

Laurel/Redwood/Leona Heights (Beat 25X)
Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 13, 2012
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Redwood Heights Recreation Center

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bobbie Bond at 7:06 p.m.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Announcements

- **16 February/10-11:30 a.m.** Local Heroes Award at Allendale Park. Libby Schaaf invited everyone to attend this amazing event to recognize volunteers in the area.
- **6 March/7 pm** Free Burglary Workshop at St. Lawrence O’Toole Church.
- **16 March/10 a.m.—2:30 p.m.** CORE Citywide Exercise Skills Workshop

Neighborhood Law Corps Attorney Greg Minor

G. Minor is responsible for Central East Oakland. He focuses on improving the quality of life for citizens—everything from prostitution to illegal dumping. Residents can e-mail him with complaints. Upon sufficient evidence, the NLC will move to prosecute those responsible for crimes/nuisances. They use nuisance/eviction law, among others to deal with issues. A resident from Tompkins Ave (one of the founders of the Neighborhood Law Corp) said it is one of the most innovative programs in the country with an earned reputation for working effectively with the community to solve problems.

“Oakland's community law unit puts attorneys in the streets to tackle drug houses, prostitution, slumlords, blight and other problems affecting the quality of life in Oakland communities. The program which is inspired by the Peace Corps was recognized with the Gold Award for Municipal Excellence from the National League of Cities.

NLC attorneys are spearheading the City Attorney's effort to protect the rights of tenants in foreclosed buildings. To report a nuisance or get help from the NLC, call **(510) 238-6517** or e-mail lawcorps@oaklandcityattorney.org.

New Problem-Solving Officer Clay Burch

- Officer Burch provided some background on himself. He is originally from New Jersey. He tries to keep a bit of that attitude in his work—plain talking. He started as a Problem Solving Officer 5 years ago on Beat 27, served as a Resource Officer working narcotics and has also done robbery suppression. He weeds out criminals and follows up with City resources to deal with underlying issues. He recently served as an acting sergeant.
- ***Burch’s problem-solving philosophy.*** He sees himself as a “process man,” consulting with neighborhoods—analyzing the neighborhood, identifying problems, recommending and helping with solutions.

- He identifies the hub of criminal activity (HOCA) (the center from which various problems radiate outwards).
- Burch works with the NSCs, aligns resources, and attacks problems. He also uses the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) philosophy. (How a built environment influences crime.) He related his successes in using this method in previous work in East Oakland. He believes in cooperative problem-solving—bringing together teams from City, neighborhoods, and businesses.
- Burch appreciates serving the community but also stated “he’ll walk with us but not for us.” Wants to help everyone work together—collaborating but not doing it. He *will help when he can, but it’s up to you the community.*
- Wants all communication to go through Renee Sykes, the NSC assigned to the area. He will not be answering e-mails sent to him.
- The murder in the 4000 block of Quigley Ave. has nothing to do with the neighborhood. Anyone with information should call the Major Crimes Unit at 238.3821.
- There is an exemplary camera system on Maybelle & Bayo. (Contact Robin White.) Officer Burch is using pictures from this system as a resource in crime solving efforts.
- His work hours are Tuesday-Friday, noon to 10:00 p.m.
- He encouraged residents to attend the upcoming workshop and learn how to “target harden” homes; he will then work with residents to brainstorm on further measures.
- A neighbor told of her success in using a different tactic to discourage area youth from congregating in front of her house.
- Identify people who are causing problems. (Consult your NSC and Councilmember for resources.)
- Make multiple calls to the police to report incidents, create a greater impact and generate more responses by OPD.
- Always make reports to the police as complete as possible. Documentation should also be as complete as possible. The PSO needs to be able to justify to commanders why time is being spent on any particular case.
- A resident expressed concern that there has been (5) PSOs in 5 years, and if it will take Officer Burch a while to really know the neighborhood, what chance does the community have?

District 4 Council Member Libby Schaaf

- The police contract allows PSOs to transfer to other divisions. As long as the entire team is working together, it should still work.
- There have been some real highs and lows this month. A murder on Quigley Ave. and the shooting of two officers. On the positive side, three new council members are on board and the (3) Schaaf-Reid proposals were passed that added another police academy, \$4.2M permanent increase in public safety plus another \$4M in one time public safety expenditures.

- Council also passed the OPD strategic planning consultants (Wasserman, Bratton, et al) contract.
- Schaaf encouraged everyone to attend her Public Speakers' series—the next is in April at Holy Names University. Her website is www.safeoakland.com. Click on events for upcoming community activity.
- **Quigley Ave.** homicide—She appreciates the Neighborhood Services Division turning around her request to review the area around the cul-de-sac and making recommendations. Eddie Simlin will be conducting a CPTED walk on February 20, 2013 at 4 p.m. Residents were invited to the walk.
- Natasha Middleton and Lily Mono will be temporarily replacing Community Liaison, Shereda Nosakhare while she is out on family leave caring for her newborn twins.
- On the first Saturdays of the month, CM Schaaf has office hours (9-11) at World Ground Cafe in the Laurel.

Q&A

- **Q. How much help are pictures from cameras?** A. It depends on how usable they are. (Burch) Some pictures can only be used as background pix for officers to see and keep in mind. Schaaf added how important it is to position cameras at face level to help get a good face shot of the possible suspect.
- **Q. When are residents going to be able to feel safe going downtown again?** A. Actually, there are a lot of people in the downtown area in the evenings. Specifically for Art Murmur. Schaaf recommends going early and not staying late. Crime has actually declined in the downtown area.
- **Q. Is there any way to get pix of the young people who are committing crimes in the area sent to Juvenile Hall?** A. Great idea. We'll continue to explore.
- **Q. Who in OPD investigates evidence from the pix?** A. Burch—Usable ones get forwarded to the Burglary and Robbery details for follow-up investigation.
- **Q. Attendee noticed that newspapers in the city of Ventura have a police column that focuses on how and where crimes are being committed as a way to inform the general public. Is that something Oakland can do?** A. Good idea—if not the Tribune, maybe the newly reopened Laurel Metro.
- **Q. Is there any way to bring together all the different list servs in the Beat?** A. Probably best to have a member of one listserv be on several others and bring back information to their listserv as appropriate.
- **Q Where will new OPD officers be assigned?** A. Currently there are unassigned beats (no officer). The new police recruits should fill in these slots.
- An attendee told Schaaf and the group that she and her neighbors try to know each other as much as they can. They notify each other (5 house radius from each house on the block) when they are coming home late so others can watch out for them. They are encouraging each other to do this through telephone contact. They stand on their front porches and watch until the person gets safely into the house.
- Another neighbor told of his neighborhood working together relying less on OPD since they are not always reliable. They also look out for each other. "Target

hardening” homes, working as a neighborhood, with a 210-member listserv, sponsoring social events, and a newsletter (dnwneighborhood@wordpress.com).

- Schaaf stated Oakland now has the fewest number of officers in recent memory. In six weeks this will turn around. There will be one academy graduating soon, and the next one starting right after that and another starting in September.

NSC R. Sykes

Renee Sykes told the group on behalf of superiors in OPD that residents must not chase/pursue criminals or suspicious people in their neighborhoods.

An attendee stated in response, in the last two years, only three of the seventy houses in her neighborhood have not been burglarized. People there feel they need to do what has to be done to try and keep them safe.

Steve Tull will be the new police captain for this area starting in March.

Status of Safeway remodeling: residents can visit the website at www.safeway-store.com.

Senior Housing High & MacArthur: The project itself was approved several years ago; now waiting on the results of the EIR. No news yet.

OTHER ITEMS

4690 Tompkins (Beulah House)

There are plans to create 40 high-end rental apartments with on-site parking. New owners, Urban Green Investments (UGI) of San Francisco, conducted a community meeting in January where their plans were presented. To date, UGI has not filed any formal plans with the City nor have they presented anything in writing to the surrounding community. Members of the community will have a number of opportunities to review UGI’s written plans and formally react/respond to them.

Council members may not take any position on building projects because final City approval of any plans for such projects in Oakland come before and are decided on by the Council. However, Schaaf and her staff are carefully monitoring the project and keeping constituents informed of facts, processes, and procedures.

CM Schaaf’s office and neighbors will be meeting in the near future to review and learn about the permitting process, hear about the impacts of various uses of such a property, and discuss ways to monitor and participate as the project moves forward.

Cash for Gold in the Laurel

217 e-mails from area residents opposing this business allowed Deputy City Administrator Sanchez to reject their application request.

Selection of 2013 Priorities

Recommendations:

- Educating citizens, working with each other to keep safe.
- Establishing more Neighborhood Watch groups

Recommendations for personal safety:

- Don't chase people, or question them, wave at them.
- A neighbor suggested mixing paper garbage from one neighbor's can to another neighbor's to keep them from being a victim of identity theft.

Good of the Order

- Summer employment opportunities with Oakland Parks & Rec. Check the City website for listings.
- The "Movies in the Park" series starts in April at Redwood Heights Recreation Center

With no further items up for discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bond at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Danny Cieloha
NCPC Secretary