

RHN Retreat
Saturday, August 1, 2015 @ 11:30am

Russian Hill Neighbors is a voice for residents and merchants to preserve and advance neighborhood character and quality of life through collaboration, volunteerism, and celebration of community.

Attendees

Greg Carr, Tim Covington, Phoebe Douglass, Par Hanji, Emily Harrold, Joyce Kucharvy, Mike Moylan, Tina Moylan, Laurie Petipas, Carol Ann Rogers, Sarah Taber, Steve Taber

Tina called the meeting to order at 11:27am.

Committee Reports

- Sarah (DZLU)
 - Verizon adding antennae to poles around the neighborhood remains a significant issue. Mike, please add a line to the next e-blast about writing your supervisor if you are upset about this issue. We need to make our voices heard. Tina: Sarah, please send verbiage about this issue to include in letters to supervisors.
 - Sarah Christensen's office secured funding to repair Macondray Lane stairs. Carol Ann: we could organize a celebration when the stairs are completed.

- Mike (Communications)
 - The next e-blast is going out early during the wee of August 3. Please send updates immediately.
 - National Night Out is Tuesday night, August 4. RHN made a donation and we will have a table present. Thanks to the volunteers coming! Expect a great time for families with fire engines, police, CHP, McGruff the Crime Dog, etc.

- Tina (President)

The LWV / RHN candidate debate will take place at Francisco Middle School (2190 Powell Street) on Thursday, October 1 at 6:30pm. It will be filmed and Cheryl Jennings from ABC7 will moderate. We will need twelve volunteers from RHN.

- Steve (Transportation)

The Central Subway extension is now included in SFMTA's 20-year capital plan. By the end of the year, we would like the project to be included in the county transportation plan.

- Emily (Families w/Children)
 - The SFPD / RHN event for kids is on track for Saturday, September 19 at Helen Wills Park. Time TBC (considering the afternoon, when kids have finished fall sports games). More details to follow, as well as requests for help at the event.
 - The event with Jennifer Bertman, author of 'Book Scavenger', the new middle-grade book set in the Russian Hill area, is set for Saturday, November 21 at the North Beach Library. 4th-8th graders are ideal for the presentation, but everyone is welcome! RHN, SF Public Library, and the Russian Hill Bookstore will co-sponsor the event. More details to come.

RETREAT TOPICS

1. Families with Children

- San Francisco is experiencing a flight of families with young children. Key concerns are affordable housing, access to quality public schools, and child care options.
- Helping to maintain a diverse community, inclusive of families with children, is important. What can RHN do? 1) Share information about resources for families and 2) advocate for specific policy changes to support families, which align with our residents' interests.

Brainstorming:

- Carol Ann: let's conduct a survey to find out the pain points of families in the neighborhood. Why do they feel they need to move away? What, specifically, do they believe needs to change in order for them to stay and raise their families here?
- Tina: For those families who moved away, what were their concerns, and were they really met in other locations?
- We can send an email survey to the Russian Hill voter email addresses we have and also conduct in-depth interviews for more detailed stories.
- Steve: there is a significant movement to update the SF Public Schools lottery system so families may be more likely to gain admission to the public school(s) in their neighborhood. We should find out the latest.
- Greg C.: the SF Planning Department is an opportunity to make change. Currently they are not supportive of combining units to create a larger habitable space. But, if retaining families become a priority for the city, the Planning Department could institute policies or a special review processes to make combining units, building in-law apartments, etc. easier from a permit perspective. Supervisor Christensen is already supportive of this idea.
- Emily: once we collect data from Russian Hill families about why they feel they need to leave San Francisco and what would need to change in order for them to stay, we can organize a panel discussion for the community – inviting city leaders to respond to the residents' concerns and 'convince' families to stay in the city. Agree with the group we should only organize this panel discussion once we have collected informative data and have specific action items to request.
- Next step: Emily will put together a proposal for this families survey and share it with the board prior to the September meeting.

2. Social

The question brought to the group was how to use social events to attract new members, especially younger people.

- We had a short discussion about giving RHN a membership card that they could use for discounts with RH merchants. No resolution on the card, but it was considered to be a good idea. Par will talk to Duncan to see if we can get merchants to offer a discount during an event. Par also mentioned the social committee was looking into a pub crawl and also a Polk Street walk during things like Halloween.
- Our next cheers night is tentatively at Tonic, which draws a younger crowd. We agreed that we would offer people a free beer if they joined RHN that night. To do this, the person organizing this would need a way to get paid memberships at the bar, and a list of the current membership. Joyce will work with Adam on this.
- We need to put together talking points of why someone—especially someone that is younger—should be part of RHN.

- We could create subgroups and events that appeal to a younger audience
- We need to publicize RHN events on things like NextDoor. Joyce will post events there and attempt to also tweet.

The next RHN Board Meeting will take place on Monday, September 14 at Tim's home. Tina and Mike will co-host.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.

(Notes taken by Emily Harrold, Secretary)