

Notes on North Park Community Plan Update Meeting of 12/15/2009

[Click here to Link to Meeting Agenda](#)

District 3 City Council Member, Todd Gloria, opened the meeting with a brief address expressing his thanks and appreciation for the volunteers who serve on the Community Plan Update Advisory Panel & the residents to attend these meetings.

Marlin Pangilinan, City of San Diego Senior Planner in charge of this process, presented a summary slide show of the input the City received this month from the community, and then moderated the ensuing discussions. (The “homework” from last month’s meeting was to take photos of “likes” and “dislikes” in North Park) The city received around 400 photos from North Park residents.

[Click here for link to City Website with December Meeting Power Point Presentation](#)
(Note: Photos and Comments in the Slide Presentation are as received from the public, not opinions from the City!)

Common themes that emerged from the photographs submitted in the “likes” category were:

Bike paths, canyons and open space, water-wise landscaping both public and private, attractively paved and landscaped sidewalks with tree plantings, side walk café’s and well designed welcoming storefronts in commercial areas, public art, sensitive preservation and adaptive re-use of historic resources in all forms (i.e. historic districts, private homes, bungalow courts, apartment buildings, commercial buildings, public institutions) and a general love of the cobblestone walls, pillars and landscape features that abound in North Park. Also popular were public concerts and the arts in general. And many people expressed an appreciation of the ethnic and economic diversity of North Park.

Common themes in the “dislikes” category were:

Unattractive and unwelcoming Community “gateways” were a common dislike. There were photos of unattractive bridges, freeway on-ramps and streetscapes that form the entrances to North Park and also some suggestions for how they might be improved.

Poor pedestrian and bike access in some areas, particularly between communities like North Park and Uptown (that whole El Cajon Blvd/Park Blvd/ Washington Street interchange) was seen as a concern.

The undesirability of out-of-scale buildings was another common theme, particularly when located adjacent to historic homes and buildings. And there was a general aversion to “boxy”, “clone”, “strip mall”, “boring”, pedestrian-unfriendly and bland architecture. Poor maintenance of homes, landscaping, commercial buildings, roads and sidewalks was noted as a concern and sometimes a hazard.

Several people cited “predatory lending” establishments as being inappropriate tenants for a redevelopment area like North Park, concerns about the streetscape and management of some public service agencies, and “threats to public safety” like graffiti, erosion and the fire hazard from untrimmed brush.

After the Slide show, there was wide ranging discussion under the category of “opportunities”, during which panel members and members of the public contributed suggestions for improvements to problems areas in North Park.

There followed a “debrief” discussion, with the city soliciting feedback on how the meeting and process could be improved.

What is next? How can I get involved?

Why, come to the next meeting, of course! ☺ The next Public Meeting will be the 3rd Wednesday in February, with the location still to be determined. Check the NPCA Meetings page for info when we have it.

There will be self-guided walking tour of specific areas on North Park (to be determined by City Staff) in January, in lieu of a meeting. Maps, details & instructions for feedback will be provided via the city website after the first of the year.

North Park residents may all continue to submit photos and ideas and comments to MPangilinan@sandiego.gov throughout this process.

! Please reduce the size of your photo files before submitting and keep each email communication to under 10MB, as the city’s server will bounce anything larger than that.

So if you didn’t have time to participate before, it is not too late. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help shape the future of North Park. Do attend the next meeting and please do keep sending your ideas and photos to the City.

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