

AUGUST MEETING REPORT

Neighborhood Preservation

Co-chairs of the meeting, Sandra Matteucci Henderson and Patti Francois, stated that the purpose of the meeting was to provide neighborhood leaders with information to enable them to answer their resident's questions about property care, crime safety, disaster preparedness and city council support for their grassroots organizations. We had three awesome speakers that addressed each topic, and a concerned city council candidate, Steve Hoffman, in attendance. (Note several other council candidates, Fred Fowler and Tara Martin-Milius, are already represented within in our membership.)

Public Safety Neighborhood Resource Officer

Many subjects integrate a neighborhood expressed excellently by Officer Tracy Hern when he stated that the deterioration of a neighborhood is in direct correlation to the increase of its crime. He also clarified "solicitation", which generally causes suspicion when solicitors peruse neighborhoods. Credible solicitors will have obtained a *permit* from the city. A religious organization is one of the few he knows that has done so; we should beware. When asked who we should report to, either 911 or the public safety business office, we were told to use our fear instinct and call 911 on that basis.

The non-emergency phone number for the police is 408-730-7100. If you put it on your cell phone contact list, with an underline in front of it, e.g., _police, it will appear at the top of your contact list. Handy, Huh.

Officer Hern spoke about:

- Trees – don't let them block the view between neighbors and burglars
- Transients
- Speeding
- Always lock cars and houses
- Don't ever leave cars running in the driveway
- Install outside night Lights around your house (Available timers can turn them on and off at dusk and dawn)
- Motion sensor lights pointed toward the street
- Interior lights on timers when you are away
- Load your car for vacation inside the garage where no one can see you

- If a solicitor or stranger knocks on your door, don't answer, *but* do let them see that someone is at home
- Don't park cars the same way every day. Move them around, show that you're home
- Have neighbor park his car in your driveway when on vacation

Great crime reducing safety tips were given that we can pass on to our neighborhoods. He was very encouraging about what help is out there for city residents from Public Safety. Residential Security Recommendations are available at: [Crime Prevention Guidelines](#). Some more guidelines are available at [Burglary Basics](#)

Public Safety Neighborhood Preservation Specialist

The neighborhood preservation specialist, Dale Huber, was as helpful by explaining the city code and mediation processes and how code violations are enforced. These departments have a huge job with a small staff due to the present economic downturn. Dale Huber spoke about:

- Zoning codes are the rule
- The Sunnyvale Municipal Code is available on the Internet, Sunnyvale Municipal Code (<http://qcode.us/codes/sunnyvale/>)
- *All* complaints are followed up on without revealing the complainer's name
- Citations are issued in three stages, asking the homeowner or business to correct the problem within by a deadline, [Neighborhood Preservation Enforcement Process](#)
 - 80% correct the problem before the first deadline
 - 19% correct the problem before the second deadline
 - 1% are a problem
- Sunnyvale has a strict sign ordinance. That's what keeps the city looking nice.

SNAP Liaison Officer

Robert Locke, SNAP liaison representative, informed us that SNAP would like to divide the city up into districts for disaster preparedness. Partnering with the existing Neighborhood Associations is a natural for carrying out this idea. Robert will hopefully have more time to speak in a future meeting about integrating SNAP with neighborhoods. Meanwhile, let's all think about how we can integrate SNAP. Perhaps each Neighborhood Association should appoint a SNAP liaison officer.

Wrap-up

There was a great question and answer period with each speaker. In reference to lack of city council support it was agreed that it is not due to the economic cutbacks but to where the council's priorities are placed. Grassroots networking begins with feeling welcome in your neighborhood and results in looking out for each other, thus reducing crime and promoting goodwill. Having social function funds that were limited to a mere \$300 for entire neighborhoods for those purposes cut undermines exactly what a neighborhood association is for. I (Sandra) mentioned how I appealed to the city council via email to no avail. Perhaps they will reconsider once they start to campaign again and realize it is the neighborhoods that elect them! Regardless, we all pledge to continue our neighborhood community effort with or without city council support. We look forward to future quarterly meetings that are as informative and where we can bounce solutions off each other. And thanks to Wayne Amacher for getting SunnyvaleNeighbors computerized!! Wayne's website handling, meeting reminders and making sure we have a chair for each meeting keeps us all on track!

Co-chair, Sandra Matteucci Henderson with Patti Francois and Wayne Amacher