

SBRA Board Minutes – Thursday, August 24, 2023

Home of Alisa Morgenthaler

Attendees:

Elyse Arbour
Daniel Borenstein
Lauren Cole
Laurel Davidson
Marylin Krell
Alisa Morgenthaler
Armen Pandola

- Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm.

Reports

- Minutes approved – The Board approved the minutes from the meeting held on 6/22/23. There was no Board meeting in July 2023.
- Treasurer's Report - \$7,272.14 in bank account as of 8/24/23. The balance is higher than usual because we have started to get money from sponsors and advertisers but have not spent any monies on marketing the AGM yet.
- BCC Meeting on 8/16/23
 - City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto spoke. She was a very good speaker, so we've invited her to speak at our AGM but haven't heard back yet.
 - Homelessness - Encampments are growing again, particularly by the VA which is County land not City land. Barbara Roll has been on the BCC Homelessness Task Force and Armen Pandola has just joined. They can represent SBRA and give updates at future SBRA Board meetings.
- AGM
 - Speaker update – Speakers confirmed so far: 1) Jared Rivera from Karen Bass' office, 2) Assemblywoman Jacqui Irwin, 3) Councilmember Traci Park, 4) Supervisor Lindsay Horvath, 5) City Inspector Bryan Kirkness, 6) SLO Matt Kirk.
 - We invited Congressman Brad Sherman but his office won't confirm until the meeting is close so we decided not to follow up to see if he will speak.
 - We're in touch with Hydee Feldstein Soto (City Attorney) and waiting to hear back from her scheduler. If she is available to speak, we will work her into the schedule.
 - Website – We're updating the website to include the new speakers and to delete old posts from 2021.
 - We'll need to decide next year whether we want to do a website rebuild to allow us to update the website more frequently and without having to pay our webmaster for each revision. The website is currently built on WordPress.

- We'd like to do more of our own (short) articles and updates in our monthly/semi-monthly email blasts which are currently just articles from politicians. Ideally, the articles will also be posted on our website and Facebook. Barbara is working with Marylin on the emails and other communications.
 - Barbara suggested putting in more notes of what we are doing in the newsletter and not just including what the elected officials are doing and resending other emails.
 - There was discussion of using the newsletter to get more people involved and show what we are doing in the community (virtuous circle)
- Ads and sponsors
 - In 2022 we received \$4,650 in advertising and sponsors. Our target for 2023 is \$5,000. As of the start of the meeting we had verbal commitments of \$5,550 but haven't received most of the payments yet.
 - Pam Taylor is tracking the ad payments and the artwork and will let the person who sold the ad know if we are missing payments or artwork so that person can follow up. Pam was not at the meeting so we didn't know how we were doing on collections.
 - We have commitments from most advertisers and sponsors from last year other than Nourmand and maybe Brentwood Mailbox (Gary is following up.) New sponsors include Jemma di Mare (Marylin), StayreadyPT (Lauren), and Caffé Luxxe (Marylin, confirmed after the meeting). New advertisers include Brentwood Wine and Spirits (Barbara), and maybe Chris Stein Iyengar Yoga (Lauren). As of the meeting, we had 7 sponsors, 8 advertisers (w/out Brentwood Mailbox and Skyfall PT which we learned about after the meeting), 1 TBD if they will be an advertiser or sponsor (Tom Safran offered \$250).
- Memberships
 - Last year we had a big shortfall in memberships. In 2021 we got \$3,115 even though the AGM was a Zoom meeting, but in 2022 dues dropped to \$1,185. Our dues target for 2023 is \$2,000.
 - We need to order new dues envelopes since we've changed the dues level.
 - Elyse has offered to deliver envelopes to many of our current members. We need addresses to deliver the envelopes. We had been mailing them with a printed version of our newsletter but now we are switching to an e-newsletter so that isn't an option. We'll ask Melissa to get us a list of all of our current and previous members and Elyse will check to see if they still live in the area.
 - We need other ideas on how to get members to become paid members.
 - We need to draft a letter that goes out with the request for dues and send it to all of the members. The letter should highlight the things we have done over the past year.
 - The Board discussed whether we get the email addresses to the AGM attendees and registrants and follow up with them.
 - The Board discussed whether we can we get AGM registrants to give us their mailing address.
 - The Board discussed when people are paying their dues. We had been thinking that we'd start for the AGM in October. Alisa said that last year we decided the year would be a calendar year.

- We could put the benefactors in the newsletter. BHA does this and gets a lot of higher donations.
 - We should also give people a chance to win something. Last year Vicente foods gave us ten \$10 gift cards that we gave out to new members. We could look at doing a raffle (Alisa said we need to make sure we follow rules for a raffle if we do this.)
 - Laurel will follow up with Vicente Foods to see if we can get gift cards again. They usually give us water for our AGM when it is in person but we don't need it this year.
 - (After the meeting Caffe Luxxe said they would also give gift cards for a free drink that we can use.)
- Transportation Report
 - STAP (Sidewalk and Transit Amenities Program)
 - They will start to replace the current bus shelters on Wilshire with digital shelters in early 2024. It will take 4-5 years to replace all of the shelters.
 - We passed along our feedback to make sure that the shelters are not too bright for residences near Barrington/Wilshire or the small business building on Carmelina. STAP says that the brightness is designed to be ambient light and will not be any brighter than the current shelters. Unlike the shelters today, the digital shelters can have their brightness adjusted remotely.
 - There are two companies who handle the shelters, one for the digital shelters and one for bus benches with no shelters. The companies are responsible for emptying the trash receptacles. If there is a problem with trash collection you can email STAP and there is also a phone number on the bus shelters/benches.
 - Farmers Market parking
 - Lauren is contacting the property owners on the north side of San Vicente between Gretna Green and Carmelina to see whether they will be ok with eliminating the 7 am to 7 pm daily parking restrictions. Many Farmers Market customers are getting parking tickets on Sundays because of the restrictions. Changes would not impact the No Parking 2 am – 6 am for large vehicles.
 - Lauren has spoken with a representative of the two large apartment buildings who very much wants to get rid of the parking restrictions because they don't have enough parking for their units.
 - Elyse gave Lauren a list of property owners for the homes on the block, and Lauren sent letters to them a few days ago. There are 10 houses on the block (1 isn't developed so 9 developed properties) + 2 apartments = 11 owners of developed properties. LADOT needs a petition from 50% of the property owners on the block representing 2/3 of the frontage on the block, so 6/11 needed. Since the 2 apartments are already on board, we need 4 houses in addition to apartments.
 - 5 of the owners of the 9 developed properties do not list mailing addresses that are the same of the properties, so they could be renting out the house or they may just have a financial person managing the trust that owns the house.

New Business

- 11905 Wilshire at Westgate – This is a new apartment building to be built where Lazy Daisy Café and the Vietnamese restaurants used to be with a parking lot on top.
 - Because building multifamily housing is a priority, this and other projects are fast tracked by the City, particularly if they are on transit corridors like Wilshire.
 - This was originally heard by the BCC LUC in fall of 2022 but we didn't have anyone at the meeting because Len Blum has not been well and was not able to participate. When we get new Advisory Board members next year, we will keep an eye out for someone who wants to go to the LUC meetings and Lauren will cover them in the meantime. This project also came up just before the election of the CD 11 City Council seat so it is likely that neither Bonin's staff nor Traci Parks' staff (who hadn't been hired yet) were monitoring the project.
 - The comment period ended 8/21 and we only found out about the project a few weeks' earlier. We were going to do a comment letter but because the project was in the equivalent of an FEIR stage it is unlikely that any changes will be made.
 - Lauren suggested some issues that will also apply to other projects in the area so we can decide on the next project whether we want to work with CD11 and BCC LUC on them.
 - West Wilshire CDO- This was put in place many years ago to improve setbacks and landscaping on Wilshire in order to make the street more attractive and pedestrian friendly. This project had its setbacks waived and we don't know how many street trees will be provided.
 - Parking/bike parking – The State and City are cutting parking requirements. The City allows for vehicle parking to be replaced by bike parking but in this instance the building has proposed 160 bike spaces for 81 apartments and some retail. We would like to know where the building intends to put all of this bike parking and if that number of bikes can't be accommodated, they should supply more vehicle parking.
 - We had this issue at 11719 Wilshire (FedEx building) where they proposed ~100 bike spaces to reduce their parking requirements including many bike spaces on the public right of way. To date those have not been installed but the building is still under construction. In that case, we asked in that case for the developer to provide a map of where the bike parking would go and they could not provide one for the interior spaces.
 - Affordable housing – The City is targeting 20% affordable housing in any new project but this project is only building 15% or 9/81 units. The Board asked why they can't provide 20% given the market rents that they will receive on the rest of the units? It is also possible that having renters of affordable housing on Wilshire will be less likely to have a car.
 - Alley – Neighbors on Goshen behind the project also have raised concerns about using the same alley that they and the Ralphs market uses and has requested that the building not have its setbacks waived. They would prefer that no building is built there. Lauren and Marylin will meet with the neighbors in September to hear their concerns but this project will likely be approved.
 - Future projects – Lauren signed up for notices of new projects going up. One to watch is 11701 Wilshire (NW corner of Barrington and Wilshire) where a huge project of 150+ apartments, and retail and commercial space is proposed. The City has changed its

transportation guidelines to make it harder to argue against projects on the basis of traffic, and Lauren is looking into what we can do in her transportation role on the BCC.

- BCC LUC update
 - Lauren attended the last BCC LUC meeting. The State Senate has introduced two bills (SB4 and SB23) that chip away on local control of housing. Our State Senator Ben Allen voted against both of them but they passed anyway and are now expected to pass the S Assembly (Jacqui Irwin).
 - SB4 allows projects to be fast tracked and CEQA exempt if they are on land owned by a college, church, or university.
 - SB423 – This broadens the Housing Accountability Act that was passed in 2017 that prevents a city or unincorporated part of a county that has not met the requirements to build enough housing from preventing any project that fit within the area's general plan. The 2017 version had an exemption for projects that required Coastal Commission approval and the new bill gets rid of that exemption.
- Film LA
 - The neighborhood had a problem with an independent film production company parking several large production vehicles including Star Waggon on Gretna Green and Gorham on Sunday Aug 13 and Mon Aug 14. Film LA incorrectly gave the company a permit to park at the school but this wasn't possible during the Farmers Market. Film LA failed to give any notice of parking as required 2 business days in advance so no one was able to point out that the Farmers Market was taking place at the time of the permit. The company refused to move their vehicles after the Farmers Market ended either later on Sunday or on Monday.
 - The Board authorized Lauren to write a letter requesting that: a) production vehicles should be parked on the south side of San Vicente whenever possible, not in the neighborhoods; b) Film LA must provide the required notices; c) Brentwood should receive e-notifications of filming as other areas of the City do (Currently, CD11 gets notices and sends it out to many other Brentwood neighborhoods that have had problems with Film LA); and d) there should be a transparent penalty process.
- Franchise Tax Board – Alisa applied to the FTB to resurrect SBRA's tax exempt status. Alisa received a notice that FTB had finished their review and would be sending us a letter soon, so she is hopeful that the status will be reinstated shortly. Once it is, we can apply for the IRS exemption and then apply for charity rates on PayPal and anywhere else they apply.
- Board Slate – The following slate for 2023-24 was approved and will now go the AGM for member approval.
 - President – Lauren Cole
 - Vice President – Elyse Arbour
 - Past President and Secretary – Alisa Morgenthaler
 - Treasurer- Melissa Spagnuolo
 - President Emeritus and Member – Marilyn Krell
 - Member – Daniel Borenstein
 - Member – Susan Hirsch
 - Member – Armando Pandola
 - Member – Barbara Roll

- Member – Pamela Taylor
- Marilyn and Barbara will follow up to get bios and photos for any Board members where they don't have them.
- Advisory Board - This does not require member approval. The current list of the 2023-24 Advisory Board is Bear Allen-Blaine, Adrienne Bacci, Laurel Davidson, Maya Davis, and Amber Jamal. Maya has expressed an interest in working on issues around schools and Brentwood Green and has suggestions for new Advisory Board members.
- We will start doing outreach for more volunteers with our AGM advertising and will have a committee to interview prospective new Advisory Board members. Maya and Amber are former Board members so we will not interview them again. We discussed how we might try to raise awareness for SBRA and encourage participation.
 - Farmers Market table – We've tried that in the past.
 - Ask current members how they found out about SBRA.
 - Door to door – Elyse said this is harder to do now that everyone has Ring cameras and more fences.
 - Personalized welcome letters – Elyse will look into this. We did them in other years where we sent new house and condo owners letters welcoming them to the neighborhood.
- Attendance criteria – The Board discussed where to have meetings next year where we can set up hybrid Zoom/in person for all meetings. We discussed whether we should have a strict rule that to stay on the Board you cannot miss more than a set number of meetings but decided for now that we will leave it looser that Board members are expected to attend as many meetings as possible either in person or by Zoom and to participate in Board votes at the meeting or by email. We agreed that all Board members are expected to pay dues. Advisory Board members must pay dues and are encouraged to attend Board meetings.
- Coyote Awareness meeting – Alisa attended a meeting on this and will be getting a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. After the meeting, the presentation was obtained and is attached. He People should not feed coyotes or any other wild animals intentionally and unintentionally. One woman on Mayfield was leaving food out for coyotes and Fish and Game contacted her to stop. In the meeting reflecting jackets with spikes were recommended for walking small dogs.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.