

**Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association
Steering Committee Meeting
February 6, 2007**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Ken Kruszka.

Minutes: Ken asked for approval of previous minutes. Steve Suacci said that he would like to re-write the Quality of Life part of the minutes and would email them to the secretary. The minutes didn't capture quite what Steve was trying to say. Ken said that we would look at the minutes by email and approve at our next meeting.

Marilyn Amini asked that we address the question of withdrawal from CSFN and the issues brought forward by Housing & Growth Committee first on the agenda, since there are many neighbors who are attending this meeting just for those issues. She made a motion to that effect. Emeric seconded the motion. There were 5 yes votes and 7 no votes, so the motion did not carry.

President's Report: Muni track replacement will occur again at Ulloa and West Portal. Part of Ulloa will be blocked over the next couple of weekends. Ken spoke with Melisa West (PR for Verizon) about the Verizon antenna to be placed on top of the Barbagelata building. She will send Ken more information and he will pass that out to everyone. Ken will probably ask this issue to go to one of the committees. Verizon will have a community meeting. When she provides dates and details, Ken will pass that information along to everyone. West Portal Public Library grand re-opening is February 10th 1:00 to 4:00 PM. The Mayor, District 7 Supervisor, and City Librarian will be there. It's an opportunity to see the positive things that are happening in West Portal.

We are approaching our annual membership drive. We are looking for any and all ideas on what we can do to increase membership and make sure everyone is represented appropriately and can participate as much as they want to. We are in a budgeting phase and will soon develop a budget. San Francisco Beautiful will be giving grants to community groups that might be appropriate for landscaping around the West Portal tunnel. Ken suggested the Quality of Life take the flyer and address the issue. Ken asked for a vote on the "Working Process" that he sent out via email. Marilyn made a motion to defer addressing that issue because it contradicts Roberts Rules by suggesting votes by email and she just got the details of the process the previous day. Rae seconded the motion. The motion passed 10 yes and 2 opposed. Howard Strassner suggested that the process change might involve a change to the bylaws and would need to be addressed at the (May) general membership meeting. Ken said that the committee structure would have to be approved by the Steering Committee. The committees are: 1) Community Education 2) Quality of Life 3) Business on the Avenue 4) Schools 5) Housing & Growth. Eileen Fanelli moved that we approve the committee structure. Mary Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed 14 yes 0 no. Ken asked if any of the committees want to determine if GWPNA should take a position on the issue of the central subway which was raised in an email. Additionally, there's a report of holes appearing in water pipes and gas pipes on 15th Avenue. As there were no committees volunteering to address these two issues, Ken suggested that we form a new committee. Ken asked for Steering Committee members to contact him after the meeting if they are interested in addressing these two issues so that a new committee might be formed to address these issues by next meeting. Ken got an email from Stephanie John saying that there are an inordinate number of holes in water pipes and gas pipes due to electrical ground current caused by Muni. CBS 5 ran a story on yesterday's 6 o'clock news outlining this under a CBS investigates. Muni is denying responsibility. Mary Burns, as the District 7 representative to MTA Citizens Advisory Council, will bring the issue up at a Muni/DPT meeting scheduled for two weeks from Thursday.

Solar Power Infrastructure

Stan Kaufman is Chair of the Laguna Honda Association. A number of members of his organization are currently investigating putting solar power (electrical generation) on their homes. They've "run the numbers" and the results look very good. There are some programs that provide discounts for quantity installations. If you get a certain number of houses in the same geographical region, everyone saves quite a bit of money. Stan would like a GWPNA committee to address this issue so that it is available to a larger number of people.

Motion to Consider Withdrawal from CSFN in Executive Session

Howard Strassner made a motion that the Steering Committee discuss this issue in executive session. Howard stated that this issue should not be discussed in a "broad open thing". It's a very special, sensitive issue that should be discussed in executive session of the Steering Committee. The implications of this would be that the Steering Committee members would stay and everyone else would leave until after the Steering Committee hears the issue and decides. Stan Kaufman seconded the motion. Several people objected to excluding non-Steering Committee members. Stan Kaufman suggested that we might listen to members and then go into executive session. Judy Berkowitz said that Robert's Rules allow a vote to be taken in executive session, but that public testimony should be allowed. Howard rephrased his motions to say that we would take some information and then retire for final discussion in executive session. The vote was 14 yes 5 opposed. Ken moved the item to the end of the agenda.

Committee Reports:

Community Education: No report.

Quality of Life: Steve reported that they are in the very early stages of developing a "resource card". The committee will continue the discussion via email

Housing & Growth: Ardenwood development site on 15th Avenue. The owners are selling portions of their property. The committee recommends that GWPNA send a letter to the Planning Department generally supporting the plan, but asking for some traffic mitigation and that the developer build 10 homes instead of 8. The full motion is attached. The committee is concerned about making things more energy efficient, affordable, and a little more care taken to traffic conditions. A neighbor suggested that the street is narrow and has traffic problems now and suggested widening the street. Tim Colen said that the Planning Department would not allow widening the street. Eileen Fanellie made a motion to send a letter of support as drafted by the committee to the Planning Department. Carolyn Klemeyer complimented the committee and thanked them for addressing this project early on in its development. She was encouraged by the fact that the developer responded to the committee's suggestions. A neighbor noted that August 28, 2006 there was a meeting with the developer and Supervisor Sean Elsbernd with about 40 people who live directly across the street from the proposed project, and they were reluctant and concerned with 8 homes and that they wouldn't support 10 homes squeezed in. Stan Kaufman commented that anyone who lives in this geographical area who is interested and concerned about this topic can join GWPNA and participate in the creation of these recommendations at the point they are being discussed and that is the time for input and not at the point the recommendation is being made is coming up for a vote. The motion was passed 11 yes and 7 no.

Mary introduced a second issue that the committee addressed. They recommend that GWPNA send a letter to the Planning Department supporting the Market/Octavia Plan as it is being presented to the Planning Commission. That recommendation is

attached. Mary wanted to make one comment about the neighborhood alert that was sent out, on the last page of that, the paragraphs at the top were written by her . She sent those paragraphs to Supervisor Elsbernd. She asked if it was a fair and correct explanation of what the new planning code and zoning code would do. Supervisor Elsbernd said absolutely – that is correct. This is not going to affect West Portal. West Portal is not the target for these types of high-density developments. Mary made a motion for GWPNA to send the letter to the Planning Department. Howard Strassner seconded the motion. Rae Doyle questioned why GWPNA would address an issue that relates to an area outside of the Greater West Portal area. One of the neighbors proposed that we include language in our letter that in no way do we want this plan to apply to West Portal. Mary accepted that as a friendly amendment. The letter will be sent to the Planning Department in support of the Hayes Valley Association and their desire to have the Market/Octavia Plan passed. Language will be added to express the idea that GWPNA would not want any part of this plan to apply to the West Portal area. The motion passed 11 yes votes and 6 no votes.

Mary asked that if anyone else wants to join the volunteer effort addressing these issues, please join us. She made the point that people should contribute their opinions when the issues are being discussed in committee, not to wait until when we are about to take a vote.

Business on the Avenue: No report

Schools: Fred Martin asked Will Lucy, Principal of West Portal School to do a count on the number of students who live in the West Portal area and how many come from outside. Fred asked people who are interested in the subject to see him about getting involved with the committee. The question is “do the residents of the neighborhood have an adequate opportunity to send their kids to the West Portal school.”

Connecting Citywide: No report.

Finance: No report.

Membership: No report.

Laguna Honda: No report.

Motion to Withdraw from Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods (CSFN) Organization:

The proposal is to withdraw from CSFN for one year. At the end of that time, GWPNA would evaluate if CSFN has made progress towards reform of its processes and procedures and come back to planet earth. The details of his proposal are attached. It contains a list of points of why we should withdraw. Tim's major argument is that CSFN actions do not correspond with GWPNA's position on issues and that there are too many "emergency actions" voted upon. That CSFN has become known as the pre-eminent NIMBY organization in San Francisco.

Opposes supportive housing for the homeless.

Opposes first time homeowner buyer assistance.

Opposes housing for low-income seniors.

Opposes the bicycle plan.

Opposes the Natural Areas Program.

Tim bets \$20 that delegates to CSFN do not have to report to Steering Committees.

In the 5 years that Tim has been going to meetings he's only made about 2 votes.

Rae Doyle responded to the allegations that Tim made. The first question she asked was how could Tim make these allegations since he has attended only two meetings in the past year. CSFN:

Has never discussed the bicycle plan and therefore never opposed it.

They've never opposed school bonds.

They've never opposed senior housing.

They've never opposed Better Neighborhood Plan.

Ken said that Rae's time is up. Bud Wilson objected that the material that Ken sent to people said they would allowed 5 minutes for their presentation.

Bert said that in the April 2005 Board of Supervisor's meeting there was a question of the bicycle plan exemption from assessing the environmental impact of the plan. There was apparent support by CSFN to demanding an EIR for the bicycle plan. This will cost the City millions of dollars and delay the bicycle plan for years. The president of the Jordan Park Association said the developer of the Coronet Theater project had no plans for senior housing. Judy Berkowitz said that because there was inadequate parking for the conference center and the associated offices, CSFN opposed the project. There was 70,000 square feet of offices with 26 parking spaces. CSFN supported the 150 units of housing. One of the neighbors asked if GWPNA withdraws from the umbrella organization don't we give up influence?

Ken asked if any GWPNA member, not a Steering Committee member, would like to voice their concerns about this issue.

Bruce Engle asked why the Steering Committee would go into executive session to vote on this issue. What is secretive that we'd have to hide. He thinks it's the wrong thing to do. Second, if you're not happy with the positions that CSFN takes, it seems to him that withdrawing is the wrong thing to do. Then we'd have no influence over what CSFN does and it seems to him that we'd want a voice in what they do.

Judy said that Tim has never brought these issues up to CSFN, he is just attacking the organization unfairly and not being truthful about the issues. Judy stated some of the positive things that CSFN does:

They sit on the Public Safety CAC with the police.
They have two charter amendments that are going on the next ballot.
They sit on the Transit Effectiveness Project.
They sit on and are chair of the Library CAC.
They work with San Francisco Tomorrow (SFT).
They are represented on the Water and Sewer (PUC).
They were crucial in writing the pre-ap for Discretionary Reviews (DR) with the Planning Department.
They worked on the Sunshine amendments.
They are doing the Ethics Commission.
They were the genesis of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services.
They meet with the Mayor each month.
They negotiated with SF GTV and Supervisor Peskin to keep channel 26 and streaming video on the air when they pulled the plug.
They work closely with Supervisor Elsbernd.

CSFN never opposed the Natural Areas Program and never proposed to de-fund it.
They re-wrote large portions of the Housing Element to revise it. As soon as it was revised, CSFN withdrew from the law suit.
The Prop A water bond
CSFN never took a position on the school bonds Prop A.

Bud Wilson: There is a mechanism in CSFN that the position of individual organization can be recorded in the minutes if they disagree with the majority position. CSFN was one of the principle opponents to the freeway on 19th Avenue. Without their support, the freeway would not have been stopped.
CSFN gave GWPNA a letter of support to oppose 300 Ulloa.
There's strength in numbers. It enhances our position as a neighborhood association to give us a better line to city hall.
Mayor Newsom has selected CSFN as the conduit to communicate with neighborhood organizations in the city. Over 50 of the city's neighborhood organizations belong to CSFN. Fred Martin asked Bud if there is a way that we could suggest that there's a need for a clearer line of communication and a responsive process that better meets the current objections and makes it possible. Bud answered yes.

Tim said that in his five years he's only voted on two issues which he had time to get back to the Steering Committee and get a consensus on. Very often issues are dealt with on an emergency basis.

Ken asked if there is a second to Tim's motion. Bert seconded the motion.

Ken counted the votes as 7 yes 8 opposed. He counted opposed a second time and counted 7. Ken voted yes to break the tie. Marilyn asked for a roll-call vote. The roll-call vote was 8 yes and 9 no.

Details of the count:

Amini N
Basuino N
Bost N
Burns Y
Colen Y
Doyle N
Hill Y
Johnson Y
Kalman N
Kaufman Y
Klemyer N
Martin N
Shepard N
Straassner Y
Suacci Y
Tarantola Y
Wilson N

Fred Martin made a motion that at our next meeting we re-consider this issue and determine if there's a way to improve the situation with CSFN. No vote was taken.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 PM

Steering Committee Member		Present	Absent
Marilyn	Amini	x	
Joe	Basuino	x	
Sheila	Bost	x	
Mary	Burns	x	
Tim	Colen	x	
Rae	Doyle	x	
Eileen	Fanelli	x	
Bert	Hill	x	
Helen	Johnson	x	
Emeric	Kalman	x	
Stan	Kaufman	x	
Carolyn	Klemeyer	x	
Ken	Kruszka	x	
Fred	Martin	x	
Helen	Naish		x
Chris	Nunes		x
Chris	Radich		x
Avrum	Shepard	x	
Howard	Strassner	x	
Steve	Suacci	x	
Karen	Tarentola	x	
Bud	Wilson	x	

Guests:

Harry	Aleo
Judith	Berkowitz
Charles	Burns
Eric	Castongia
Jacob	Delinsky
Amy	Edgerley
Bruce	Engle
Gary	Frank
Barbara	Goodyear
Joseph	Grimaldi
Tia	Grimaldi
Eddie	Huang
Rohanna	Iber
John	Lehane
Jan	Leja
John	Lockly
May	Mason
R.H.	McVey
Tom	Muhawieh
Brenna	Murphy
Elizabeth	Price
Terry	Roach
Ed	Shannan
Patty	Shannan
Arnie	Thompson
Rich	Worner
Bruno	Zanbaun