Minutes of the monthly NW Neighborhood Association Meeting, Sept 8th, 2007 Northwest Neighborhood Center.

Attendance

Armando Vargas, Kara Curtis (TPD), Dan Roberts (TPD), John Dalhstrand, Karin Uhlich (Ward III Councilmember), Jennifer Gonzalez (NWN Center/Mansfield Park), Dan Dorsey, Hannah Soreng, Martha Retallick (El Cortez NA), James B RAy and Robert C Young (Intrl School of Tucson). (Katherine Foster made a cameo appearance because she was on her way to a memorial service.)

Opening

Armando Vargas, president, opened the meeting at 1:05 PM.

Neighborhood Watch & TPD

Armando said we gathered only six signatures (spread throughout the whole Neighborhood) total at National Night Out to restart the Neighborhood Watch Program. There were not enough signatures for any one block to start the program (51% of households per block must sign up) Kara Curtis from TPD who administers the program suggested that all it takes to get an official Neighborhood Watch sign up and to start the program is for one "block leader" to independently knock on doors on his or her block and get the required signatures. Dan said he was working to do that on his block since it is a gateway block into the neighborhood and several other neighborhood members expressed interest also. Kara provided more information and there was more discussion on the Neighborhood Watch program.

Officer Dan Roberts then gave us the crime statistics for Aug 4th - Sept 4th and passed the official TPD log around for viewing. He said overall crime in the NW boundaries had actually gone down from the previous month. He said the new rookies have hit the streets, and often there are more cops around than what people realize when plainclothes officers and bike cops are factored in. Several people raised concerns about the usual issues - drug houses, illegal parking on the street and easements, tall grass and lawns not kept up, etc. Officer Roberts and Kara replied to these concerns.

Karin Uhlich, Ward III

Karin Uhlich, our city council person, spoke next. She said NW is not eligible to participate in the new NPZ program to mitigate "mini dorms" in neighborhoods, but several neighborhoods like Feldman's to the south would be. She mentioned several new city ordinances that have been passed.

- The first is that any building or residence that is at least 45 years old or built before 1953 goes through a special review before it can be torn down or before a demolition permit can be issued.
- The second ordinance is a new parking violation ordinance. Basically, a vehicle cannot be parked outside the boundaries of a property (including street parking) that the owner of the vehicle does not own or live in the building on that property. Officer Roberts said that any vehicle that appears to be abandoned and parked on a street could be towed after a sticker gives a warning for a minimum of 48 hours.

National Night Our Review

Next we talked about National Night Out and how it could be improved. Dan suggested to block off the street and make it into a block party. Martha suggested better publicity. There were several other suggestions.

Bronx Wash Charrette Design Session

Armando and Dan then gave a report on the Bronx Wash Charrette Design Session held August 16th in collaboration with Katie Gannon and the Drachman Institute. The brief summary is that

the entire wash and both sides of Linden are in the 100 year flood plain. It is probably out of the question to do anything in the wash itself, but Katie seemed hopeful that we could get a street width variance to put small bumpouts on each side of Linden with landscaping and make each side one way traffic. Also, the railing and posts and wash itself could be painted and decorated. She seemed hopeful also that some sort of entry Neighborhood statement could still happen at both ends of the wash. Also, a pedestrian bridge over the wash at 5th Ave. to link the walkways on both sides could be done.

International School of Tucson

The last item on the agenda was a report by Robert Young, head master of the new International School at the site of the former VFW Hall at 1st and Lester, and now also at the former Grand Stop #4 Market and the complex to the east of it across the street from the former VFW. With 73 students (now just K-2nd grade), the school is a full language immersion independent private school serving mostly wealthier clients who can afford the fees. The International School is a worldwide program. It is currently licensed as a childcare facility and it will be applying for a variance to become an educational institution next year. There was discussion and questions on the school and about education in general. People noted how much the area had "cleaned up" since the Grand Stop #4 had closed and this institution had taken its place.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at about 3 PM.

notes taken by acting Secretary Dan Dorsey.