



Parkmead Community Association

Summer 2005

Walnut Creek General Plan Update — Call to Action

Undoubtedly you are aware that Walnut Creek is updating its General Plan covering the next 20 years. Missed it in the newspaper or via the Parkmead Community Association? Want to stay current and involved? Join our e-mail list (see below). It's not too late to have an impact.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is on September 22 (date could change to October 6) to discuss potential development on Newell Ave and California Blvd near the entrance to our neighborhood. Some PCA Board members and concerned neighbors have been attending city meetings to monitor plans and have voiced opinions on planned development and the impact on traffic on Newell as an exit from downtown as well as on Lilac.

As this goes to print, there is a neighborhood petition in the works with support from the PCA Board to provide input to the Planning Commission and City Council on our concerns and suggestions. It's difficult to cover everyone's views in a petition or group letter, but we hope many of you will sign when contacted in coming days or at the Block Party on September 18.

Of particular interest are plans to allow and possibly promote more development on Newell across from Kaiser, including Albertsons, with up to 50' heights allowed. Broadway Plaza may be allowed 400,000 square feet of expansion although this has recently been dropped from the General Plan as the shopping center owner seeks earlier and separate approval to amend the current plan. The increase in traffic using Newell to exit downtown Walnut Creek will be noticed. No matter your individual views on past or planned development in Walnut Creek, most of us are concerned about traffic and safety in our neighborhood.

We are working with other neighborhood groups such as Almond Shuey and Saranap plus a city-wide group of concerned citizens. While we

Continued on Page 2

Annual Parkmead Community Block Party

You are invited to the annual Parkmead neighborhood summer block party and barbecue. A nice lunch, friendly neighbors, Come early to join in the fun! Games and activities for the kids. Catch up on news about the Walnut Creek General Plan and consider signing a petition expressing neighborhood concerns about the plan.

The party is planned for Maple Lane (off Magnolia Way). Walk or bike if you can. See old friends, meet new ones – new neighbors please come out, invite a neighbor to come with you. The PCA is providing hamburgers, hotdogs, drinks, plates, and utensils. Salads and desserts to share would be appreciated, but not necessary. More importantly, we want you to come out and join the fun. We will have chairs for relaxing in the shade. Special thanks to our Maple Lane neighbors for letting us use their street. Hope to see you there!

-- Parkmead Community Association Board

Calendar of Events

(see articles for details)

- **Sunday, September 11** – Emergency Preparedness Fair — 11 AM to 3 PM, Civic Park; Held at Parkmead in prior years.
- **Sunday, September 18** – Parkmead Block Party
- **Saturday, September 24** – Creek Walk
- **October 3-7** – Walk-Bike to School Week
- **Saturday, October 15** – Neighborhood Work Project
- **November 14** – tentative date - Parkmead Fall Pizza Party, community meeting and Board elections – see next PCA newsletter

Summer Block Party

Sunday, September 18th

12:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Maple Lane

(Across from Parkmead School, off Magnolia Way)

Join Your Neighbors

Bring Your Family

Desserts/Salads appreciated (we need a few)

PCA E-Mail List

The PCA Board has established an e-mail list of neighbors who want to be informed on events and issues of interest to the neighborhood. This is an attempt to improve communications during the months between our three newsletters. There will be no commercial or political use of your e-mail address, no attached files, and no sharing of the list. We do not expect more than one posting a month. You will be listed as "blind copy" so others will not see your email address. If you want to be on this list, send e-mail to parkmeadboard@comcast.net with your name and (optional) home address.

Call to Action — Continued from page 1

emphasize the impact on Newell, we also have concerns about other areas of the City including the downtown.

So—how can YOU be informed and involved?

- Attend our PCA neighborhood meetings
- Sign up for our e-mail list (see bottom of page 1)
- Join the Parkmead Community Association
- Join the Traffic or Development Committee
- Read the local newspaper or their website
- Check the Walnut Creek website www.walnut-creek.org and click on General Plan Update
- Attend Walnut Creek Planning Commission and City Council meetings (also on local TV live on Comcast 6 or Astound 29)
- Contact City and County officials

Who to Contact and What You Might Say?

Contact Walnut Creek City Staff by calling the General Plan Hotline at 256-3526, by e-mail to walker@ci.walnut-creek.ca.us or write a letter to Victoria Walker, Senior Planner, City of Walnut Creek, 1666 N. Main St, Walnut Creek 94596. Please identify yourself as a resident of Parkmead so they know we care about our neighborhood and the impact of the plan on us. Write a letter to the Contra Costa Times including the Thursday Walnut Creek Journal. And please let us know of any action you take so we know how the neighbors feel about all this.

You are urged to express your personal views on this. Many of us on the PCA Board who have attended the hearings, are concerned about traffic increasing on Newell as an exit form Broadway Plaza, Kaiser and potential increased commercial and residential development on Newell. We urge limiting heights in the Plan to 35' in "land use change area 3" and limiting Broadway Plaza to its current size. We especially urge lesser heights on the west side of California toward the freeway (Pinky's block). As mitigation to the Plan we urge traffic calming on Newell by narrowing it from California Blvd. to the freeway underpass and greatly limiting development along that short block. Any new development on that block should be forced to exit on California not Newell. We welcome your suggestions, as does the City.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the new General Plan is on the city website and comments are due by September 16 to Victoria Walker, WC Senior Planner (see above), Our main concern is that the General Plan will allow for substantial increases in residential housing in the downtown and in excess of 1.2 million square feet of new commercial development. The EIR acknowledges this would contribute to traffic delays (gridlock) and air quality degradation and calls them "significant and unavoidable". Please let the city know you want to avoid this by limiting the scope of the draft General Plan.

We urge you to take action now by contacting the city and on **September 22** by attending the city meeting. Dates and agendas can change so to stay informed, join our e-mail list. There will be a continuing need for more input and action when the City Council takes up the recommendations of the Planning Commission in the months ahead. The city website will have current information as will the Contra Costa Times.

Pete Johnson
President

School Is Open + Walk/Bike to School Week October 3-7

With the school year underway, we ask all to drive carefully and for those on Lilac and Newell to try to keep the pedestrian pathways clear of vehicles (including workers at your homes) in mornings 7:30-8:30 and early afternoons and try to remove empty trashcans as soon as possible. The children and parents appreciate it. Parkmead Elementary School is again working with the PCA to support our second annual Walk/Bike to School Week October 3 to 7. Please drive with extra caution that week during school time.

Neighborhood Creek Nature Walk

Saturday, September 24; 9:00 AM to 10:45 AM

Parkmead neighbors attending the PCA Spring 2005 Community Meeting and Ice Cream Social expressed interest in learning more about local creek flora and fauna. As a follow up, a biologist from Friends of the Creeks will lead a neighborhood creek channel walking tour. Participants must be seven years of age or older; minors must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. RSVP to reserve your space early. Group size is limited.

Neighborhood Projects

In cooperation with Hillside Covenant Church, the PCA has worked on several neighborhood projects in the past few years. The next project is October 15. In addition, we are considering working on the entrance to our community on Newell at Circle Drive to clean up and landscape the circle. If you are interested, contact parkmeadboard@comcast.net.

| Officer | Position | Phone |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Pete Johnson | President | |
| Joseph Curtis | Vice President | |
| Mary Andre | Treasurer | |
| Tony Almeida | Secretary | |
| Francine Podenski | Development Committee | |
| Mike Mulligan | Traffic Committee | |

| District | Board Member | Phone |
|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Jodi Hayes | |
| 2 | Tony Almeida | |
| 3 | Paul King | |
| 4 | Joseph Curtis | |
| 5 | Sue Chan | |
| 6 | Tony Phillips | |
| 7 | <i>Vacant</i> | |
| At Large | Ann Hinshaw | |
| At Large | Sirkka Lonzo | |
| At Large | Francine Podenski | |
| At Large | Cris Tarozzi | |
| Editor | Craig Pollock | |