

Neighborhood Improvement Team Meeting

General Meeting, Rancho Medanos Jr. High School

May 21, 2016, 10:00am-12:00pm

City Staff Present: Joe Sbranti, Garrett Evans, Fritz McKinley, Don Buchanan, Kolette Simonton, Laura Wright, Maria Aliotti, Sharon Jackson, Brad Framer, Kristin Pollot, Richard Abono, Ron Nevels, Paul Reinders, Hilario Mata, Myla Rivers

City Treasurer: Nancy Parent

City Clerk: Alice Evenson

CAC Members: Judy O'Connor, Larry Wirick and Edward Borjon

WELCOME – Joe Sbranti, City Manager

- Welcome
- These meetings are designed so you can help us.
- What can we do better? Please tell us
- 68,000 citizens and only 260 employees, we need your help
- We will give you a quick overview of what our staff does

INTRODUCTION – Garret Evans, Asst. City Manager

- I've seen lots of growth & development in this city in the 19 years I've been here and it's been amazing
- Many members that help this city run
- Reach out to us and tell us what we can do better
- Kolette Simonton – Economic Development/Waterfront
- Laura Wright – Environmental Affairs
- Maria Aliotti – Development Manager/CDBG
- Sharon Jackson – Housing Authority Manager
- Brad Framer – Finance Director

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR/CITY ENGINEER – Fritz McKinley

- Oversees the different parts of Community Development ie: Engineering, Building, Planning
- Kristin Pollot – Planning Manager
- 3 Senior Civil Engineers
 - Richard Abono & Ron Nevels - Capital Improvement Projects
 - Paul Reinders – Traffic
- Hilario Mata – Public Works

PARKS & RECREATION MANAGER – Don Buchanan

- 2016 Summer/Fall Guide is available
- www.pittsburgparkandrec.com

POLICE DEPARTMENT – Lieutenant Phil Galer

- Been with department for 15 years – currently Patrol Watch Commander
- 80 Sworn Officers – City Council mad Public Safety a priority
 - Special Services Division
 - MHET Officer – Countywide mental health Team that serves all cities in East Contra Costa County, case load comes from referrals, many resources to help deal with mental health subjects
 - Traffic Division
 - School Resource Officers
 - Code Enforcement
 - NPT – Neighborhood Policing Team (est. 2008)
 - Gang enforcement
 - Narcotics enforcement
 - Human trafficking
 - Street Crimes Unit
 - High visibility - proactive
- Our department reached out to the DA & Sheriff’s Office for a voluntary audit of our reported cases for crime stats
- Because of the string of shootings of the freeway we have plans to add cameras to the freeway to help solve crimes and use a crime deterrent

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

- What is the best way to find out about Downtown/community events?

****Facebook page and Events Page on the City website are ways to find out about downtown and community events**

- I'm a resident of Pittsburg for 34 years. – I'm proud of the City for all of the improvements and adding cameras on Highway 4. We need to outsmart the crooks.
 - Crime migration makes me uncomfortable. All of the people moving are to East County

****Measure M maintains sales tax to go toward the Police Department.**

- I don't spend my money in Pittsburg. There are no real grocery stores here. Stores I like are not in Pittsburg.
- There is no reason for me to go downtown unless you're into food.
- We need help bringing property values up.

****Downtown is a hard market to create. The City only controls 3.5% of the vacancy. Redevelopment money was used to buy property but that is no longer an available tool. The economy has improved so much that the City does not qualify for government programs. The median income has increased to \$69k.**

- What is Trader Joe's looking for that we don't have?

****Trader Joe's is looking at household income, college education (55% to have bachelor's degrees or higher – downtown only has 15.8%), how many of the citizens have passports, and 60% homeownership (Pittsburg is at 52%). The best spot for it would be San Marco/Alves Ranch.**

****There are more than just restaurants in Downtown. There are different events like the Farmers' Markets, Culinary Crawl, Car Shows, Holiday Tree Lighting events and will soon to come is Movies in the Park.**

- Thank you for coming out on Saturday morning. What worries me is there is no monitoring of Industry Pollution.

****Air Pollution is monitored by Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The City is currently in the process of working with BAAQMD to meet criteria to create a pad for a facility on Loveridge/Leland. BAAQMD has many restrictions, need a lot of data, and have conditions about the location.**

- How can we create more employment here in Pittsburg? I work in San Francisco and get up at 4 a.m. every morning. There are a lot of people who live in Pittsburg that travel to San Francisco for work. I sent an email regarding White Collar employment in Pittsburg to the City and the

answer I received was that the City only focused on Blue Collar jobs. Pleasanton is now booming with pharmaceutical companies. It's like a second Silicon Valley. Call Centers are being transferred to Pleasanton. How can Pittsburg attract more White Collar Businesses?

**The completion of BART is about 18 months out. It's far from easy to get employers to Pittsburg. The City would like Call Centers. The addition of BART and the widening of Highway 4 will help to bring people to Pittsburg. The City fights for every job it can get; White or Blue. The City also fights to keep businesses.

- My family is not able to do much in Pittsburg. We go to the Antioch recreation center/water park for my daughters.

**Pittsburg has Buchanan Park which has a swimming pool. The City will be breaking ground within the next two weeks at Ambrose Park. The City also has Small World Park. Pittsburg may not have the same amenities as Antioch Water Park, but it still has two nice pools. The City has an activity guide with 4 pages of swim lessons and other activities for the community.

- The Housing market is down. My house is still upside down, but all over the Bay Area the market is normal. Why is that?

** If you use the Assessor's numbers as your measure, they are not real numbers. Go to Zillow which will give you more reasonable/accurate numbers.

**There are new subdivisions being built such as Clipper Cove, off of Herb White Way and are selling for \$400-\$600k for a 2,000 square foot home with virtually no yard. BART will change values of homes. The housing market in Pittsburg is on its way back up.

- I'd like to talk about neighborhoods and quality of life. We have ordinances that are not enforced. There are always shopping carts all over my neighborhood and the trucks that pick the carts up are ineffective. We should require the shopping centers to install devices to keep the carts from leaving the centers and if they do, the shopping centers should be cited.
- What are we doing about transients?

**The PD recognizes the issue with the shopping carts. The City has quarterly "Shopping Cart Details" dedicating a day to a "cart sweep". The City also has a shopping cart hotline the public can call and leave a location for the pick-up of carts.

- Are businesses cited?
- There are some homes that constantly have shopping carts at their houses (2115 Goff Avenue). Why aren't they told they cannot bring carts to their homes?

**The businesses are not cited but PD/staff will go to stores that frequently have their carts taken and find out what their policies are to keep carts on site.

- Why don't we enforce/cite vehicles to have license plates? This is just a way for people to commit crimes when they don't have to have license plates. How do you catch the criminals who don't have plates?

**There are 105 cameras in the City. The images are used to track vehicles from one camera to another. The City has a lot of different resources to solve crimes. Call Code Enforcement directly with concerns of specific vehicles with no plates.

- How will the BART Extension alleviate parking issues at the Bay Point BART station? Why don't they create more parking on the lot next to the Bay Point Station?

**Railroad Avenue/Pittsburg Center Station will have about 400 spaces for parking. Hillcrest Station in Antioch will have way more than 400 spaces for parking and will take the lion's share of commuters to free up spaces in Bay Point. The City is looking at possible shuttles or a new bus routing system to take residents to/from the BART extension without the riders ever having to get in their vehicles. BART has a master plan to build more housing but it would have to create a parking garage which is expensive.

- What is going on with the empty lots on Bailey, north of W. Leland Road? People are always parking on the lots and they are always full of weeds and debris

**These vacant parcels are County owned. The County Code Enforcement is not as diligent as far as the clean-up goes. We'd love to have control of those properties. We've been in talks with County for 6-8 months for the acquisition of the properties. We're also looking into putting cameras on Bailey Road to enforce regulations on the trucks going to Keller Canyon.

- What is the capacity at the Keller Canyon Landfill?

**They are currently going through an environmental review to expand daily tonnage. They currently take in 3,500 tons/day and are looking to increase to 5,000 tons/day. The City is monitoring this closely because we do not agree with some of the analysis. We believe they are using old analysis information and are waiting to hear back in regards to redoing an environmental review. We are also updating Land Use Permits.

- I had a meeting with Keller Landfill and they said they have had no complaints.

**Complaints can be made through County LEA and Air District. We don't have the final say, decisions are up to the County, but you can go on the County website and can enter complaint online where there will be follow-up. (Laura Wright) will give you my card for follow-up. There are also fees which help maintain the roadway and keep it clean.

- Compliments on front yard water conservation program, the City was great at responding. I've been in Pittsburg all my life – I love the expansion of Hwy 4, love Downtown, love being here. I want my hospital back on School Street, what is going on with the lot? It's nice to have other downtown businesses.

**There will be 82 homes built on the vacant lot on School and Harbor.

- On Ventura Drive we should put “No Cut Thru” signs. How can we enforce those using this street for commute?

**Residents, as well as commuters, would be affected. We opted NOT to do this, but will look back into it.

- Are there plans to fix the sidewalks?

**Homeowners are responsible to fix adjacent sidewalks, with the exception of Buchanan Road and we do have a CDBG project on Suzanne. Contact the City (Hilario & Fritz gave business cards) to find out who is responsible and the City will speak to the homeowner. The other exception is if the sidewalk is buckled due to a City tree or utility box.

- Are there plans to open Range Road/Polaris, over Hwy 4?

**14 years ago an analysis was done and found it would cost about \$35mil to do this and we could not find the money. Some neighbors would not want this.

- There are a lot of people “burning rubber” or “spinning donuts” at the intersection of Range/Polaris/Catamaran.

**Call the PD when this happens so we can help discourage this behavior.

- What is the plan with the big pipes behind the closed fence at Polaris/Range, we often see people sleeping in them. Also the trees in this area need trimming.

**Will follow up & assess the trees on Monday. The pipes have been there since 2007 and the plan is to use them. PD will go out to make sure nobody is sleeping in them.

- Stoneridge Development on E. Leland Road - There are 10-12 cars parked at the corner causing a sight distance issue. Can we get some enforcement there or paint the curb red?

**We will go out and make sure vehicles are legally parked and currently registered. There is no limit to how many vehicles a home can have. We will also look at the sight distance issue and red curb as needed.

- There is a property on Alves Ranch Road that has multiple cars from 5pm-8am. There is no Code Enforcement at that time and sometimes they park so we can't get in/out of our garage. What can be done about this?

**As long as the cars are currently registered and legally parked we cannot monitor number of vehicles one property has, but if they are blocking driveways call non-emergency dispatch (925) 646-2441 to have the vehicles cited or removed.

- Thank you for all of the improvements in Pittsburg! I'm wondering why we keep building new when we don't have all of the old vacant buildings filled?

**Location, location, location. Folks want to stay by the freeways and most of the vacant properties are privately owned. We try and work with developers and companies to bring to owners but they can't always agree on sales prices. We are aware of the vacant buildings. We have a website called ThinkPittsburg.com which is geared towards site selectors and includes demographic information and what the city looks like. There is a lot we do not have control over but we try to act as a "broker".

- This City has so much potential. I just don't understand how to get it going.
- Railroad Avenue is already congested by Hwy 4 overcrossing. I'm concerned with more people coming in with BART that it will be worse.

**Paul Reinders has software to synchronize all of the light signals, especially on Railroad Avenue. There are 4 signals that are controlled by Caltrans and we are working with them to get them all coordinated. This is a continual process. We will be providing a convenient/ safe place for drop off, and we will take preventative measures to deter people from getting out of vehicles in the middle of the street.

- Will the City be repairing the pot holes on Bliss Avenue?

**This is a private street and we've attempted to get the property owners to dedicate the street to the City.

- Are chickens allowed in the City?

**They are only allowed in open spaces, not in residential areas and there has been no interest in updating the municipal code.

- There is a property on Ackerman Drive that constantly has parties of 100+ people. Why don't they need a permit for this?
- Is Measure M for road improvement?

**Measure P passed in 2012. It will be decreasing in 2017 and completely gone in 2022. Measure P funds PD, Economic Development and senior services. Measure M is an extension to P; maintaining the same level, will extend to 2025, and include funding for youth programs and roadways. In 2010 we had a Redevelopment Agency and the state took our resources for that (\$2-3 million dollars were spent every year on street improvements). People began buying more hybrid cars which are good for air quality but bad for gas taxes so now we're looking at a loss of redevelopment money as well as gas tax revenue which in turn creates a deficit in road maintenance funds. Measure M will continue services for the Police Department, seniors, and we've added youth functions like PAL and Family Justice Center. There is an oversight committee for Measure P to watch how dollars are spent from these Measures.

**Paul Reinders is good at getting grants for roadway improvements but we need to have matching funds for the grants. Measure M could provide some of that. Measure J would also help leverage that. Our road conditions will continue to slip if we cannot come up with money.

- People drive erratically on W. Leland Road and the Police Department doesn't give tickets out at that location.

**We do have some roadway projects we'd like to see done on W. Leland at the curve: repaint the shoulder, maybe a street light or chevron warning signs. We've applied for a grant for high friction surface and center line rumble strips.

- Why can't the Police Department put their motor units out from 6:00-8:00am and 6:00-6:00pm to catch the speeding commuters?

**We can add a motor unit there. There is a lot of enforcement being done; it is proactively policed.

- Is there a fix for the area on W. Leland Road between Railroad Avenue and Range Road? People either have to park blocking the sidewalk or their car sticks into the lane of traffic.

**We don't know if we have a solution for this. We would have to acquire the right-of-way. We will look into the possibility of this.

- Does the City have a budget or a 2-year Plan? What does it entail and can it be found on the website?

**We have a single year budget and a 20 year plan. We are looking at a 2017-18/2018-19 longer term budget so the departments will plan out future expenditures. The City's current budget is on our website.

- Thank you. Great job on dumping complaint. The City's response was within 12 hours.
- When will we find out about the grant for improvements on W. Leland/Range to install a light?

**We will keep you informed and will post this meeting's minutes online.

- Eastbound W. Leland Road at Range Road the left turn signal onto Range Road is not sensitive or long enough. During commute hours it does not activate unit Range Road signal light turns left onto W. Leland Road.

**This is an older intersection and we are looking into it. This may be a loop issue.

- There is constant speeding on Ackerman that includes a blind corner. Can we put speed humps on this street?

**This street may not qualify for speed humps but we will have the Police Department put speed trailers out.

- Ofc. McCray responded to a call and he is a good guy, very courteous.
- Will we ever get Ferry Service?

**Ferry Service required a significant subsidy from Pittsburg to be operational. It will take 90 to 120 minutes to go from Antioch to San Francisco. Ferry Service will have a hard time being competitive with the expansion of BART.

**There are no ferry services in Antioch or Martinez. Please check the website.

<http://sanfranciscobayferry.com/>

- I try to support Pittsburg as much as possible. I went to a concert at California Theater and it was a great concert!
- Is there a handout for BART extension at Railroad Avenue?

**We will put one online. That is a good suggestion.

- With all of the new homes going into San Marco area how are you going to better the traffic situation? It already takes 15-20 minutes just to get onto the highway.

**There are 1,000 homes to be built just in the San Marco area. There will be a Hwy 4 meeting and video will be brought for Cal Trans to see. We will continue to get them to adjust the light for smooth traffic onto Hwy 4. Eventually we will have a Leland Road extension that goes into Concord as well.

- There is a section of Bailey Road into Concord that is almost not driveable, as it has many potholes. Will there be repairs made?

**This is on the Concord section of the road. This would be one of the roadway improvement projects.

- I want to compliment you on your GoGov Request App. I've entered illegal dumping complaints, roadway repairs needed, and graffiti complaints all through this app.

**If you can't figure out how to get the application, call us and we will guide you in downloading the app. Please use it and tell us what needs to be done around the City and if a particular department is not responsive it goes straight up to the City Manager.

- What is the current status of the park on Leland @ San Marco?

**This will be called Ray Giacomelli Community Park. We will be ordering the materials to start this project. We will start with the east side of the park with a playground and bathrooms. Phase I will be completed by summer and it will be a \$2.2 million project. We are working on funds for Phase II.

- On Harbor Street at Stoneman Avenue on the NE corner at Kirker Creek there has been cement dumped. Can we get this cleaned up? The gate was locked by the City for 2 days and then someone cut the lock. There has also been fence pickets removed and the homeless get down there.

**From Buchanan Road to P/A Highway we have a homeless problem. Officer Lambert has been assigned specifically to deal with homeless. He had this area cleaned out last month but it is a constant issue. We will look at getting the concrete cleaned up. Being homeless is not a crime, but it does cause blight. There is a process we have to follow to remove homeless encampment. We try to refer some of the homeless to the Veteran's Housing Project. There are other resources like Shelter Inc. and for those homeless people that are mentally ill we have the MHET Program but some choose not to use the resources. We also have some 211 flyers that are County services and resources available to all, not just homeless.