

Neighborhood Improvement Team Meeting

General Meeting, Senior Center

May 2, 2015, 10:00am

City Staff Present: Joe Sbranti, Garrett Evans, Fritz McKinley, Richard Abono, Kristen Pollot, Ron Nevels, Don Buchanan, Laura Wright, Sharon Jackson, Maria Aliotti, Jill Hecht, Officer Sarah Spires, Myla Rivers

Mayor: Pete Longmire

City Treasurer: Nancy Parent

CAC Members: Larry Wirick and J. Faye Fields

Approximately 24 Residents Attended

INTRODUCTION – Garrett Evans, Asst. City Manager

- Welcome
- Introduced CAC members and others at meeting
- 67,000 citizens, about 240 employees – we need your help to see things and tell us what is going on and to continue having this fantastic community that we can shop, eat, etc. in

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER – Fritz McKinley

- Grew up in Pittsburg and has seen the many changes
- Oversees the different parts of Community Development ie: Engineering, Building, Planning

PLANNING – Kristin Pollot

- New Planning Manager
- Not new – has been with City 10 years
- In charge of maintenance and enforcement of the City's General Plan
 - Commercial
 - Residential
 - Industrial
- Oversees the construction and development of items including but not limited to:
 - the area of Railroad Avenue for eBART station which will be high density residential and commercial development
 - Multi-tenant commercial buildings (Century Plaza)

- Items under construction by Mi Pueblo
- Solar Farm off of Pittsburg-Antioch Highway – privately owned Chinese company selling energy to PG&E
- Gas Station approved for San Marco @ Leland
- Works with the Planning Commission which is made up of a group of residents who make land use decision and development decisions for the City. Planning Department will review the plans and make recommendations to the Planning Commission according to the plans
- Full Project Pipeline list online

ENGINEERING (Design Division) – Richard Abono

- With the City for 14 years
- Not included in the design of eBART from Pittsburg/Bay Point to Antioch
- Will assist in the design of the eBART station @ Highway 4 and Railroad Avenue which will be level with the freeway – completion expected Summer 2018 along with Antioch station
- Will design a “Kiss-n-Ride” lot – can drop off and pick up eBART riders, will be friendly to busses, taxis and bike riders
- Assisting in Railroad Avenue pavement project
- Assisting in Pittsburg Schools Safety Project- adding better flashing beacons at crosswalks
- Assisted in 2014 Water Systems Project
 - Loftus Road
 - Bay Harbor Park
 - Loveridge Road from California Street to Pittsburg-Antioch Hwy

ENGINEERING (Capital Improvement Projects) – Ron Nevels

- Been with City for 13 years
- Projects currently working on
 - \$7 million improvement project with Water Treatment Plant
 - Third attempt to downsize reconstruction of Ambrose Pool
 - Pump station @ Dover – use of well water for the City
 - Railroad Avenue storm drain project – Bliss Avenue going south, then across Railroad Avenue @ Leland Road
 - Downtown Park – 6th & Railroad to include an Ice Rink during Winter
 - Park at San Marco and Leland – getting bids from the developers to begin construction
 - New traffic signal going in at Santa Theresa

PARKS AND RECREATIONS DEPARTMENT – Don Buchanan

- Been with City for 37 years
- Park on E. 6th Street and Railroad Avenue
 - expected completion in about 30 days
 - Will be called John Buckley Square
 - There will be Summer series of events
- Farmers Market will start back up May 9th
- Car Show and Culinary Crawl will start Thursday, first week in June
- Buchanan Aquatic Center to be open this weekend and every weekend until June 10th, then it will be open 7 days a week
- Small World Park open weekend only until school is out, then Thursday thru Sunday during the Summer – see me for free passes if you’ve never been there
- Activities guide has been delayed a bit, but should be out next week
- Recreation Department and Arts Foundation work together – please visit website for updated of new programs

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS – Laura Wright

- Been with City for 17 years and has loved every moment
- We believe in “Team Pittsburg”
 - Takes everyone to work together
 - Call in for pot holes, graffiti, etc.
 - Grab a flyer before you go which has important phone numbers for different City departments
- Garbage/Recycling
 - School programs
 - Pittsburg HS green challenge – teaches about recycling/sustainability
- Household Hazardous Waste
 - Free facility for you to drop off excess oil, paint, fats, oil, grease, and electronics
 - Open Thursday – Saturday 9:00am-4:00pm
 - Easy – you drive up and they will even remove it from your vehicle
- NPDES, Storm Water Program – we monitor to make sure it’s just rain water
 - New garden at City Hall
 - Drought tolerant plants
 - Integrated plant maintenance – does not use pesticides
 - Water conservation
- Adopt-a-Spot
- Water education program
- Energy efficiency – LED Lights
 - New lights in neighborhoods, finishing up parks and streets

- LEA – Local Enforcement Agency
 - We do our own inspections
 - Transfer stations
 - Landfills
 - Tires
 - Work with Code Enforcement for illegal dumping
- Safety Program – environmental compliance
- Cable/Wireless
 - Re-activating Community Access Channel called Delta TV
- In charge of many Facebook sites
- EOC – Emergency Operations Center
 - CERT – 6 week course to help citizens prepare for a catastrophic event and how to respond

GARRET EVANS

- We have many tools to keep you in the loop
 - E-News Blast
 - Pay Water online
 - GoGov – smart phone application to report to us
 - Facebook Pages: Living Green and Neighborhood Team

HOUSING AUTHORITY– Sharon Jackson, Manager

- Run a Section 8 program which provides rental assistance to Seniors, Veterans, and low income households
- Have a former Section 8 client from Afghanistan
 - single mother of 4 children ages 5-11 years old
 - she encouraged her children to improve themselves and their education as they were growing up
 - All her children graduated college, one son graduated with a PHD
 - He purchased a home for her and the rest of the family and came back in front of City Council to say “Thank you!”
- Funded by Federal Grants
 - Resources are still not enough money
 - Still have a small wait list of about 225 families
 - Currently serving 1100 families
 - House Veterans that were previously homeless

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER FOR THE SUCCESSOR AGENCY – Maria Aliotti

- Been with the City for 13 years
- Oversees CDBG funds
 - Federal funds to assist programs to improve the community, ie: Opportunity Junction (job training and placement), Code Enforcement, Infrastructure projects (construction of handicap ramps)
- Oversees Housing Authority
- Low interest loans available for low income households for home improvements – see her
- Daily operations of the Successor Agency for the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Pittsburg
 - Managing the wind down of the Successor Agency’s operations
 - In charge of budges of over \$45 Million
 - Started with 63 properties, have 58 properties left for sale
 - Manages these properties
- Economic Development Info:
 - Country Skilletts now at 51 Marina Boulevard, Suite A
 - CreAsian restaurant going into 610 Railroad Avenue, opening June 2015 – Asian Fusion
 - Kymera Body Board Manufacturing Company - manufactures motorized body boards
 - Purple Line USA Manufacturers – manufactures remote trailer hitch
- Works with
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - State Board of Equalization

PITTSBURG ARTS & COMMUNITY FOUNDATION – NON-PROFIT FOUNDATION – Jill Hecht

- Focus on Literacy and Performing Arts
- Art Shack at the Marina – year round classes – 31 Marina Blvd.
- Railroad Book Depot – all profits stay in the community
 - Book groups

- Tutoring
- School fieldtrips
- Supporter of Bay Area Children's Theater
- California Theatre – take time to check it out, it's a beautiful building, owned by the City
 - www.PittsburgCaliforniaTheatre.com
 - Pittsburg Community Theater – home theater company
- Important part of Economic Development is to bring a friend or family member downtown with you for dinner, lunch, or shopping.

POLICE DEPARTMENT – Officer Sarah Spires

- Currently in Patrol but will soon be moving into a specialized division called MET Team
 - Mental Health Evaluation Team
 - Goes to various parts of Contra Costa County, from Bay Point to Discovery Bay (not just Pittsburg) and provides resources to the mentally ill
 - Pittsburg is the first to offer this program
- Budgeted for 74 officers
 - 4 School Resource Officers
 - Traffic Division
 - Motor officers
 - Can put speed trailers out if necessary
 - Issue cites in problem traffic areas when needed
 - CASE – works with Department of Justice to remove illegal fire arms from the street
 - Code Enforcement
 - 1 officer will soon be dedicated to this division
 - Responds to Go Cities complaints
 - Addresses abandoned vehicles and blight issues as well as gives parking cites
- New online reporting – for cold calls (lower priority calls), our attempt to serve the community better
 - City of Pittsburg Website – Police Department
 - Fill out the report and will get a report number
 - Once we see the report we will contact you if necessary
- Have a new Citizens Academy
 - 9 week program
 - Learn about what we do
- NIXEL – sign up for notifications of major incidents within the City, traffic issues, road closures, community events, etc.

*QUESTIONS/ANSWERS (answers marked with ** in blue)*

- Downtown this June there will be a big Kite boarding event on the waterfront – *Garrett Evans*
- What is the “Kite Bar”?

***Kite boarding & coffee shop – can get lessons or rent/buy equipment – the owner is finishing up in Norway at the Snow Kiting World Championships and is planning the opening for her down time. The owner looked for the most ideal place through the country/world to open her shop and found Pittsburg to be it. They put a kite boarding ramp out of Riverview Park. The store should be open in 30-45 days.*

- This meeting is going way too fast for me to make my notes and I try to report back to my neighborhood. How quickly can we get the meeting minutes?

***Meeting minutes should be posted after the 2nd NIT meeting on Wednesday. You can find them on our City website under the City Manager’s page/NIT.*

- I think it’s excellent that Silicon Valley people will be coming to Pittsburg for this kite boarding and I hope they bring some high tech jobs with them. We really need to push the kids in our community to do better but there seems to really be nothing here for them. It would be nice to get some high tech development here.

***Kymera Body Boards is a manufacturing company. They manufacture the battery operated body boards. They were looking elsewhere, including Texas, but we were able to get them here, from Pleasanton! Dow is another very advanced manufacturer.*

- Where’s the parking for the eBART station on Railroad going to be and how many spots will there be?

***Primary parking will be the Bliss Avenue Park-n-Ride lot. Other than that, there will be a Kiss-n-Ride on Railroad Avenue which will mainly be a drop off/pick up only. We expect this to be an urban infill station with people walking and biking to it. This will open up parking at the Bay Point Station and there will also be a large parking facility at the Antioch Station.*

- Are there plans to make the typical BART into eBART? Will eBART go to Brentwood? Will eBART go both directions or just from Antioch to Pittsburg?

***There are no plans to turn BART into eBART. The plan is for it to eventually go to Brentwood and yes it will travel in both directions Antioch to Pittsburg and Pittsburg to Antioch. The Bay Point station should be a seamless transfer station where trains are timed so when you get off the eBART train you*

should just walk across the Bay Point platform and get right onto the SF train. The eBART cars will be taller and thinner than the regular BART cars.

**Nancy Parent wanted to make note that Clipper Cards will be usable on EBART. So now you can use your Clipper Card on Tri Delta Transit, eBART, BART, AC Transit and MUNI. Seniors get a 60% discount, so you will be able to go almost anywhere for just a few dollars!

- Will there be an eBART Operational Maintenance Station?

**

- Thank you and Good Job for the resurfacing on Loveridge Road!
- Thank you for the dog park on Buchanan Road.
- eBART is great!
- Grocery stores in Pittsburg are terrible.
- There is a house on Valle Vista that has had no garage door for about 10 years now and it causes blight to the neighborhood.

**We are very aware of this property and have been working on it for years ourselves. The building is structurally sound and the property owners have been cited.

- Where can we find what is considered a necessity for Code Enforcement? Is it abandoned vehicles on the street, tall weeds? What does Code Enforcement address?

**Code Enforcement addresses all of those things. We have our Municipal Codes on the website for you to look at. You can call the Code Enforcement number and if you don't reach anyone they will call you back. You can also enter your complaints into the GoGov complaint system and under Code Enforcement there is a drop down box of items we address. There is also an "Other" choice if you are not sure.

- Citizen stated she has never received a return phone call from Code Enforcement. She was directed to speak to CSS Rivers after the meeting.
- There was a home invasion in Pittsburg last night. What can we do to prevent this?

**I am not at liberty to discuss this case right now because there is still an ongoing investigation, but I can say there are no outstanding suspects and this was not a random act, all parties knew each other.

- Does City Hall have parking lot cameras? It seems there are illicit acts going on after hours.

**The Police Department never closes. We do have cameras in the parking lot. Our city is a hub for other departments to do specialized investigations so sometimes you may see plain clothed officers just hanging out in our parking lot.

**The City also has 100 cameras throughout the community which is a great way to look back at traffic accidents, etc.

- I've recently been getting advertisement flyers/cards to sign up for internet services, is that normal?

**We haven't seen these post cards or flyers.

- What programs are we using to better the education of our youth so they are ready for employment?

**By the citizens passing Measure P tax, a portion of the money goes to the Police Department, a portion goes to the Senior Center and its activities, and then a portion also goes to job creation such as our Future Build program. We're looking at creating a PAL, Police Activities League, for our youth and we also contract with STS Academy which is a strong after school program, that also offers some tutoring.

- The sidewalk areas around Davi Baseball Fields are terrible. There is no stroller access to get to the fields and there is no Handicapped parking. What can the City do about this? She stated Will Casey thought this was a great idea and advised her to talk to Mr. Sbranti.

**There is no Capital Improvement Funding to take care of this, but Don Buchanan gave her his card so they can meet at the fields and discuss the problem areas.

- There is an empty lot west of Pittsburg-Bay Point BART Station, what is the plan for this lot? Will they be creating more parking because BART riders like to park up in the Oak Hills neighborhood.

**It is zoned for a multi-family/high density project. The master plan includes parking garages and surface redevelopment. There will be shops and transit oriented housing. There are similar plans for both stations (Railroad Avenue and Pittsburg-Bay Point) and these plans can be found on our website.

- A citizen stated she works for Kaiser Permanente and partner with multicultural agencies for different opportunities for people. She wanted to know if our City does anything like that and commented that she had her child enrolled in STS Academy and that the quality of their care for children is unacceptable.

**Thank you for telling us this, we want to offer high quality care and the opportunity to improve our service. STS Academy is currently going through building renovations. Future Build is actually implementing the renovations. They are re-doing the electrical, flooring and giving it a fresh new look.

**The City has a group of groups called Healthy and Livable Pittsburg. They work to implement nutrition education both at school and after school.

- There recently was another accident on Railroad Avenue involving a semi-truck off of Kirker Pass. Can they add a runaway truck ramp so this doesn't happen again?

**Contra Costa County, Concord, and Pittsburg are all working together and compiling accident record data. First and foremost we are reaching out to the trucking firms to educate the companies as well as the drivers. We are also working with the different jurisdictions for improvement and are facilitating the communication.

- What is the plan for the old County Health Clinic lot on School Street?

**The address is 500 School Street and it was recently approved for sale to a developer who wants to construct 60 residential units on the site.

- Has the City changed its policies for the drought?

**There are handouts in back related to the drought. In June the City will be proposing that every household/business curb their excess water use by a 20% reduction. You see something in the water bill. You will see us as a City modifying some things. The lot where eBART is going you will see turn brown, there is no sense in watering it if we know we will be building on it. We have a new City Garden with drought tolerant plants. There will be a Water Conservation Page on the website. There are incentive programs to help turn your lawn into a drought tolerant garden. People need to realize that when they do this they also have to modify their current irrigation system to be more water efficient.

- Can we use any of the industrial energy to help with the drought and create a long term plan? Are there plans for a desalination plant? This City is good at finding Grants, can't you find one for this project?

**Mallard Slough is one of the top two spots for desalination plants. If you don't already know what a desalination plant is, it's a plant that turns salt water into irrigation water, like the one in Half Moon Bay. There is a plant in Carlsbad that turns the water into drinking water.

- In the Central Addition, are there any plans to put our utilities from the back yard to the front yard?

**This has been included in the 5 year City Plan, but right now it is an unfunded project. We hope to get it started in 1-5 years.

- Are there still plans for the James Donolan Bypass?

**This is still in the process and we hope to get to see its completion in our lifetime.

- Will there ever be a grocery store in the downtown area?

**It's a challenge all over the county to even keep some grocery stores running. There are not enough bodies in the downtown area to constitute a fully serviceable grocery store, even though Safeway is always swamped.

- Thank you for fixing the pothole on Andrew Avenue!

**That actually came in as a GoGov request, so thank you for bringing that to our attention.

- What's going on with the Pittsburg Baseball team?

**It looks like they've changed their name from Mettle to Diamonds. Their home opener will be June 5th against San Rafael.

- Citizen stated she was a host parent for players on this team and recommends it.
- Pittsburg doesn't have enough "good" restaurants, not just in the downtown area, but in general. What are we doing to get more restaurants in this City?

**We only control the downtown sites but we are encouraging and working with private land owners to bring more into Pittsburg. We've assisted with some land improvements in Century Plaza as well as the Railroad corridor. We go to retail gathering and meet with various brokers.

- Laura Wright did a survey in regards to the possibility of a downtown shuttle, what happened to that?

**Funding for this would be through the air board and in order to get the funding we first need to have EBART, because it is a transportation grant.

- More restaurants in Pittsburg? No way!! We don't support the ones we have now. I say we need more retail, not restaurants! Why can't we model our downtown after Benicia where they have a great Wine and Chocolate Festival?

**This is a dilemma for us. We want more retail downtown also, but it's up to the property owners to re-invest their money and bring their properties up to code so they can lease.

- Part of the problem is figuring out how to rebuild Pittsburg's image. How are you working to improve the City's image?

**Pittsburg crime rate is fantastic. It's better than Concord and Antioch and the same Walnut Creek. We've done a media campaign through SF Business Times to get the word out. You as citizens need to put it out there as well. Pass ideas on to us of things you've been to or would like to see within our City, ie: movie nights, Shakespeare in the park, Wine & Chocolate Festivals, etc.

**We have the Culinary Crawl downtown during the summer which now includes 7 restaurants. They are now selling out because of the quality of the event.

- I think Pittsburg has done tremendously! The image is so much better now than 10 years ago. I was born in Pittsburg and have seen the changes in the landscaping, shops, etc. Thank you!
- How many new units and senior units do we have downtown?

**About 500 or so new, 88 under construction, and 200 on paper zoned for Harbor Street/E. 3rd Street. The percentage for total available units for housing has been filled. The biggest growth will be around EBART with about 2000 new residential units.

**Mayor Pete Longmire: Thank you for coming to this NIT meeting. This venue gives us so much info. All you are saying is written down and your comments are taken to heart. There is a process of making Pittsburg “new”. We look at successful communities to get new fresh practices and ideas. We use those to help make Pittsburg unique & finding what works for this community with what resources we have to be successful and safe. We are committed to doing right things, safe things, for proper growth. These people are coming out on their own time to meet with you. We are looking for feedback on what we need to do. Share with your neighbors, on social media and with your families and bring them to Pittsburg. There are some things coming up to put us on the map, potentially worldwide.

Post meeting

- 1317 Springhill Drive – Parking on lawn
- 1435 Springhill Drive – parking on lawn
- 4266 McDermott Drive – debris on property, cars parked everywhere
- McDermott Drive/McDermott Court – Chevy pick-up parked at location for extended period of time
- Jewett Avenue/McFaul Drive – abandoned property, 3 cars left behind, weeds, fence falling
- Speed bumps needed on Springhill Drive, people using this street as a shortcut off of Palo Verde and are driving really fast, has almost been hit coming out of her driveway numerous times (Rivers has her contact info if needed)
- Assistant CM was mentioning how we need to lure people to shop and spend money on the downtown, but we need to look at the neighborhoods. She suggested the City Manager send a letter out to the residents of Pittsburg reminding them to take pride where they live. To cut their lawns, register their cars, have garbage service, don't park on their lawn, and do all of the little things so they can be proud of where they live. So we can have the “wow” factor in our neighborhoods as well.

- Santa Cruz Ct. – thank you for Code Enforcement and Police Department, we always get a good response when we call!
- Glacier Drive – people parking in front of handicapped ramps
- 234 Calistoga Drive – boats and trailers parked on lawn, property a mess
- Trinity Court – resident painting cars, no specific address given
- Benjamin Avenue – multiple complaints regarding specific properties, see attached

[**all of the post meeting complaints were added into GoGov complaint system](#)