on July 10th, seconded by Ellen and unanimously approved.

Item 5: Information Technology

- a) General Discussion:
- Concern presented by Stu regarding liability with articles, etc. that might go on the website.
 - Discussion regarding insurance coverage and whether libel and slander are covered under our current insurance. Joan will check to see if these items will be covered by our current policies.
 - Another concern is our political liability: we need a way to keep track of such things to ensure we don’t make political mistakes (though they may be legal).
 - Discussion regarding controlling content verses not controlling content and how this connects to liability. These same issues are also present for the website.
 - Jon suggests that what goes on the website monthly is coming strait from the news but with the added option of a button sending an email response. Then there would be some formal process of response set up to address these emails.
 - Ronnie also brings up constant contact as needed for review: Stu clarifies that constant contact need not be reviewed because they are announcements and would not contain info. other than meeting times, etc.
 - John Gussman is concerned with the public relations pitfalls. (legal and editorial review)
- b) Proposal presented by Jon and Peter:
- Proposal includes the overall goals of the website and a process for putting together a new website. (see proposal).
 - Discussion regarding the pros and cons of linking rockridge.org to the Rockridge business association website versus resurrecting our own business directory.
 - Discussion of the process by which we will come to a final, physical site: there will be a back and forth between the website team and the board (via the process proposed) to create the website. Because of the approach Jon feels that it would be possible to bring in volunteers from outside the

board. Maintenance of the website will follow the same process outlined for establishing the original design.

- Joan is interested in keeping the website less commercial and more informational.
 - Peter notes that the business members are a part of the community/stakeholders and should be represented on the website.
 - Annette would like to see a section of “History of Rockridge’s Architecture” and/or the history of the area as a transit based neighborhood in which the business is a part of it but not a huge part.
 - Danica sees the RCPC as a grassroots neighborhood organization, and as such, we should convey our spirit and why we are passionate about our neighborhood through the website.
 - Ronnie want to ensure that the website be available for quick update so that people can be included in neighborhood action and for immediately mobilization of the troops.
 - Jon explains that these types of details will really be worked out in the next phase. The business directory should be easily accessible but isn’t part of the home page.
 - Doug comments that Jon is proposing a process while we have been getting hung up on content.
 - Jon requests that we write these ideas up and we will integrate them into the proposal document.
 - Annette likes Jon’s idea that we create a website easily used by small devices (iphone, etc.)
 - Joan is interested in attraction rather than promotion. She is interested in preserving the authenticity of the spirit of the neighborhood within the design of the website.
 - Jon noted that rockridge.org already has a high page ranking on Google, something he considers to be a valuable asset. He suggested that our business directory could take advantage of this by pointing users who Google the word 'Rockridge' to local businesses. Joan expressed the opinion that she did not want such a commercial component on our site.
 - Danica is not concerned with attracting tourists.
 - Jon’s take on the website is extending the Rockridge news distribution by including it online. This would increase the value of the adds.
 - Jon would like to continue to work on the existing document and refine it to build consensus.
- **MOTION:** Accept Jon’s proposal for the process as outlined on page 2 *Moved: Doug Secinded: Spitzer Unanimously approved.*

c) Additional website issues:

- Discussion regarding updating the website between today and the time when this process is complete. There are reasons that the website content will need to be modified between now and then. Stu suggests that there are specific issues coming up that will require a link on the home page and the board agrees that this should be done.
- Stu discusses the growing IT responsibilities for RCPC and is there enough for a specific committee or should we continue functioning on an ad hoc basis.
- Annette feels that we should have such a committee but with the specification that outside volunteers with expertise are included.
- Danica suggests that maybe we should pay someone to manage the IT issues.
- Jon emphasizes that he is trying to set up the website so that is clear and easy to maintain. He describes additional day to day functions of the website that will be required to be accomplished, including back-ups, email responses, site captures (these are the tasks that should be taken into account when considering hiring an IT person)
- Annette asks us to check out the website bungalow heaven- perhaps this is the flavor we are looking for.

Item 6: Rockridge News (Don Kinkaid: absent): No Discussion

Item 7: Town Hall Meeting Schedules

- a) Safeway meeting joint sponsored with Jane Brunner and Elmwood neighborhood association. Ronnie is going to take care of advertising the meeting as vice chair. June 19th at Peralta School
- b) July NCPC meeting. Annette is our representative. We will co-host the meeting and advertise it in the Rockridge news. Annette is going to write an article for the news. Maybe we will distribute a survey regarding website content.
- c) No August meeting.
- d) September: Ellen has some ideas for this meeting
- e) October: league of women voters: Katy and Danica will host

Item 8: Noise complaints regarding the Red Cross blood bank

- a) Annette comments that the Red Cross may have a zoning problem
- b) Stu suggests that he talk with the neighbors and the blood bank and get both sides of the story. Maybe invite both parties for a meeting. Loan our decibel meter to the neighbors. If we can't resolve it, act as mediators, and if that doesn't work, then advise the neighbors where to take their complaints.
- c) Joan brings up the potential problems of our roles in this process with regard to our 501c3 status.

Item 9: Committees

- a) NCPC: no formal report
- b) Schools: no formal report
 - Point of discussion: RDA is pushing forward with this school projects. Annette feels we need to go forward with this because it is part of our call.
 - Danica will represent the RCPC at the upcoming meeting.
 - Discussion regarding the issues with Claremont middle school
- c) FORL: Annette: Jon called Annette and alerted her to the sale of videos at the Global video and as a result FORL is planning to obtain some new movies, etc. for the library
- d) Traffic: Ronnie: main topic is a study done by the city of the "Colby triangle"- the city wants the area to prioritize what pedestrian mitigations they would like to see. The committee is waiting on drawings in order to go forward with this.
 - Stu: Description of issues regarding school verses public buses. Should we submit a comment to the Feds regarding this issue: Board gives Stu permission to write a letter presenting our views on the issue.
 - Danica: issues regarding cyclists on sidewalks in the area. Ronnie has looked into it: suggestion posed that an article be included in the Rockridge news to educate the public regarding this issue.
- e) Landuse: Stu
 - 5175 Broadway came in front of the planning commission last night. Stu spoke with Lucy regarding the "phantom bedrooms".
 - Stu brought up the issue regarding traffic but because there is a statement of "no traffic problem" the city doesn't have any basis to require the developer to do further study.
 - The project was approved with no changes.
 - Safeway is supposed to be coming out with their new proposal June 13th, meeting with the neighbors on the 19th. We will be co-hosting the meeting on the 19th.
 - Safeway would like to have a copy of the sign up sheet for this meeting. Discussion regarding issues of the sign up sheet and how to resolve it. Annette suggests that RCPC and CIMA speak jointly to Brunner and emphasize that the list is proprietary.

Board enters executive session at 10:03

(Stu recused himself at 10:22...left the room and closed the door)

Executive session ended at 10:30 (moved by Annette, seconded by Ellen).

Item 11: July agenda items

To be emailed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Katy Taylor, RCPC secretary.

Time Allocated: 3 hours 30 minutes

Actual Time: 3 hours 15 minutes

Online Polls for month of June:

Motion by Annette Floystrup, seconded by Katy Taylor, that classified advertising rate for the Rockridge News be increased from \$20 per month to \$22 per month for a 36-word message, and that the annual subscription rate for the Rockridge News be increased from \$20 to \$22.

Results: 4 votes for increasing the rates, no votes for keeping the rates as they are, no abstentions. The motion did not pass, lacking the required votes.