

**Racquet Club Estates Neighborhood Organization
Minutes of May 12, 2012
Annual General Membership Meeting @ Vista del Monte School
By, Joseph May**

Welcome and Introductions

Rick Vila called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. Board members introduce themselves: Robert Perry, Dean Nicastro, Barbara Maccarillo, Joseph May, Scott Kennedy, Bob Merliss, Donna Chaban-Delmas, and Terry Towne.

Approval of Minutes

April minutes were approved.

Financial Report

Dean reported that we have \$21,041.95. Reports were filed with the IRS.

Preservation advocate and distinguished architect Patrick McGrew on historic districts

Patrick came to speak to us today about the process of becoming an historic district. He talked about our neighborhood as possibly having four to six separate historic districts each one coinciding with different developments in our neighborhood: Wexler steel homes, Alexander moderns, Alexander ranchers, Meiselman homes etc.

He stated that there was a form for application on the city website and spoke about his experience assisting Royal Hawaiian Historic District. He said that only those homeowners who wanted to be a part of the district would and there could be several houses on any given streets whose owners opt out. To qualify the house exterior would have to maintain a specific architectural integrity and only those that qualify would be eligible for Mills Act tax reductions.

Questions were asked:

Q: Would there be restrictions as to what one can do to their house?

A: Yes, if they are qualifying homes and there are "secretary standards" that is, what is appropriate and what is not.

Q: Could the boundaries be drawn so that one house is in and the house next to it is not?

A: Yes, it does happen. Once owners of those homes that don't qualify see the benefit they often consider renovating to be designated.

Q: What is the difference between an "historic district" and an "overlay district?"

A: In Los Angeles they call their historic districts "overlay districts"

Q: Are there any forms of assistance for those homeowners whose homes don't qualify unless they are renovated?

A: This can be done by the neighborhood organizations.

Q: You stated that we could have several districts, why would we want to do that instead of creating just one historic district?

A: There are several different developments within this neighborhood each with different specific architectural interest. It would be nearly impossible to have a neighborhood as large as this one in agreement. It would therefore be much easier to start small, one part of the neighborhood, and then add on.

Q: At Royal Hawaiian was there an assessment of each property?

A: Yes, property construction date, integrity statement for each property.

Q: What about houses that have eliminated breezeways and carport? Doe that disqualify them?

A: No, not necessarily. It is important to say that property values ALWAYS go up in historic districts.

Q: How much do taxes go down for those properties that qualify for Mills Act?

A: It depends how long they've owned the house, if they owned it for fewer years the reduction will be greater than if they've owned it for a long time. It is very complicated.

Q: How long does it take, what is the time span?

A: Six or seven months if a professional is hired, longer if the group wants to take it on themselves.

Scott said that he would spearhead the effort.

BOA Elections

One half of the board had to be reelected, nobody else wanted to run. All incumbents were reelected.

Joseph Scudder

Was not able to attend but Joseph May made his announcements:

1. To let the membership know that we'll be purchasing approximately 40 bicycles for our Perfect Attendance program with the RCENO donation this year – thank you to everyone!
2. The exterior of VDM is being painted over the summer – and anyone with ideas for a new color scheme should email him at jscudder@psusd.us

Terry Towne on Charitable Donation Forms

Terry is in the process of designing a charitable donation form. At the June BOA meeting we will review it.

Robert Perry on Neighborhood Beautification

Robert and Barbara are still working on a plan to assist economically disadvantaged homeowners in fixing up their facades.

Donna Chaban on PSNIC

Donna reported on the latest PSNIC meeting:

- Police Chief spoke about the departments reverse 911 program and about neighborhood safety.
- A PSNIC member will attend all Measure J advisory Commissions meetings.
- Grants will be available for homes in our neighborhood for solar conversion, more information upcoming
- Community garden at Demuth Park is open and residents can obtain a plot for a small fee, go to city website
- There will be a sustainability fair at the Camelot Theater on May 19
- There will be a sustainability Expo on October 27th.
- The pipe bomb issue was presented and residents were asked to report any suspicious looking devices. If found, move away, move all people from the area, stop all traffic in the area, call 911 on a landline. A resident who lives on San Rafael spoke about his experience as his next-door neighbor had a pipe bomb found on his property.

Ken Lyon on SCE Tree Cutting

Ken announced to the group that undergrounding power lines is way too expensive and will not be happening. He spoke with SCE about the old poles not being removed. SCE said that they would take care of them. He also told SCE that palm trees are being topped, and left to die. SCE said that homeowners should give them the addresses where this happened and they will come out and remove them. Ken told the group to send him the addresses where palm trees have been topped and he will forward them onto SCE for removal.

Other Potential Topics

- More involvement: Some members wanted to talk about getting more involvement in RCENO. Ideas ranged from creating “welcome packets” to more members attending BOA meetings. A Welcome Wagon used to exist but no longer does. We could do a better job with communications and a monthly newsletter was suggested.
- Neighborhood watch: One member suggested that we form neighborhood watches. It was proposed that we have this as an agenda item for our June 9th meeting.

- Ideas for spending money: Robert suggested we work with Good Samaritans in helping to feed seniors in need. A member suggested a sign at the entrance to the neighborhood. It was brought up that our neighborhood has multiple entry points and identifying just one would be problematic. Joseph suggested doing something with the median strips along Caballeros and Racquet Club.
- Measure J: Ken announced that the advisory Committee has been formed. Rick explained that Measure J monies are not just for the downtown redevelopment project but also for improvements all over town.
- Lee Bono announced the citywide picnic would be on March 23, 2013.
- One member said that in light of PSUSD plan to replace a mid-century modern building on Palm Springs High school campus with a new art department building, RCENO should not be giving money to programs like the VDM attendance program. ***(It shall be noted here that the students at Vista Del Monte who have perfect attendance and earned the reward of a bicycle should not be punished for what some believe is an inappropriate decision made by the school board.)***
- Historic District: Rick asks the group if everyone is supportive of the plan to go ahead with the historic district. Everyone raises their hands, as there was no opposition in the room to the plan to seek historic district status. It was suggested that we hire a professional like Patrick McGrew to assist us. Ken will forward the guidelines to Scott who is facilitating the process with his committee.

BOA Meetings Hosting Schedule for 2012

Here is the hosting schedule for our meetings for 2012:

- ~~April 14~~ — Bob Merlis
- ~~May 12~~ — Vista Del Monte
- June 9 - Terry Towne
- July - Dark, no meeting
- August 11 - Joseph May
- September 8 - Rick Villa
- October 13 - Picnic and general membership meeting
- November 10 - Lauren Scarbro
- December 8 – Ron Oliver

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.