BNC

April Meeting

Saturday – April 13, 2019

10:00 am – 12:00 Noon

**TAREA HALL PITTMAN SOUTH BRANCH**

**Berkeley Public Library**

1901 Russell St.

Berkeley, CA 94703

**Minutes**

Present: Steve Medbery, Pam Ormsby, Trudy Washburn, Shirley Dean, Phil Aikin, Barbara Gilbert, Michelle LePaule, Gale Garcia, Toni Mester, Janis Ching, Kristin Leimkuhler, David Ushijima, Jaquelyn McCormick, Meryl Siegal, Jurgen Aust, Steve Marinot, Chris Smith, Merrile Mitchell, Wanda Warkentin, Willie Phillips.

**2701 Shattuck** (Todd Darling submitted after meeting) – Council voted 5:4 to remand back to ZAB asking for extensive redesign. Neighbors are working on their specific demands for the redesign. Developer said that construction is at least 1.5-2 years away.

What was Successful: The “ask” was for remand, not denial of the project. Harrison said our neighborhood was the "perfect example of the 'missing middle' ".  Good neighbor turnout including residents next to the project with their children. “I feel like our list of specific re-design points and the description of the detriments and the shade studies we did all made a big difference in the final motion.”

**1155 Hearst** (Pam Ormsby) – 8:1 Council vote to remand back to ZAB. Asking for support at April 25th ZAB meeting.

What was Successful: Ex-parte meetings where they met with Council. Now are offering these meetings to ZAB members so that they can present the facts of the case. This neighborhood group has a hydrologist and attorney. The other point is the loss of rent control units. Shirley Dean commended the neighborhood group for an excellent presentation and that the pictures of the flooding was particularly effective. (They gathered evidence of flooding with measurements.) Pam pointed out that there were 5 alternates at the original ZAB meeting and some were not up to speed on the issues but still were able to vote.

This sparked a discussion about **alternate commissioners** and how they are used. We need to find out what the city rules are governing the use of alternates.

**North Berkeley BART development**: (Kristin Leimkuhler) – Asking for support at special City Council workshop on this issue at Longfellow Elementary, Thursday, May 9th 7:30-9pm.

North Berkeley Neighborhood Alliance (NBNA): a loose group organized around the North Berkeley BART development. They have a legal team working on this. This was designated as an “urban” area, allowing 10 story buildings, working to get to a more reasonable massing of the site. Asking to be reclassified as “Neighborhood/Town Center”, allowing 7 stories. Object to the non-transparent process. Ideally want 2-3 story buildings. Discussion centered around the need to involve neighbors early in the process, the need for more neighborhood autonomy, problems with decreasing the parking and the possibility of coordination between North Berkeley and Ashby Bart neighbors.

Margy Wilkinson is organizing a sit down between north and south neighborhood groups. BNC could sponsor this.

**LeConte Neighborhood Association** announced a meeting, “Berkeley’s Future?” on Wednesday, April 24, 7:30-9pm at Life Adventist Church, 2236 Parker St.

**Updates on The “Missing Middle” Plan**: (Toni Mester) -The issue was put off at last council meeting and will be discussed on April 23rd. Form-based zoning requires a Planning Department that is really planning for the future. Toni will put together a one-page summary to be sent out and discussed at next BNC meeting.

Resources: See the book by Herb Aurbach “Place Makers”

Look at: vancouver.ca/makingroom as an example of good missing middle planning.

Discussion centered around: What is appropriate density? Do we need to house everyone who wants to live here? What is the “Middle”? Are students included in the calculation? (Household income is what is considered in affordable housing.) Who are we building for? Who needs housing help?

Jurgen: read the article in Berkeley Daily Planet

Shirley: read the article in the Chronicle about shading. Investors are out soliciting people to take a “loan” $500,000 which is really creates an investment partnership.

**Planning for May Forum in District 4**. Proposed Dates: June 1st or June 2nd. Proposed Topic: Opportunity Zones: How can we influence development in our neighborhoods? Proposed speakers: Kate Harrison, Ben Bartlett, Cheryl Davila (and Jesse Arreguin?) Dean to settle the date/place with Kate.

This is an outrageous tax scam.

Can it be reversed?

How did the Economic Development Department comment on the proposed zones?

What role did the City Manager play in this?

**Joint Subcommittee on Implementation of State Housing Laws (JSISHL)** – David Ushijima

There is way too much too cover in 5 JSISHL meetings because the Zoning Code is not objective and much too complicated and cannot be re-written. They are discussing detriment: Density (May 22), Sunlight (September), Views (October)

Discussion over whether the building code is/should be “subjective” vs. “objective” vs. “flexible”. We can still be flexible, and objective.

**UC Berkeley Upper Hearst Project:**

DEIR for this project included resetting the student population baseline. The project was discussed at 2 meetings and comments were due yesterday. Financial analysis may take another 4 months. City has insisted the university sever the truing of the student population from the EIR. UC should be paying the city $21M/year for their impacts on city calls, etc. City has sent a letter with strong documentation of discrepancies and demanded changes be made to the DEIR.

The city has laid the ground for legal action

11:30 – 12:00 The Future of BNC – increasing our impact through outreach, social media, etc. What have we accomplished and setting goals for the future.

Do we need to hire someone to manage the website?

How do we pay for this?

Hire a student? Give them experience while we get a better social media presence.

Update the website

People like the information given, like that BNC has a good reputation and is respected.

The Forum is a very good way to get the info out.

More publicity about the Forum and get more info about about the Forum – invite journalists, etc.

We need to moderate the site if we put things out on Instagram, etc: It’s hard to get the info out and get rid of the trolls. Need an expert to manage it

We need to reach the next generation and social media is a good way to get that.

Should we get on Next Door?

Consensus is: Charge yearly membership, something like $50/neighborhood group (negotiable). Priority is to update the website. Mixed response to doing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Meryl Siegal agreed to head up the dues structure/social media campaign if others will help.

Adjourn

Meeting dates for 2019:

May 11, 2019

June 8, 2019

July 13, 2019

August 10, 2019

September 14, 2019

October 12, 2019

November 9, 2019

December 14, 2019