BOULEVARD PARK

PARK BEAT

The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association ▪ Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 ▪ February 2018

BPNA General Membership Meeting (January 16)

Neighbors joined BPNA board members at the Hart Center for the Annual General Membership meeting, held every January. Voting for the new 2018 board of directors was part of the agenda. Four re-elected 2017 board members (Ty Dockery, Liz Edmonds, Dave Herbert, and Eric Knutson) will be joined by the three newly-elected members (Bob Flack, Whitney Leeman, and Dylan Wiseman). A big "Thank You!" to Margaret Buss and to Marjorie Duffy who are outgoing board members. Your many contributions are so appreciated. We will miss you!

The first speaker of the evening was our guest from the Sacramento Police Department, Captain Norm Leong, a long time police officer and Sacramento resident. Captain Leong works the Central City Area along with about five other officers. He recommended using home burglar alarms, or at least cameras, as an effective way to scare off intruders. Burglaries are up in our area, often due to homeless people who might see residents leaving for work. Almost all incidents occur during day time hours.

Speaking next, Margaret Buss detailed the upcoming Central City Specific Plan (CCSP) being developed by Sacramento City officials. She said that a lot of good is included in the plans but many other changes coming our way are of concern. Our neighborhood faces residential zoning changes that allow much taller and denser buildings near our homes. The splitting in half of the larger 160 foot midtown residential lots is also a major issue. The City Council will be voting on this controversial plan within the next couple of months. A member of the Sacramento Preservation Commission, present at the meeting, urged midtown residents to attend Preservation and Planning Commission meetings at City Hall.

The last speaker, BPNA board Chairman Eric Knutson, reviewed the many projects undertaken by the 2017 board this past year. Those efforts included attending CCSP city meetings and meetings involving lot splits and alley developments, helping organize National Night Out and other neighborhood events (the very successful BPNA yard sale, the September neighborhood Spaghetti Dinner event, and December's BPNA Holiday party), and the publishing of our monthly neighborhood newsletter, *Park Beat*. Upcoming 2018 events will likely include some new events along with our familiar annual festivities. Neighbors are invited to join us in planning and running these fun community events (watch for information in future issues of Park Beat). We are looking forward to a wonderful upcoming new year 2018!

Museum Day: Saturday, February 3

Introduced in 1998, Sacramento's annual Museum Day—always held the first Saturday of February—is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, with participation by 26 museums and local destinations. Most will be open from 10-5, and will offer free admission (two exceptions are the Sacramento Zoo and Fairytale Town, with half-price admission instead). Many of the sites also will offer special events. Free transportation on all city buses and light rail trains will be offered to anyone holding a SacRT Museum Day Flyer. For more information about the event and a PDF of the flyer, go to the Sacramento Area Museums website: **http://sacmuseums.org/news-events/museum-day**

Alhambra: Sacramento's Palace of Fantasy

"Remember the Alhambra" could have been the rallying cry for Sacramento's architectural preservation movement following the demolition and replacement of this historic building in the 1970's. Built nearly a half century earlier, in the era when movie theatres were truly palaces (and often labeled as such), the 1920's Alhambra took its name and several of its distinctive features from the famous royal residence in Granada, Spain. Like the original Alhambra, it had archways, courtyards, gardens, and fountains--one of which survives today, overlooking the Safeway parking lot.

Another significant remnant of the theatre, its pipe organ, can be seen and heard in the Alhambra Music Room at Ironstone Vineyards in Murphys, California. *Park Beat* readers may be interested to know that the man who designed the theatre, Leonard Starks, has a Boulevard Park connection. His first business partner in Sacramento, E. Charles Hemmings, had worked with George C. Sellon in the early 1900's. Both Hemmings and Sellon designed impressive homes in the Boulevard Park neighborhood.

The Alhambra Theatre, the lost "Showcase of Sacramento," is now the subject of a 55-minute documentary film by Matías Bombal and Chad E. Williams that will be screened for the first time at the Tower Theatre on Wednesday, February 21st. A true labor of love, *Alhambra: Sacramento's Palace of Fantasy* includes original film footage, period photos, and even the lush sound of the theatre's pipe organ.

To see the film trailer: **https://vimeo.com/242839790**
For more information about the film showing, go to: **http://sachistorymuseum.org/programs-events/alhambra-sacramentos-palace-of-fantasy/**

For more information about the film project, go to: **https://www.facebook.com/Alhambra-Sacramentos-Palace-of-Fantasy-1525863504113537**

All that is left of the theatre is the fountain. The plaque to the right has a verse from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

The photo on the right shows the theatre's grand interior.

BPNA Board of Directors 2018

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Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association purpose: The BPNA is created to support, promote, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood. By achieving this goal we strive thereby to improve the quality of life for others who work and live in and around Boulevard Park and therefore Sacramento as a whole.

Committees

2018 committee memberships will be announced after the February Board Meeting

Park Beat Production Team

Designer: Open - Contact Ty Dockery to volunteer
Webmaster: Open - Contact Ty Dockery to volunteer
Editor: Catherine Turrill Lupi, sac16712@csus.edu
Block Captain Coordinator: Joe Cress, 916 698-7938 cressj@saccounty.net
Ad Manager: Dave Herbert, davidmather446@gmail.com

Places to Go, People To See

Every Saturday:
Free Yoga in the Park: 9 a.m., McKinley Park (behind the H St. Rose Garden). For more information, go to: http://yogamovesus.org/calendar-items/yoga-in-the-park-mckinley-park/

Midtown Farmers' Market: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 20th Street between J and L Streets.

Sat., Feb. 3: Sacramento Museum Day: free or reduced admission to 26 museums (10 a.m. -5 p.m.). See article on p. 1.

Tues., Feb. 6: (6:30 - 8:30 p.m.): BPNA Board Meeting, open to BPNA members and other interested neighbors. Contact Eric Knutson for location or to suggest agenda items.

Sat., Feb. 10: Backyard Composting Workshop with UCCE Master Gardeners: 4145 Branch Center Rd., Sacramento; 10 a.m.-noon (the $10 fee covers supplies, including a compost bin for each participant). Pre-registration required. Go to the website: http://sacmg.ucanr.edu/Special_Events/

Sat., Feb. 10: Monthly gathering of Friends of the River Banks: Mushroom walk with Ryan LaPorte, starting at Sutter's Landing Park (10 a.m.). See article on p. 6.

Places to Go, People To See (cont.)

Sat., Feb. 10: Second Saturday ArtWalk. Galleries around town will be open to present individual and group shows of artists' work. Website: http://www.2ndsaturdaysacramento.com

Feb. 10 & 11: Sacramento Weavers and Spinners Guild Open House, Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3300 McKinley Blvd. (10 a.m. - 4 p.m. each day). Website: http://www.sacweavespin.org/annual-show-and-sale

Sun., Feb. 11: Sacramento Antique Faire, held the second Sunday of every month (under the freeway at 21st and X Streets; 6:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.; $3 admission fee for adults). Website: http://www.sacantiquefaire.com

Sun., Feb. 11: 21st annual Sacramento Darwin Day, Mission Oaks Community Center, Carmichael (2-5 p.m., fee charged). Website: http://sacdarwinday.org

Sun., Feb. 18: "Pay-What-You-Wish" at the Crocker (the third Sunday of every month)

Wed., Feb. 21: Special screening of "Alhambra: Sacramento's Palace of Fantasy" (Tower Theater; fundraiser for the Center for Sacramento History). See article on p. 2.

Thur., Feb. 22: "Behind-the-Scenes Tour," California State Archives (10-11 a.m.; photo below): Free, but advance registration is required. Go to the website: http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/public-events/tours

California State Archives

CENTRAL CITY SPECIFIC PLAN: MOVING TOWARD APPROVALS

The Central City Specific Plan (CCSP) is the city's re-zoning and planning document that will shape development in the Central City over the next 20 years. As reported in recent *Park Beat* issues and at the general membership meeting in January (see page 1), the CCSP has much to recommend it, including goals for increased housing, better transit, better bike/pedestrian access, street-lighting, open space, trees and other amenities for urban life.

Controversy revolves mainly around housing. Most residents agree that more housing is needed to maintain the mix of ages, incomes, occupations, and ethnic diversity that have made Midtown the lively place that it is. With rental housing and home prices rising, young people, working class families, artists and others on lower income are less and less able to afford living here. It is also desirable for environmental reasons to have workers live close to their jobs. The question is how to increase that housing stock or increase building density to keep those populations here without taking away the very qualities that make Midtown inviting to live in – relatively low-rise buildings, trees, light and airy neighborhoods, walkable human scale, diverse small businesses with *local* entrepreneurs.

The city has a goal of 14,000 new housing units in the central city, requiring more dense development, which it proposes to meet by raising height limits from 65 feet (roughly six stories) to 85 feet (roughly eight stories) in commercial, mixed use, and office zones. Except for the Central Business District (commonly considered downtown), the commercial corridors are typically right next to low-rise residential areas, many of which are also historic districts. To avoid ending up with eight-story buildings that loom over adjacent one- and two-story homes, the CCSP allows for "transition zones," where building heights are scaled down to six or fewer stories in residential areas zoned R 1/A or R2/A, but *not* those zoned R3. However, the house and apartment types in R3 zones are the *exact* same mix of sizes and shapes as those in R1 and R2 zones (and even may fall within historic districts); the R3 designation simply means the area is closer to commercial zones.

Another issue is the cap on deviations in building heights for projects offering "significant community benefits." For those projects, the CCSP originally capped deviations from established height limits by using the "Floor-to-Area Ratio" (or FAR) formula of 1.20%, which essentially means that another story could be added to an eight-story building. However, that cap was removed in the version sent forward.

Representatives from BPNA and other midtown neighborhood associations, members of Preservation Sacramento, and other interested residents met with Councilman Steve Hansen and city planning staff in December to discuss these issues (see the article in January's *Park Beat*). City staff were going to analyze whether making those changes would still allow the city to meet its goal of 14,000 units. A response was expected in late January or February.

The city is simultaneously revising the Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines (CCNDG) for residential neighborhoods and the Central City Urban Design Guidelines (CCUDG) for the Central Business District. These guidelines describe what design principles—massing, stylistic elements, etc.—should be used in new developments to make them compatible with existing neighborhoods and business districts. They provide guidance to city planners, developers, and residents on what should be built as the city implements the CCSP goals. Many people speaking at the December meeting felt the guidelines were too broad and asked for changes.

All three documents—the CCSP and the two sets of Design Guidelines—are moving forward for approval at the same time, with very tight timelines for public input. Residents are strongly encouraged to attend the public meetings scheduled at New City Hall, 915 I Street on **February 21** (Preservation Commission meeting, with presentation of the city staff response to comments made by the Commissioners and by the public; 5:30 p.m.), **March 8** (Planning & Design Commission; 5:30 p.m.), **March 27** (City Council: 5 p.m.), and **April 3** (City Council; 5 p.m.). BPNA will try to keep its members informed about the meeting schedules via *Park Beat* and email.

ANOTHER INTERESTING MIDTOWN BUSINESS – STEREOADVISOR

A few years ago, when my favorite music store "The Beat" was getting ready to close its doors at 17th and "J" to make way for a "Bev Mo" store, I asked the clerk "Where am I going to go to keep my record turntable in good working condition?" He handed me a business card for "StereoAdvisor" up the street.

It turns out that StereoAdvisor's owner, Luis Galvez, after being located for many years in San Francisco's Marina District (since 1982), had moved to 1812 "J" Street (Suite 8) in Sacramento in 2009. If you enjoy music and good home stereo equipment, StereoAdvisor will fascinate you. As you walk in the door, you will see shelves filled with many varieties of speakers, amplifiers, receivers, tape decks, and turntables (both newer equipment and vintage models).

StereoAdvisor sells, buys, and takes trade-ins of quality used equipment. They do repairs, modifications, and complete refurbishing. They repair just about every brand or model of sound equipment, including vacuum tube amplifiers, professional grade equipment, vintage stereo components, reel to reel and cassette tape machines, and stereo consoles.

If you have vinyl records and a turntable that needs a tune up, StereoAdvisor can fix yours or supply a good one off their shelf. Turntable repairs include cleaning and lubrication. They check all turntable parameters to bring out that warm sound only vinyl records can provide. Repairs are available on models from the 1950's to the present. Cartridges and belts are also available.

Phone: 916 538 6340; E-mail: **service@stereoadvisor.com**
Website: **stereoadvisor.com**

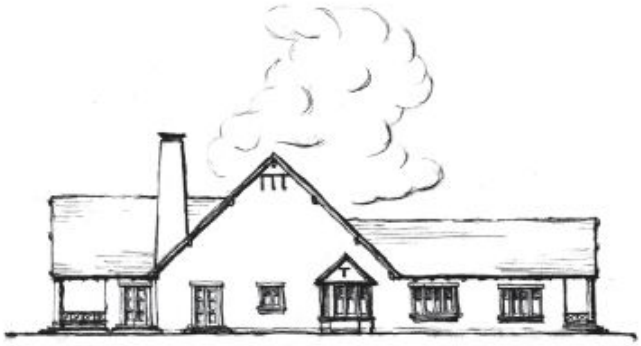
Neighborhood Treats – What you see while walking the streets.

A weather-worn pair of tennis shoes hangs from high wires at the intersection of 22nd and G. They have been there for years. Whatever the story behind them is, you have to figure that someone was having a whole lot of fun that night. That's our Midtown. Please snap a photo of a Boulevard Park Treat and send it to Margaret Buss, **bussmlou@gmail.com**,

Now you see it . . .

Now you don't. The "Claw" made its last pass on January 31. Leaf season and regular street-side cleaning will return in November.

KNUTSON ARCHITECTURE



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Grand Opening of Sutter's Landing Regional Bike Trail (Two Rivers Trail)

As reported on the website of Friends of the Riverbanks (friendsoftheriverbanks.org), the second section of the Two Rivers Trail was inaugurated on January 19. Meant to better establish Sutter's Landing Park as the city's gateway to the American River Parkway, the project included paving a short stretch of bike trail, removal of invasive plants, establishment of native vegetation, creation of a defined staging area, installation of plaques, and more.

The project came together around 2011 but delays and conflicts slowed the start of construction by 1-2 years. What resulted is a compromise, at best, of the design and goals suggested by neighborhood groups and organizations but does meet the need for a basic gateway. Most of the people who attended the two community design workshops strongly objected to the rock gabions which now fill part of the area. Other improvements also may need to be implemented.

Future phases could include extension of the bike trail eastward to Sac State, expanding the size of Sutter's Landing Park, and further improvements to adjacent areas of the American River Parkway. The recent establishment of a Lower American River Conservancy creates a means to continue and expand this type of work. Ultimately the City hopes to complete a seven-mile, multi-use trail along the south bank of the American River, but that will require purchasing the land between the first section (on the levee north of Richards Boulevard), inaugurated a few years ago, and the newly-opened second section.

For the third section to be built, arrangements must be made to extend the trail under the railroad trestle near Capital City Freeway.

Interviewed for an article in the *Sacramento Bee*, council-member Jeff Harris said that the new bike path, when completed, will provide "a safe way to ride downtown, and will open parts of the river (for recreation) that people don't get to now."

FRIENDS OF THE RIVER BANKS

Members of FORB gathered together twice in January—on the first of the month for the annual New Year's Day gathering, and again on the 19th for the grand opening of the Sutter's Landing Regional Bike Trail. In February, they will enjoy a popular seasonal activity that had to be cancelled last year due to the unusually high river flows: a hunt along the American River bank for mushrooms and other fungal forms, led by expert Ryan LaPorte. Participants will gather at Sutter's Landing Park at the north end of 28th Street (February 10, starting at 10 a.m.). Please bike, walk or carpool, and please leave dogs at home.

EDMONDS AND PHILIPP: *Your Way Home*

Whether buying or selling, call the team that lives & works in Boulevard Park.
Recycling vintage homes in record time is our specialty!

Doug Philipp
REALTOR
916.212.1322
dave@davephilipp.com

Liz Edmonds
REALTOR
916.838.1208
liz@lizedmonds.com

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Send form with your $5 to $15 check per member for the remainder of the calendar year to: P.O. Box 163179, Sacramento, CA 95816-9179

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member ☐ Yes! I want to help. Call me.

☐ Would you like to receive the newsletter by email, as well as home delivery?