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Macdonald

HRB MEETING MINUTES - TUESDAY, August 2, 2005, 4 P.M.

In attendance: Aileen Anderson, Jeffrey Beckwith, Brian Cummings, Komal Dewan, Rachel Gamby, Wayne Sandholtz, Alan Terricciano

The HRB chose to have an August retreat, rather than a regular meeting, to allow more time to discuss the communication and relations with ICHA issues that have been prominent in recent months and ways in which the HRB, and the community, can address them. We did not follow a standard agenda, nor did we do any architectural reviews. The following letter summarizes the topics we discussed. ICHA's management report, received prior to the meeting, is reproduced later in the newsletter.

Dear University Hills Residents,

The University Hills newsletters over the past several months have carried notice of both plans and discussion regarding consideration of a facilitated design process for addressing/improving communication issues and incorporating community input into the proposed community center. Exploration of this process with a facilitator/consultant from the community who offered his services (see letter from Chris Darrouzet July 2005) came to a halt when the ICHA Board elected not to participate in this process, removing one of the three vested parties from the discussion (residents, HRB, and ICHA management/ICHA Board). Pursuant to this, the July newsletter was headed up by a note to residents from Rich Haier (Chair of the ICHA Board) that read, in part:

“...the Board has encouraged the HRB to generate community wide discussion before any proposals [to improve communication] are adopted to be sure there is support for these efforts beyond just a few individuals. We continue to discuss various ideas and appreciate any thoughts you have about expanding the HRB membership (perhaps with neighborhood by neighborhood representation), augmenting the HRB with an advisory committee, or any other ideas. We are at the beginning of an important and timely review of these issues.”

As a result, in the August newsletter the HRB wrote a letter to the community encouraging residents to respond to the second community center survey (organized by the CCC) and requesting direct comments and suggestions to the HRB regarding the governance of University Hills. As of August 16, neither of the HRB co-chairs has received any emails; however, the response to the survey has been good thus far.

At this time the HRB would like to summarize in more detail key areas in which we feel residents lack representation in University Hills, and how some of the efforts the HRB has made on behalf of the community in these areas relate, or do not relate, to the charter of the HRB.

First, the HRB welcomes resident comment and debate about how the HRB and the HRB election process could be improved. There certainly is a problem with current levels of participation. At the last election in which four HRB posts were up for re-election there were only four self-nominees and fewer than 80 households voted. However, we feel that the ICHA Board is overlooking the fundamental reason for low participation in HRB elections – the lack of a formalized governance structure through which the community can participate in decisions that affect current and incoming residents, rather than merely petition ICHA to heed their views.

Critically, the HRB is, according to the ground lease, an architectural review board only, and the extent to which its recommendations regarding the management of University Hills are implemented is entirely at the discretion of ICHA Management and the ICHA Board. In other words the HRB has no formal or official power. In contrast, the ICHA Board has stated that its primary responsibility is to serve the University's faculty hiring and retention goals, focusing on the development of new housing. In this regard, the Articles of Incorporation of Irvine Campus Housing Authority read:

“This corporation is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is... for public and charitable purposes. These purposes are the development, provision, and maintenance of affordable housing and other related facilities and activities for the use and convenience of students, faculty, and employees of the University of California, in order to foster an active academic community and environment on the campus...and to attract and retain the highest quality students, faculty, and employees at the campus.”

However, while it is clear that meeting the goal of building new housing is essential for the growth of UCI, we feel that the current governance structure has not met the goal of “fostering a ... community”, with particular regard to a formalized structure to balance the needs and interests of current residents in this community that has grown so much since its inception just over 20 years ago. In saying this it is not our intent to dismiss the efforts of ICHA Management in the day-to-day operations/maintenance of the community, which continue to make University Hills an asset to both UCI and its residents. We, and most residents, greatly appreciate this work. Nonetheless, formal, elected representation through which the concerns and needs of current residents can be effectively addressed is lacking.

Despite having no constitutional power, the HRB have undertaken a number of projects for the benefit of residents in recent years. We have, for example:

- Established a dialogue with the Campus Environmental Planning office to ensure that the impacts of the CalIT2 Parking Structure and Southern Radial on University Hills were considered and minimized where possible. It should be noted that ICHA expressed disapproval when the HRB first established this direct contact with the campus, because these discussions went beyond the role of the HRB as an architectural review board. In addition to negotiating mitigations in the planning of the parking structure, Southern Radial and California plans have been modified to the benefit of nearby residents (street lamp shields, sound reducing road surface, increased landscaping), improvements in the safety of the Engineering Gateway crosswalk have been made, and mitigations regarding noise from the Engineering quad are being sought.
- Advocated for the 500 residents who signed a petition supporting a dog park. The park is on the verge of being made a reality after four years of effort by the HRB and interested community members, and despite early opposition from some parts of ICHA.
- Advocated for ICHA Management to take direction from a dedicated group of residents with children who have specified the components of playground equipment that was installed at Gabrielino Park and the replacement equipment that will soon be installed at the Los Trancos and Upper Pool playgrounds.
- Advocated for and persuaded ICHA to significantly increase the pool-heating budget in response to resident input and concerns.
- Run a community survey and gained feedback to support formal HRB advisements to ICHA regarding proposed plans for the Community Center.
- Recommended altering the new hire period of purchase priority for junior faculty, to give them the option to begin that period at the time of their choice between their hire and tenure dates (not acted on by ICHA, but taken up by the faculty welfare committee)
- Recommended formalizing a process through which non-UCI resident occupation of homes can be addressed, in order to maximize home availability for recruitment and retention (not acted on by ICHA)

However, the governance and communication structure in its present form carries the consequence that each of these efforts has taken more time than any HRB member can afford to spend. Although there have been instances of excellent cooperation with ICHA, these efforts have also frequently been rebuffed, and the recommendations of the HRB on larger community issues questioned extensively. The recent decision of the ICHA Board to opt out of a process to explore communication and governance issues related to the points summarized here highlights the concerns of the HRB regarding a need for effective elected input from the community.

Improving communication between the community and the HRB will not be sufficient to address these issues. There is little motivation for faculty or other residents to serve on or elect a board without real decision-making power on the most pressing issues facing the community.

If you have any comment or suggestion to offer on the governance of University Hills or are interested in serving as a volunteer on a specific issue (parks committee, pool committee, transportation/UCI construction committee etc.) please contact HRB co-chairs, Rachel Gamby (rgamby@cox.net) or Brian Cummings (cummings@uci.edu).

---Respectfully, Members of the Homeowners Representative Board.

COMMUNITY BUILDING UPDATE

One of the four ICHA office trailers is being removed because of its poor physical condition and unhealthy rodent infestation; a new trailer will be rented. The other three trailers have similar but less severe problems and limited durability. Therefore, the ICHA Board believes it is time to move ahead with plans for permanent community office space of about 5,000 square feet (similar to the current trailer space). These offices directly serve community

maintenance and homeowner needs. The Board believes combining this office space with another 5,000 square feet for community activities is desirable and cost effective (construction costs will be borne from ICHA reserves set aside for this purpose over the last 10 years).

After a five-month moratorium on planning, the previous community building proposal (12,500 square feet) presented back in March 2004 needs to be reworked to incorporate the considerable feedback from the community. The original design proposal was too large and too expensive to build. Before developing a new plan, however, Leason Pomeroy, the architect, will attend a design meeting open to all residents. This direct communication will be for the purpose of hearing and discussing various options and ideas from residents. Much feedback has been generated but there has not yet been any community-wide discussion or prioritizing of it. This meeting will be an opportunity for all residents to participate in the design process with the architect. Following this meeting, ICHA hopes to receive from residents within a month, a revised scope-of-work document that prioritizes the kinds of program spaces and design elements that are most valued. Everyone recognizes that not all views can be accommodated, but hopefully, either through the HRB, the petition organizers, and/or any other avenue, residents will communicate a representative set of views. Leason Pomeroy will then base a design proposal on these views (consistent with budget) and a new detailed plan will be presented for review and comment at another community meeting to be scheduled in December. If all goes well, the ICHA Board will be able to approve plans in time for the construction to be part of the next housing phase (area 9), which is the most cost-effective timetable.

The first of the community meetings will be held at the University Club on October 5, 7-10PM.

Two related developments of importance: (1) The campus is working on plans for a new childcare facility (toddlers and infants). This facility will be for students, staff and faculty. The campus has determined this facility needs about 5,000 square feet; State funds for construction are already available as are sites on the campus. The campus did explore whether the construction of the childcare facility could be consolidated with or managed by ICHA (because of favorable ICHA overhead rates). However, the use of State funds precludes ICHA from this role (no State funds are used for UH home construction). (2) ICHA has always endorsed an energy efficient design for the community building. While the estimates for the cost/savings ratio for solar generated electric power for the community building are not favorable, ICHA is continuing to explore options, including solar generated water heating for a possible future pool adjacent to the community building. Given the current winter heating expenses for pools (approaching \$40,000 a year), this option may have a much more compelling cost/saving ratio.

---R. Haier, Chair, ICHA Board of Directors

AUGUST 2005 COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Community Development

There is no new news on the Gabrelino Community Park mural to be painted on the bounce wall. There is some discussion still in progress to use a more scientific Solar System image. A resolution is pending this month.

The Southern Radial and California Avenue second lift of paving commences this week. Work yet to be completed includes the last bit of irrigation and tree planting, energizing of the street lights and traffic signals and striping and signage. D&CS is studying the installation of the lighting fixture at the corner of Russell and is proceeding with the addition of shields on the traffic signal safety lights at the same intersection. Soltek Construction is in process of joining the SR with East Peltason at this time.

New play equipment has been ordered for the two tot lot areas to be retrofitted. There is at least an eight-week delivery period before the pieces are shipped. Management will coordinate the removal of the old equipment and the installation of the new toward the end of September. The Park Planning Committee has been of great assistance in reviewing and researching much of the detail.

The Multi Family Apartment Project site has been fenced and a grading move on is tentatively scheduled for September. Southern Radial planting is tentatively scheduled to commence in early September. Gabriellino Park improvements will follow shortly there after.

Community Maintenance

On going and completed Community improvements and repair work

Work in Process:

- Tree Pruning has been completed across the Hill and is wrapping up in the Las Lomas Apartments.
- The tennis court nets will be replaced this month.

- Supplemental pool furniture has been ordered for pool II and is anticipated by the middle to end of this month.
- Asphalt repairs will commence this month at various locations across the Hill

Work Completed:

- New Tiny Tot Play Houses have been added at the Lower tot lot and at Gabrielino Park.
- Two of the three lap lanes have been removed from the Gabrielino Pool to open the general swim area to more family activity. A resident called to voice their opinion. In general, the removal has been received well.

Architectural Review

Seven new architectural applications have been received in July. Five Area 8 landscaping and hardscape applications, one older phase painting and landscaping applications. No architectural issues at this time.

UCI POLICE AND OC SHERIFF... SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINING EXERCISE

On Sunday, September 11, 2005, between 10:00 A.M. and 1:30 P.M., the U.C. Irvine Police Department in conjunction with the Orange County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Reserve Unit, will be conducting a training exercise. The exercise will involve a search for a missing 14 year old boy on the UCI campus. During this training exercise, you may see bloodhounds, bike patrol squads, helicopters, search vehicles, etc., in or near the University Hills community.

This will be a training exercise please do not be alarmed.

---Sergeant Steven Monsanto, UCI Police Department

STREET BIOGRAPHY – DICKENS (One in a Series)



Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is often regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. His popular works, which addressed the social injustices of the time, were serialized and often read aloud by readers and the author himself. An amateur actor, Dickens mesmerized his listeners and readers with emotional tales of suffering and anguish. The deaths of certain characters would frequently cause his audiences to weep with despair.

Born to John and Elizabeth Dickens, Charles was twelve years old when his father went into debt. The entire family, except Charles, was sent to debtors' prison; Charles was put to work in abhorrent conditions at a blacking factory. This traumatic childhood would underlie most of Dickens's writing, causing him to focus on the miserable conditions of the Victorian underclasses.

Dickens's first job was as a reporter; he adopted "Boz" as a pseudonym and wrote various sketches about London. *Pickwick Papers* was released in monthly installments (a format he popularized) in 1836 and was widely received. At this time he married Catherine Hogarth and continued publishing his novels in installments— *Oliver Twist* in 1837 and *Nicholas Nickleby* in 1838. Four years later he traveled to the United States, lecturing about the necessity of abolishing slavery. *Martin Chuzzlewit* was partly based on this trip. He also wrote *A Christmas Carol* in 1844. Dickens and his family then traveled to Italy, Switzerland, and France, returning to England in 1847. *David Copperfield*, largely autobiographical, appeared in 1849. Four years later, Dickens traveled again to Italy where he lived for a year. *Hard Times* began in weekly installments upon his return to England in 1854. The next year he relocated his family to Paris and began to write *Little Dorrit*. In 1858, Dickens and his wife, after 22 years of marriage and ten children, separated. The next year saw the first parts of *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Great Expectations*. He continued with his public readings in Paris, London, Ireland, and Scotland. Dickens's health seriously declined during a trip to America from 1867 to 1868, and back in London, he suffered a fatal stroke. His death supposedly caused a little girl to cry out: "Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die, too?" Charles Dickens was buried at Westminster Abbey.