



Parkmead Community Association

Summer 2007

Summer Block Party

Sunday, September 9, 1 PM to 5 PM

Maple Lane

Across from Parkmead School off Magnolia Way

Join Your Neighbors

Bring Your Family

Live Music

See article on this page

Message from the PCA President

It is midsummer and a good time to do a midyear review of the Parkmead Community Association. Your Board has been involved in quite a number of projects this year. One way to see what is new around Parkmead is to log on to our website, parkmead.org. Our site continues to grow and contains much valuable information. I suggest you take a few minutes and explore it. We have an events calendar, neighborhood news, photos, past newsletters and many helpful links.

You have probably noticed that the property at the corner of **Lilac and Arbutus** is poised for development. In the City of Walnut Creek General Plan 2025 under Chapter 2, "Quality of Life," Goal number One is to "Protect and enhance the quality of life in the city's residential neighborhoods" and Policy 1.1 is to "Protect the distinctive characteristics of each neighborhood." We have been meeting with the City of Walnut Creek in a somewhat futile attempt to insure that the City take this part of the General Plan into account as they approve this project. There is much more on this topic on page 3 of this newsletter.

We are looking at ways to improve the **Newell pathway**. This is a valuable community resource that during many times of the year has become impassable. No one likes the fact that school children need to walk in the street to circumvent the mud puddles during the winter. The PCA does not have the resources to put the path back into its original condition but we are undertaking the research to see what it might cost and what options may be available. We are in contact with the County and an outside contractor to see what it will take to repair and improve our path.

Some of the PCA Board members recently had a meeting with the leaders of several **other local community associations**. It was a good opportunity to share the concerns and successes of the various organizations. Although there isn't one galvanizing issue that we have decided to work together on at the moment, it is clear that we all have many similar concerns. We have agreed to continue to meet and keep each other informed on issues that may be of common interest.

PCA **membership** continues to grow. As of this date we have 215 households that have joined the Association. This is as many as we had all of last year so we look forward to a significant increase by the end of this year. Even with our growth and the remarkably low dues rate of \$12 per year, only about one in three households are members so we still have a lot of growth potential. If you have not joined the Association for this year, please do so.

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Annual Parkmead Community Summer Block Party – Sept. 9th

It is that time of the year again for the Annual Parkmead Summer Block Party and BBQ on Sunday, September 9th from 1:00pm-5:00pm on Maple Lane. This is an event for all residents of Parkmead, so bring your neighbors along for what will be a great afternoon of food and LIVE music by the band Spin Out!

Our party is held on Maple Lane (off Magnolia Way) across the street from Parkmead Elementary School. We will be serving hamburgers, hot dogs, and drinks all provided by the Parkmead Community Association. Please consider bringing a salad, desert or a favorite dish of your own (to feed approximately 10 people). We ask that you leave your four legged friends at home, but want you to come enjoy the festivities. There will be chairs to relax in, tables to dine at, and activities for the kids. Thank you to our fellow community residents living on Maple Lane for letting us use their street. Hope to see you there!

Calendar of Events

Sunday, Sept. 9 – Annual PCA Block Party 1 to 5 PM

Saturday, Sept. 29 – Las Trampas Creek Walk

October 1 to 5 – Walk to School Week

For details on the above, see articles in this newsletter

Tuesday, Nov. 13 – Fall Pizza Meeting and Board Elections, 7 PM, Hillside Covenant Church – details in Fall PCA Newsletter

We Need Your Experience

To best serve the neighborhood, the PCA Board has a strategic plan to get to know and work closely with the various City, County, State and other regulatory and governmental agencies. For years we have been developing relationships with City and County representatives and we will continue to create and take advantage of opportunities to work with them. If you are somehow involved with, or have strong contacts with, any of these organizations please let us know so we can put you on our resource list. Also, we occasionally need someone to interpret the legal jargon in the various regulations we work with so if you are an attorney and would like to help out your neighborhood please let us know. Contact Joseph Patch Curtis at chfc2000@yahoo.com to be on our resource list.

The Month of September is National Preparedness Month.

In September there will be a couple of opportunities to talk to CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) representatives from the city and see some demonstrations of what we can do. The first one will be at the "Celebration of Preparation" an Emergency Preparedness Fair sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the City of Walnut Creek. The fair will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 100 Northgate Road, Walnut Creek. The second one be at the Walnut Festival on Sept 22 – 23 11am – 8pm.

If you are interested in taking CERT classes offered by the City of Walnut Creek, go to the City's web site at <http://www.ci.walnut-creek.ca.us>, it will be under: SERVICES – City – Emergency Preparedness. The next is class starting on Sept 19th and will run 6 weeks. If you are unable to attend this class, they will offer more classes next year.

There are several web sites that might be helpful in getting started in your emergency preparedness. Here is one.

From the U.S. Department of Homeland Security located at <http://www.ready.gov/>, they will help you to make a kit, make a plan, and be informed. They also have plans for your animals.

Contact Michael Ulrich at ulrichtribe@earthlink.net for more information or to become part of the Parkmead Emergency Preparedness Team.

Neighborhood Creek Nature Walk

Saturday, September 29, 9am-11am

Join Friends of the Creeks biologist, Dr. Jim Hale, for a neighborhood creek channel nature walk. Learn about flora and fauna in the Parkmead portion of the Las Trampas creek channel between the Olympic Boulevard Bridge and the California Boulevard Bridge. Participants must be seven years of age or older, minors must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. Group size is limited. RSVP to reserve your space. For more information, call Francine Podenski at fpodenski@comcast.net

Walk to School Week

October 1 to 5

The first week of October is International Walk To School Week and once again the Parkmead Community Association will be joining in with a Walk to School Day celebration on October 1st. There will be Walking School Busses starting in the Arlene Lane, Arbutus, Magnolia and Dewing Park areas, and walking to Parkmead Elementary School. Please come and join the walking bus with your kids, your dogs or just yourselves to meet the neighbors, get a balloon, get some exercise and some fresh air, and do your part to save the environment and help make Parkmead an even friendlier safer place to be. For more information contact Tony Phillips at a.n.phillips@att.net

Development and Traffic News

Arbutus/Lilac Properties

This is an update on the vacant lot on Arbutus Dr at Lilac Dr as this newsletter goes to print the week of August 20. Things are suddenly moving quickly and the information and dates may change. We will keep the neighbors informed via our e-mail list and website www.parkmead.org. If you do not have internet access, and want information, feel free to contact Pete Johnson at PeteRPCV@astound.net or Sue Chan at sjhuettl@astound.net

The vacant lot where the old dairy barn house was is still destined for four homes. The PCA Board is working with the immediate neighbors to make sure their concerns are heard as well as those of others in the larger Parkmead neighborhood. The developer, Mark Scott Construction, has met with neighbors twice and has submitted plans for the 3 homes on the lower lots to the city piece meal, while not revealing the plan for the house on the hill. There will be two homes of two stories facing Arbutus while the house on the corner will be one story with a high roof. The corner house has been approved for a building permit after the developer reduced the size a bit to meet city maximum size criteria for that lot size and construction can begin on August 26. The square footage of the 3 homes is in the 3400 to 3700 foot range plus garage and thus about 4500 square feet.

Neighbors and PCA Board members have met with city staff. A meeting with the builder's architect and two neighbors, one a planner and one an architect, is planned for late August. Neighbors are concerned about house size and building mass and have expressed this to the developer and to city staff. In response to PCA Board and neighbor concerns as well as city criteria, city staff has informed the developer that public hearings will be necessary. City staff has determined that two of the three homes will need a public hearing before the Design Review Commission, most likely on Sept. 5, but it could be later in September. Letters to the city and developer from the neighbors have documented these concerns while the PCA Board will encourage the city to follow its General Plan goals to "protect and enhance " residential neighborhoods and another one to "require that infill development is compatible with its surroundings". For more details and background see

Walnut Creek JCC Expansion On Tice Boulevard

On July 17, 2007, Walnut Creek City Council conducted a hearing to consider a proposal to change land usage owned by the Jewish Community Center on Tice Valley Boulevard from recreational/open space to very high density multiple family housing. The JCC hopes to re-zone the land and then sell to a developer to finance the expansion of the Walnut Creek JCC from a local center into a much larger Bay Area regional center. City Council rejected the JCC's proposal and encouraged them to return with a proposal for less dense housing on this site. For more details, go to www.parkmead.org

Tice Valley Boulevard Condominiums

A proposal is forthcoming for a 17-unit condominium project at 1640 and 1660 Tice Valley Boulevard near Olympic Boulevard. (This is the nursery land next door to Bryon Park on Tice Valley Blvd). Community members have met with the developer, with County planning staff, and county supervisors to discuss concerns about this project.

Traffic Study Planned

Now that Trader Joe's and Elephant Pharm are both open and schools are back in session, the PCA Board will be back in contact with the City of Walnut Creek concerning the traffic impact study planned for the Fall. Though the stores may be welcome news for Parkmead residents, the cut-through traffic impact on Newell Avenue could be considerable. The PCA worked with the City on traffic mitigation before Trader Joe's opened and signs were installed directing traffic exiting the parking lot away from our neighborhood. Traffic studies were done in the recent past on Newell and Lilac as well as at the intersection of Newell and S. California Blvd. and these will be used as a base to see what changes have resulted from the 2 new stores. The crowded parking lot has also been a concern, but hopefully that will not impact our neighborhood. If you have questions or input on this, contact us at parkmead@parkmead.org or Joseph Patch Curtis at chfc2000@yahoo.com or Francine Podenski at fpodenski@comcast.net.

NAME	BOARD	OFFICER/COMMITTEE/CONTACT	PHONE
Joseph Curtis	At Large	President	
Anna Gunn	District 4	Vice President	
Mary Andre	At Large	Treasurer	
Terri Almeida	District 2	Secretary	
Jodi Hayes	District 1		
Chris Sherwood	District 3	Garage Sale Coordinator	
Matthew Mead	District 5	Events Comm. Chair	
Tony Phillips	District 6	Web Page Coordinator	
Ann Hinshaw	Dist 7 acting		
Katie Conlan	At Large		
Pete Johnson	At Large	Communications Comm. Chair	
Francine Podenski	At Large	Development Comm. Chair	
Katie Zeigler	At Large		

Contact board members at Parkmead@parkmead.org

District Map - see website www.parkmead.org or call for copy

PCA President – Continued from page 1

The **Summer Block Party** is the Parkmead social event of the season. This is definitely a child friendly party so bring the whole family. This event is important because the warm and casual atmosphere is perfect for getting to know your neighbors and it provides an opportunity for the PCA Board members to get your thoughts on our neighborhood. We have been able to increase our budget for this event so we will once again have live music and lots of refreshments for young and old. We were able to do this without increasing dues because some of you decided to make donations in addition to dues. We thank you for this and urge you to continue your generosity.

Your Association is constantly looking at ways to further the quality of life in the neighborhood and we need your help. We have more ideas than resources so if you want the opportunity to contribute to your community and work with some quality people, talk to a Board member about how you might help.

Joseph Patch Curtis

Membership

Forgot to join the PCA this year? Never too late!! You can get the information on how to join on our website at www.parkmead.org or contact a board member (see list in this newsletter). Not sure if you are a member? Contact Mary Andre at Parkmead@parkmead.org

PCA Electronic Communication

Check our website – www.parkmead.org

To join our **neighborhood e-mail list**, send an e-mail to parkmead@parkmead.org with your name and (optional) home address.

“Lake Arlene”

For residents of the Arlene Gardens section of Parkmead, there has been a minor flooding problem at the intersection of Arlene Dr. and Lilac (the Arlene to the west nearest to Arbutus) for years. Over ten years ago the neighbors petitioned the city to solve it. Studies and surveys were done but the cost of a storm drain for such minor flooding was prohibitive and the engineering tricky. Finally after many years of friendly conversation with city staff, the city installed new curbs and engineered the drop off to draw water away from the intersection. The neighbors await the winter rains to test the “lake” and claim continued drought will not count for victory. Contrary to rumor, there is no “Save Lake Arlene” movement afoot.

School is back in session.

Drive carefully.

Lilac Drive and Newell Ave. residents — please keep the pathways clear of parked vehicles and remove trash cans in a timely manner.