



Message from the New PCA President

Hello, my name is Joseph Curtis and I get to be President of the Parkmead Community Association this year. I will start my comments by thanking Pete Johnson on behalf of all Parkmeadians for the tremendous contribution he has made to our association as President for the past five years. I consider Pete my mentor and look forward to continuing to work with him in his new role of Community Liaison. Pete's vast experience in dealing with the City of Walnut Creek and the County will serve us well as he continues to coordinate our dealings with them.

We should all be proud of the quality of the PCA Board this year. It is very exciting to associate with such motivated and hard working individuals. This year we have continued to expand the idea of setting up committees to cover the various duties and projects we pursue each year. Francine Podenski is Chair of Development, Tom Sheridan is Chair of Communications, Anna Gunn is Chair of Events, Tony Phillips is the Website Coordinator, and Chris Sherwood is the Garage Sale Coordinator. I also want to thank our Vice President, Cris Tarozzi, who helps me with so many details.

Parkmead is facing many challenges. Your Association is consistently looking at the effect of local development, crime, traffic and other issues. By reading this newsletter cover to cover you can see how much your neighbors are doing on behalf of our neighborhood. I urge you to join, or rejoin your Association and volunteer to help on a committee. (see membership form enclosed). We need your support and we have a lot of fun.

Calendar

Tue. Apr. 18 – Ice Cream Social, 7:00 p.m.,
Hillside Covenant Church

Sat. June 3 – Neighborhood Garage Sale

Sun. Aug. 27 – Annual PCA Block Party –
watch for summer newsletter

Sat. Sep. 3 – Las Trampas Creek Nature Walk

The Parkmead CERT Group

The Parkmead CERT Group (Community Emergency Response Team) wants to remind everyone to set up their home emergency supply kit.

Our group will be meeting soon. In the meantime, to express interest or pose questions, please contact Rob Weiner at parkmeadboard@comcast.net.

Ice Cream Social

Tuesday, April 18, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hillside Covenant Church
2060 Magnolia Way

Neighborhood Watch Program

Presented by Walnut Creek Police Dept. and
County Sheriff

Baby-sitting provided + videos for kids

Parkmead Traffic Update

As you may have noticed, the Parkmead Neighborhood was recently paved with hoses at the entrances and exits at Lilac/Lancaster, Newell/Circle Dr. and Olympic/Newell. For quite some time, members of the Traffic Task Force (a subgroup of the Development Committee) have been working with the City of Walnut Creek to continue our efforts in trying to address neighbors' traffic concerns and take advantage of the momentum set by Parkmead residents at the Planning Commission meeting in September 2005.

A meeting with City traffic engineers resulted in a recent study of traffic patterns, speeds, and volumes along both Lilac (City jurisdiction) and Newell (County jurisdiction), within the neighborhood, in order to understand the basis for neighbors' concerns.

The hoses provided several pieces of data. In addition, City of Walnut Creek engineers were out in the neighborhood looking at traffic patterns. Following is a summary of the results.

Average Daily Traffic – Both Lilac and Newell average approximately 2800 cars per day (2,821 on Newell and 2,743 on Lilac). This is lower than counts taken in previous years.

Peak Hour Volumes – Not surprisingly, peak hours (hour when the most cars are driving in the neighborhood), coincide with school start and end times. The hours around 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. yielded between 300 to 400 cars traveling in the neighborhood.

Speed Survey – Speed data was collected by the hoses and verified by speed guns. Average speeds were just below the speed limit on Newell (24 mph) and slightly faster on Lilac (25-26 mph). 50% of drivers tended to drive at or below the speed limit of 25 mph along both Lilac and Newell. Most, approximately 99.5% of drivers, were going at 35 mph or less.

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Parkmead Traffic Update

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Through Traffic – Data collected on the amount of through-traffic utilizing Lilac and Newell shows that Newell receives quite a bit more through-traffic than Lilac. Of the approximately 265 cars that come into the neighborhood, between 12 and 1 p.m., 93 (or 35%) utilize Newell to reach a destination outside of the neighborhood. In the p.m. peak, between the hours of 5-6 p.m., this lowers to 30% or 89 out of 293 cars. The opposite is true for Lilac, although it sees significantly less pass-through traffic than Newell. In the noontime peak, 5 out of 91 cars (or 5%) that come into the neighborhood is pass-through traffic. This increases to 16% in the p.m. peak when approximately 22 out of the 137 cars on Lilac are just passing through the neighborhood.

Turning Movements – 64% of northbound traffic on Newell makes a left turn on Olympic in the a.m. peak hour, while 71% make the same turning movement in the p.m. peak hour.

Collisions – Collision data was collected from both City and County records. There was one speed related crash recorded on Lilac and another on Newell since 2003.

So what does this all mean? Tolerance for traffic volumes and speed will vary. To the city, these are not particularly significant numbers given that neighborhoods like Homestead average around 10,000 cars per day, and that other neighborhoods with schools see quite a bit more congestion and speeding than Parkmead. Given the results and tight operating budgets, the city cannot pursue further study to come up with solutions for Lilac. Since Newell is in the County, any traffic calming or sidewalk upgrades within the neighborhood would require support and funds from the County, something they are reluctant to do. As noted elsewhere in the newsletter, our only hope for funding to mitigate traffic impacts from cars entering our neighborhood will be when someone tries to develop the area around Newell and California. However, to neighbors who live with these results on a daily basis, particularly those that live on Lilac and Newell, families with small children that stroll along these streets, and the elderly, cars going faster than 25 mph is a major concern, particularly since there is limited pedestrian space on either of these streets. This is why Committee members will continue to monitor traffic in the neighborhood and see if we can get some low cost traffic calming options like signage, traffic diversion, enforcement or other solutions.

Finally, since the majority of traffic that enters and leaves our neighborhood is comprised of neighbors and their acquaintances, we would like to encourage you to do your part by slowing down and allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to safely share the streets we live in. This is particularly important along Lilac and Newell as they connect our neighborhood, provide a route to Parkmead Elementary, are used by bicyclists and parents strolling or walking with their kids, and experience the most traffic.

We should note that the City of Walnut Creek Traffic Engineers were gracious enough to include Newell in the traffic study even though it is within County jurisdiction. Thanks to Sue Chan and Michael Mulligan of the PCA for pursuing this with the City. If you wish to discuss this further, you are welcome to attend the Development/Traffic Committee meetings. These are held on an

as needed basis, but are currently active and dealing with other issues. You can inquire as to the next meeting by calling your district representative. They can pass on your contact information to receive announcements.

Note: Volume counts were taken during typical high traffic days, which exclude Mondays, Fridays, and school and work holidays. Also, due to the manner in which this data must be collected, data was not taken during peak traffic times (school start and end times) because of such factors as drop off and congestion delays, and complex traffic patterns. In any event, school traffic would very likely deter pass-through traffic at these times.

Walnut Creek General Plan Update

As this newsletter goes to press, the final draft of the General Plan 2025 for Walnut Creek is being reviewed by the City Council. The Planning Commission approved the Draft General Plan on January 12 and forwarded it on to the City Council for review and approval. This final step is expected in late March or possibly April and we will be keeping an eye on the process.

From a strictly Parkmead perspective, we feel we made significant inroads in making the City aware of our neighborhood and our concerns about development near us and the resulting traffic impact. Thanks to our Parkmead neighbors - the petition and the turnout last September in particular - we are a known entity to be considered in future development near us. We are referenced in the General Plan and there is a call for a “Specific Plan” for the area on Newell and California (Albertsons, etc). The Walnut Creek Journal listed Parkmead and Almond Shuey Neighborhoods as two neighborhoods the City needs to pay attention to. However, there are other steps to be taken in the coming year as we seek city funding for the Specific Plan and monitor any potential development at our entrance on Newell as well as in Creekside and Broadway Plaza. If and when a developer decides to develop the Newell-California area we will need to be actively involved to seek funding from the developer to mitigate traffic from using our neighborhood as an exit. This could include narrowing Newell between California and the freeway overpass.

In the meantime we will continue to work with the City traffic staff to seek ways to deal with the traffic exiting the City on Newell and Lilac. And since Newell is in the County we will need to work with the County on any concerns on Newell within our neighborhood. For updates on the General Plan visit the city website at www.walnut-creek.org.

If you have any questions about the General Plan feel free to contact Pete Johnson at parkmeadboard@comcast.net.

Contra Costa Weed Abatement Deadline

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District requires that weeds and wild grasses be cut and removed from properties by no later than mid-May.

It is important that you attend to this matter before the deadline date. If you have a compelling reason that your weed removal can not be completed before the deadline, you can apply for an extension from the county before the middle of May.

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District staff will intervene in our neighborhood after mid-May, 2006. This year's exact date has not yet been set due to the heavy rains. If county staff locates weeds and wild grasses that they consider fire hazards on your property after the deadline date, they have a legal right to enter your property, remove the weeds and wild grasses, and then bill you for the work done at county rates.

If you need names and phone numbers of companies who specialize in removing weeds and wild grasses, telephone the Contra Costa Fire Protection District at 941-3300. Then press "6" for the Weed Abatement Division, and, for referrals to weed removal companies, press "3". If you would like more info about weed abatement call George Laing at 941-3545.

We don't want a fire in our neighborhood like the Oakland Hills fire a number of years ago. Please --- let's each do our part to ensure our neighborhood is safe from fire danger this year!

PCA Development Committee

The Parkmead Community Association Development Committee **monitors** development proposals which impact the Parkmead neighborhood, **educates** members of the Parkmead community about development related topics, and **networks** with other neighborhood associations about development related issues.

The Saranap Community Association invited Development Committee members and Parkmead neighbors to a presentation about the proposed Paulson Lane Subdivision Project on Feb 06 2006 in Supervisor Ulikema's conference room, Lafayette, CA. Developers Brad Blake and Bob Walsh propose to build 22 two story homes on 4.6 acres on Paulson Lane. Concern was expressed about the impact that removal of up to 100 trees at Paulson Lane might have on 680 freeway noise in the Parkmead neighborhood. There was also discussion about possible impact of night light pollution from the new subdivision. The developers suggested that the Parkmead Community Association coordinate with the County to establish a CCNR for the Paulson Lane Subdivision.

The Development Committee and the Traffic Committee merged into one combined committee this year. Projects and proposals that the committee is currently monitoring include the proposed Paulson Lane Subdivision, the Walnut Creek General Plan document, problems caused by cut-through traffic on Newell and Lilac, and other projects that impact Parkmead neighbors.

For more information or to join the PCA Development Committee, contact Francine Podenski at parkmeadboard@comcast.net.

Concerned Citizens of Tice Valley

Concerned Citizens of Tice Valley (CC Tice Valley) is a loose knit, neighborhood group that has been established to keep Tice Valley residents updated on issues that impact us all. We are facing the threat of high rise condos on open space/recreation land at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) located on Tice Valley Blvd. The JCC wants to convert the plant nursery site to a 4 story (45 feet), 138 unit, luxury, high rise condo development with 1 ½ stories of underground parking. The following issues concern CCTV:

- The JCC property has a land use designation of "Open Space/Recreation" and should not be used for high density housing.
- The proposed development is way too dense for the area, which is surrounded by hills and low density housing, and quiet senior residences. The highest buildings are two stories and are rustic in nature.
- The design and architecture of the proposed buildings are out of scale and out of character with the surrounding neighborhood.
- The proposal sets a precedent for development at the eastern end of Tice Valley Blvd.
- Tice Valley Blvd cannot accommodate the increased traffic and parking problems that would result from an additional 300+ car trips per day, especially at the rural, eastern end where it is a winding country lane, but will also impact traffic and parking on Olympic Blvd, Rossmoor Parkway and in Parkmead.
- The JCC proposal is inconsistent with the 2025 General Plan's key provisions to "retain the character of existing neighborhoods", "preserve and expand open space, parks and recreation opportunities" and "protect views".

Please contact Concerned Citizens of Tice Valley at: ccticevalley@yahoo.com if you would like to receive future email updates. Provided by CCTV at the request of the PCA Board.

Parkmead Neighborhood Annual Garage Sale

It's time to start cleaning out those closets and pricing your goods for the **Annual Parkmead Garage Sale on June 3rd**.

We provide the advertising in local papers, signs in the neighborhood, balloons for participating houses and maps at the entrance of Lilac and Newell. All you have to do is put out your stuff and make sure you have paid your Parkmead Association dues.

To sign-up for the event, please contact Chris Sherwood at parkmeadboard@comcast.net.

We will need your address, phone & possibly E-mail address, but only addresses will be printed on the map.

Parkmead Community Association Newsletter – Spring 2006

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