

Russian Hill Neighbors Board Meeting
Home of Tina and Mike Moylan
Monday, November 6, 2017

Attendance

- **Attended:** Bob Bluhm, Lorena Calcagni, Gregg Carr, Phoebe Douglass, Helen Doyle, Al Greening, Tracey Katayama, Judy Junghans, Joyce Kucharvy, Mike Moylan, Monique Olivier, Laurie Petipas, Greg Polchow, Lucretia Rauh, Jovanne Reilly

- **Absent:** Sarah Abbott, Richard Cardello, Par Hanji, Traci Jaquier, Matthew Mansfield, Tina Moylan, Carol Ann Rogers, Julia Strzesieski, Stephen Taber, Christine Welland

Thank you to Tina and Mike for hosting the Board meeting and to Al for co-hosting and providing a delicious Thai dinner.

Meeting Called to Order at 7:00pm

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson.

Executive Committee Reports

- **Chairperson's Report**

The Executive Committee met on October 26, 2017 and discussed the following:

- Russian Hill Safety Summit
 - Attendees: The maximum capacity for the Norwegian Seaman's Church is 100 people. So far, 70 people have RSVP'd that they will attend. If 100 people reply that they will be attending, no new invitations will be sent out. A Paperless Post reminder will be sent to those who said they will attend.
 - Moderator: Retired SFPD Deputy Chief Jim Dudley will moderate. [Note: Paul Henderson will be the keynote speaker at the RHN annual meeting in April]
 - Welcome Remarks: Tina will do the welcome remarks, introduce panel members and give brief outline of meeting.
 - Focus: On staying safe in the neighborhood.
 - Sign-In Sheet: We will need sign-in sheets and volunteers to help at door. Monique volunteered to do this.
 - Refreshments: Water for attendees and panelists.
 - Nameplates: Richard Cardello will make nameplates for speakers.
 - Executive Committee members should be at the venue at 5:30pm.
 - We should give the RHN brochure to people who ask about membership at the event.
 - Security cameras as a safety measure will be discussed.

- Meeting with Aaron Peskin: The Vice President and the Chair of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee recently met with Supervisor Peskin and discussed the following:

- Peskin wants to shine a light onto process of the Planning Department. He feels that the Planning Department in simplifying and streamlining its methods, is creating a one size fits all approach, some of which may not fit needs of Russian Hill. For example, he feels that curb bulb-outs are not appropriate for many District 3 neighborhoods.
 - Peskin stated that he is not against new development, but he is against railroading new buildings in a dense, historic area like Russian Hill
 - Peskin stated that if a survey shows that 50% + 1 of local residents want street sweeping, he will be behind it. The Chairs of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee and the Social Committee are preparing a street sweeping survey to be sent to RHN members.
 - Downtown Streets is an organization that uses homeless and dysfunctional people to do street sweeping, and could be useful to help clean up Russian Hill.
 - Peskin said that a Community Benefits District could also be useful to clean up Polk Street. The boundaries of existing CBDs do not extend to Russian Hill.
 - Peskin will not be attending the Safety Summit on November 8, but his aide Lee Hepner will attend in his place.
 - Peskin was given a copy of the DZLU Land Use Principles.
 - Peskin is open to meeting with RHN leadership at least once a year.
- Whole Foods 365 at Jackson and Polk: The Vice President and the Chair of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee met with Whole Foods the upcoming community meeting on October 17th. At the meeting, Whole Foods said that it will work to promote small local merchants.
 - Tour Bus Operators: Recently SFMTA representatives, Sunny Angulo of Supervisor Peskin's office, Steve Taber, Carol Ann and certain neighbors on Jones Street met regarding the tour buses and other vehicles that have become stuck or had accidents on Jones Street between Green and Filbert Streets. There are currently approximately 60 signs prohibiting vehicles with eight or more passengers on Russian Hill as well as large heavy trucks. The SFMTA will review this signage to determine if it is old or faded, and is in process of adding more signage, including the possibility of a lighted sign at Columbus and Jones. The SFMTA has contacted Waze and Google about promoting Columbus Street as a recommended route instead of Jones Street. The SFMTA will also consider reviewing neighborhood petitions to make Jones one-way downhill for at least two blocks.
 - Reciprocal Organizational Memberships: Only one local organization (the senior center at the end of Polk Street) has paid to become a member of RHN. RHN is member of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers and North Beach Neighbors ("NBN"), but they do not send us any monthly newsletters or pay to become members of RHN. The Chair of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee spoke to NBN about joining RHN. We should request newsletters from organizations of which RHN is a member. We could create a separate membership category for such local organizations and could send a special membership letter to them regarding joining RHN. In the future, we could make membership a reciprocal arrangement with no exchange of money.

- November E-Blast: The Vice President would like to have the November e-blast sent after the November Board meeting and it could include photos from Safety Summit and the Polk Street Halloween event. The Executive Committee Letter in the e-blast will include thanks to those who assisted with and attended the Safety Summit, and will discuss membership renewal and the RHN holiday party.
- **Treasurer's Report**
 - Some new members have joined and the Treasurer has sent the Board a list of new members that would like to join RHN committees.
 - RHN received \$2,000 from the company that filmed The Ant movie on Russian Hill in September.
 - There is \$113,000 in total RHN accounts, including 58,000 in restricted reserve accounts and \$31,000 in available funds. Many RHN committees have not spent their annual budgets.
- **Secretary's Report**
 - The Secretary requested approval of the minutes from the October Board Meeting. **Moved, Seconded, Carried:** To approve the October Board minutes prepared by the Secretary.
 - **Consensus:** Board members favor omitting the names of Board members, including those who move and second motions, from Board minutes.

Committee Reports

- **Membership**
 - Volunteers will meet on Saturday, November 11th to stuff envelopes for the membership renewals drive.
- **Neighborhood Improvement**
 - There will be a neighborhood sweep 9-11am on November 18th. Volunteers will meet at Washington Square and work westward. DPW will provide cleaning materials.
- **Social**
 - The Holiday Party will be held on Sunday, December 3rd, 2-5pm, at Joyce Kucharvy's home. Volunteers are needed to man the front door to help with food prep and cleanup.
- **DZLU**

- 2465 Van Ness at Union Project: A new housing complex is proposed to be built at 2465 Van Ness Street, on the site of a former gas station. This project is not within RHN boundaries (it is directly across the street) but the issue of parking could impact Russian Hill. Currently, only 0.5 parking spots are allowed per unit, but the developer would like this increased to 0.75 parking spots per unit. The Vice President drafted a letter supporting a 0.75 parking ratio. The issue of parking will be heard at a Planning Commission hearing scheduled for December 14. **Moved, Seconded, Carried:** To approve the draft letter in favor of the 0.75 parking ratio.
- Whole Foods 365 Project at Polk and Jackson: Opponents (mainly middle Polk merchants) argue that housing with mixed-use would be a better use for this site, however no housing project is currently being proposed for this location. The Middle Polk Neighborhood Association is organizing a campaign to oppose the 365 store project in favor of housing and will be holding a meeting on November 7th. The Van Ness Corridor Council has not taken a position yet. (NOTE: at its monthly meeting on November 7th, VNCNC voted to oppose the Whole Foods 365 project, with RHN voting against the majority.) The Coalition for SF Housing also opposing Whole Foods 365 store. Whole Foods needs a conditional use permit from the Planning Commission to operate on this site because a formula retail grocery store is not allowed. The Planning Commission will decide whether to issue the conditional use permit at its meeting on December 7th. **Consensus:** No new survey regarding the Whole Foods 365 store is necessary. It would be better to encourage residents (and merchants) that favor the project to attend the December 7th meeting.
 - The Vice President has drafted a new letter supporting the project. **Moved, Seconded, Carried:** To approve the draft letter in support of the Whole Foods 365 store at this location.
 - In the e-blast, we should advise RHN members of the December 7th Planning Commission meeting and tell them to attend and/or send letters.
 - If RHN wants to advocate for Whole Foods it will need a careful strategy to show that this is “necessary and desirable for the neighborhood”. The Communications and Marketing Chairperson recommended that some RHN groups meet to strategize how to promote the Whole Foods 365 store.
- 982 Green Street: The mandatory discretionary review hearing regarding renovations made to a historic residential building without the necessary permits has been rescheduled to the end of November.
- Wireless Antenna at 2201 Leavenworth (at Greenwich): This matter is going to the Board of Appeals on December 13.
- 915 North Point (Jamestown): A four-story, 37-unit residential building is being proposed for this site, which is located across the street from Ghirardelli Square. The project sponsor has been invited to meet with DZLU, as will representatives of concerned neighbors. Per the sponsor, the project falls within the 40 foot height limit, but people are concerned about the scale, shadows and parking issues..

- Land Use & Development Principles: These should be posted on the RHN website and will be shared with government agencies and project sponsors.

Ongoing Business

- Greening of the Broadway Tunnel: DPW has stated that it does not want to undertake the work of planting at the 70x4' space located at the corner of Larkin & Broadway, however Brian Hunt, the new owner of the building located there, and the Friends of the Urban Forest will assist with this. Brian Hunt will do the landscape design. The \$12,000 RHN budget for the greening of Broadway Tunnel will be available to help fund this project.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:04pm

Minutes taken by Monique Olivier, Secretary

Upcoming RHN Events

- Sunday, December 3, 2017 (2-5 pm) – Holiday party at Joyce Kucharvy's home (900 Green Street, #501)
- Monday, December 4, 2017 – Board meeting at Tim Covington's home (1365 Greenwich Street), co-host Helen Doyle