

# VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## Public Meeting

May 9, 2007

7:00 p.m.

Four Corners Room/Community Center

### PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Officer Brian Parsley addressed us:

- We have had some laundry issues with clothes being stolen. Don't leave your laundry unattended for hours at a time. The Village is relatively open and people can come through and scavenge for clothes.
- As always, parking is a problem. There have been some problems with the 2 hour zones in front of the community center. From now on they are going to really enforce the 2 hour limits. The community center has lots of different classes and there is never enough parking.

### COMMUNITY NEWS

Mandi Bozart, a Resident Advisor, gave us the community announcements.

- We had a great Health and Wellness Fair! It was well attended and very successful.
- There is a kids activity time in FRC room every Tuesday at 4:30 pm. There are art activities and a story time for the children.
- Family Friday is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month. A movie is shown and pizza is sold for \$1 per slice.
- The Village yard sale will be on June 16.
- There is an open mike night with singing (piano accompaniment provided) on the last Friday of every month.
- Ocean View Elementary School is hosting a walk-a-thon this Saturday from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. The kids are raising money for computers for the library, so please come out and support them!

### CABLE TV UPDATE

Nancy Jurich, Director-Administrative and Business Services for Residential & Student Services Programming, gave us an update on the cable TV issue:

- The VRA board sent a letter to Peter Hoenig in March recommending that any cable service be not mandatory.
- Tavie Tipton, Village Manager, is working with a group of residents to create a cable channel line-up.

- Nancy is submitting a proposal recommending that cable service not be mandatory.
- Residents cannot use Comcast after June 30<sup>th</sup>. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Housing and Dining will connect every resident in the Village to pre-defined cable lineup. Any time up to 15<sup>th</sup> of July, residents can opt-out for next month.
- According to the proposal, Financial Aid would consider this a utility and the cost would be included in students' financial aid packets.
- The cost will probably be under \$15 per month.
- They are still working on a process that will allow premium channels for those who want it. Eventually, they are hoping that the sign-up process will be on-line.
- There is an anticipated \$25 fee for reconnecting cable service after it has been disconnected.
- After July 1<sup>st</sup>, the only option available will be cable TV channels that Housing & Dining provides.
- Residents will need to return any Comcast boxes that they have.
- When a new resident comes in, the cleaning/maintenance staff will connect the cable service.
- Residents will be able to opt out of cable service at any time.
- This plan has not yet been approved.

## VILLAGE PLANNING MANIFESTO

Brad Flamm, a Village resident and UCB Visiting Scholar, led a discussion about construction, planning, and development in the Village:

Two weeks ago, Village residents had a meeting with a representative from the architecture firm responsible for creating the plans for the buildings that will replace Section A from 10<sup>th</sup> street to San Pablo. He didn't have any information about what would be built on 10<sup>th</sup> street to Jackson.

Residents are concerned about the lack of a cohesive plan. We want to come up with a statement of principles that residents would like to make clear at this point to the University and to the city council. Possibilities for principles to include are:

- 1) **Retain the central location of key community facilities**  
 The existing Community Center, Village Offices, and sports and playground facilities have always been located within the heart of the village and they have been welcome and important resources for village residents. With the proposed sale of university property between Jackson and 10<sup>th</sup> Street, these vital community assets will, at best, be located adjacent to, but not within, the village. Because the VRA opposes conversion of the Gill Tract to non-agricultural uses (see point 6 below), we can only support the renovation or reconstruction of these community facilities in their current location.
  - Comment: If you go up Jackson St. to the Gill Tract, it isn't really any further from the center of the Village than the existing Community Center location.

2) **Honor the village's historic past by preserving a Section A building**

With respect for the village's past and appreciation for the affordable housing and sense of history and place that Section A buildings have given generations of students and their families, we strongly support the preservation, renovation, and reuse of at least one of the original structures. Building 9 is an excellent choice for preservation with its prominent location at the corner of Jackson and Monroe Streets.

- Comment: We should preserve a piece of Section A to commemorate our history, the national effort for the war, and women's working rights.
- Comment: Why not keep ALL of Section A?
- Response: That would be nice, but it just isn't going to happen. We need to be realistic about it.
- Comment: Why use this valuable land as a museum? Couldn't we do something better with the land? Build a better study center, for example?
- Response: Perhaps we could use it as a resource for fundraising. For many people it has sentimental value. We could renovate it for community purposes, historical purposes, and fundraising purposes.

3) **Ensure family student housing is affordable**

With the demolition of Section A housing, the lowest cost housing option for students with families in the University Village, Albany will rise from \$\_\_\_ to \$1,360. The University of California has committed itself to a Master Plan which aims "to provide decent, affordable and convenient housing and related facilities for University students with families." Final plans for the development of land within the present boundaries of the University Village, Albany must honor the university's commitment to "use property which is not needed for University uses to generate income to subsidize the housing."

4) **Promote and ensure a culture of good neighbors**

New businesses and residents will be moving into buildings and homes on land that was formerly village property. It is important that the university work to preserve a community focus for non-university uses of village property. Whole Foods and other businesses must have prominent and welcoming entrances as close to village residences as possible and accommodate the shopping and service needs of student families on tight budgets. Traffic planning should route cars and delivery trucks in a way that minimizes impact on the village. Pedestrian and bicycle access to and through former village property should be made a priority. And Codornices creek between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and San Pablo should be cared for in ways that reflect good environmental stewardship and pedestrian access along the creek should be extended to San Pablo.

5) **Include village residents in the planning process in a meaningful way**

The planning process for these final steps of the reconstruction of UVA must be inclusive of village residents and involve them regularly

throughout the process, not just as reviewers of decisions already taken. Decision criteria should be explicit, the process should be transparent, and opportunities for participation should be frequent and substantive.

- Comment: We should ask to be included every week/every month in a meeting with the architect.
- Comment: In addition to this list of principles, we should create a drawing representing how we would like to see the Village development take place. We could use the architecture program to help us achieve this. Then we will be able to better communicate our ideas about how this area should be developed.

6) **Preserve the Gill Tract as open, agricultural space**

Residents of the University Village, Albany have consistently voiced their support for preserving the Gill Tract as an open, agricultural property.

Prepared by:  
Maile Urbancic  
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