

## Neighborhood Improvement Team Meeting

General Meeting, Delta View Elementary

October 26, 2016, 6:30-8:30pm

City Staff Present: Garrett Evans, Fritz McKinley, Laura Wright, Maria Aliotti, Sharon Jackson, Jill Hecht, Kristin Pollot, Richard Abono, Bryan Ballardo, Anthony Baldazo, Celina Palmer, Paul Reinders, Haidi Muro, Lt. Phil Galer, Myla Rivers, Toni Baldazo

Mayor Ben Johnson

Planning Commission Members: Mark Gargalakis, Juan Banales, AJ Fardella

Number of Residents attended: 25

WELCOME – Garrett Evans, Assistant City Manager

- Welcome
- Been with City for 20 years
- Doing these meetings for over 13 years
- City has these meetings so we can hear from you to see what is working well and what is not
- We need you to contact us with any questions or concerns by email, phone, or web
- Approximately 70,000 citizens and only 265 employees, we need your help
- Can even enter requests through our Government Outreach system which forces us to abide by timelines
- Good news: Fire Station 87 is to reopen January 1<sup>st</sup> which should reduce response time by 1.5min
- How many have been to any of the Downtown events like Off the Grid? (show of hands)
- [www.ThinkPittsburg.com](http://www.ThinkPittsburg.com)
- Many members that help this city run
  - Laura Wright – Environmental Affairs
    - Can't stress enough that there are 70,000 of you (residents) and only 265 city staff
    - Team Pittsburg means we all are working together in the community
    - CERT Pamphlets in the back – six week course, it will help in the event of a disaster so you can help yourselves until City services can reach you
  - Maria Aliotti – Development Manager for the Successor Agency, CDBG, and Housing Authority
    - 14 years with the City
    - Properties acquired under Redevelopment Agency we are now selling
    - CDBG – Community Block Grant Program
    - Grant money available to assist with home repairs that are considered a health and safety issue

- Jill Hecht – Community Development
  - Been with City for 10 years
  - Assistant Director overseeing Building, Planning, Engineering
  - Involved with programming for California Theatre which was built in 1920 and is owned and operated by the City
  - Railroad Book Depot is also owned and operated by Pittsburg Arts and Community Foundation
- Richard Abono – Senior Civil Engineer
- Kristin Pollot – Planning Manager
- Bryan Ballardo – Public Works
  - Maintains all infrastructure
- Anthony Baldazo – Parks and Recreation Division
  - Been with City for 9 years
  - Maintain street trees
  - Takes care of graffiti abatement
  - Started construction at the new San Marco Community Park, first phase to be completed by Fall 2017
- Lt. Phil Galer – Police Department
  - 16<sup>th</sup> year with the Police Department
  - Patrol Watch Commander Thursday thru Sunday
  - 81 sworn officers
  - With cameras on Hwy 4
    - The PD has recovered 33 stolen vehicles and have made 34 arrests
    - Assisted Lafayette/Orinda PD on a large scale burglary ring
    - Tracked a serious felony vehicle out of the SoCal area
    - All Police Cars have License Plate Readers (LPR) to alert officers of stolen vehicles on the freeway
- Myla Rivers – Code Enforcement
- Toni Baldazo – Crime Free Housing/Community Outreach

*QUESTIONS/ANSWERS (answers marked with \*\* in blue)*

- This is my first year living in this City and I commute to San Francisco every day. My concern is there is only one option for grocery shopping. It seems like commercial retail building is stagnant.

\*\*20 years ago development was all in the Oak Hills Area. San Marco was negotiated in 1991-1992. We understand that there is limited parking at Safeway shopping center and the store is always packed. North of Alves Ranch is slated for commercial development; however, we need a master developer to take 13-15 acres to develop the retail area. Companies like BevMo have expressed interest.

- I want to spend my money here, not somewhere else.

\*\*The City wants you to spend your money here and appreciates it. The City controls approximately 100,000 square feet of commercial retail in the downtown and 98% of it is occupied

- I heard a Charter School made a presentation to buy 35 acres from Mr. Alves.

\*\*That came across the Land Use Sub Committee meeting by the Making Waves Foundation to build a Jr. High School and High School and there would be retail for the other 15 acres. It is in negotiation but City staff has not received an update from those private discussions.

- In 23 years I have never seen the traffic so bad. It takes me a half hour to go 7 miles to Port Chicago. I am very frustrated. The metering lights back everything up. The side streets thru new developments are being used and that is backing everything up even more.

\*\*The City is trying to regulate the traffic issues. Cal Trans controls the metering lights, not the City, and the freeway bottlenecks west of San Marco which makes everything worse. There are several possible solutions: more storage for cars on the on ramps, Int. Corridor Management Study turned off the metering lights to see what would happen, or add a right turn lane. Bottom line is there will be challenges. Traffic Engineer, Paul Reinders, is out there seeing it, working it and the City wants to make sure your quality of life does not go down. The metering light rate is set as low as it can be. The City can post signs in the neighborhood to eliminate the cut thru traffic. There are traffic calming measures that can be done. A couple of days of "no tolerance" can change the ways of the problem drivers. The PD can get motor units out there. This is a team approach – the City, Cal Trans, and County.

- I've been a resident of San Marco since 2010 and there is a huge mail theft issue which leads to identity theft. Some people now pick their mail up at the post office. This has been going on since June, I've taken all steps I've been told to take and there is still no resolution to date. Is the City aware this is going on and if the Post Master is so inundated, what else can we do?
- \*Walter Podesta (citizen) – for a while Pittsburg had no Post Master, now we have one but we have to find a way we can work together. First we had no Post Master, but there has been one there for 2 years now and there has been no change. We had a box left open for 5 days. There should be an incident report taken so a mail inspector can go out and see what happened. The

key for this is having people in different subdivisions/communities to document when an incident happens: date/time and number to file the complaint. Post Master's name is Maria Arzate (925) 432-2741. Christina Bower is the supervisor over the mail clerks. Complaint line (800) 275-8777 or (510) 874-8737

- Why do we have the boxes?

\*\*The volume of mail is a lot with all of the new developments. The City, along with the Post Office, does Identity Theft stings. There are trackers that are put in fake mail. Once the mail is moved information goes to Dispatch and updated every six seconds. 10 months ago there was a frantic search by the Post Office for 2 skeleton keys that were missing. One of the keys was found while working with the postal inspector. A search warrant was served after an 8 month investigation of a large mail theft ring and the key was found. The Postal inspector put a case together. This can start with the trackers.

- Is it possible to have security at the cluster boxes, like security cameras?

There is a new company in Pittsburg that has created a wireless battery operated camera which works on motion sensor and works at night too. The company can be contacted on the Next Door App.

- These are personal/residential cameras not City controlled cameras?

\*\*Yes, for now not City cameras. Photos were given to Lt. Galer of a possible suspect in a mail theft case. Case was filed on the 800 phone number. The citizen spoke to the Post Master who said an investigator would make contact. It had been 2 weeks and no contact had been made. The citizen called to make a report with the PD but the CSS said she had to call the 800 number because it was a Federal case. Lt. Galer stated the PD should be taking a report as well.

- New here to Pittsburg and always heard Pittsburg is a bad place.
- Thank you for the freeway cameras.
- Mayor Ben Johnson – Thank you for your team work. We all need to work together, start a Neighborhood Watch. Let the City know how to make things better for your own area. This meeting is about finding a way to make our city better, take action.

\*\*City Manager's office loves to get calls! It is always a good place to call.

- What is the rationale of another stop light near the Pittsburg/Bay Point BART station?

\*\*It will be energized in 2-3 weeks. It has been warranted for quite a few years now. The Oak Hills community requested it.

- Not everybody wants it. There are a lot of lights on Leland already.

\*\*It will create a better flow so there is not so much stop and go.

- On Railroad Avenue coming from downtown it is really hard to make a right turn onto the freeway.

\*\*The signals on Railroad Avenue need to communicate better. The City has acquired new software that will time the signals better and will be implemented soon. By spring citizens will have a better experience on Railroad Avenue.

- On California Avenue onto Railroad Avenue, trying to go across town, we need to address the light issue.

\*\*There is a combination of Caltrans lights and City controlled lights. With the new software the lights will be “talking” better.

- I’m excited about the park coming in the San Marco area.
- On Alves Ranch Road we have a problem with cars speeding. They drive like it’s the freeway even though it is a residential street. What can be done about this?

\*\*Paul Reinders can help with this. Studies can be done on speed. The City has adopted a Traffic Calming Policy. The City is looking forward to helping you and your neighbors apply the policy on Alves Ranch Road. Some of the measures include flashing beacons or narrowing streets. The City can connect with you using Facebook and soon Next Door to get feedback.

- Why don’t we ever see a City presence on the Next Door App?

\*\*The City is looking into the process of getting on Next Door as an agency but in the meantime we do have the Nixel App that comes directly from the PD. Through this app you will get info via text/Facebook/twitter. You can sign up for “alerts” which is something important that might be going on, or “advisories” which could be traffic issues, or “community” which would be community items all coming from the PD.

- When will a speed trailer come back at the Leland bend?

\*\*The Police Department rotates the speed trailers all the time. It will rotate back out there at some point. That is always a place the speed trailer will go.

- I’ve been here 41 years and in that time there has been so many crashes and deaths at that location.

\*\*The City recently received a grant to put in safety measures at the location. A high friction surface treatment will be done and new lane markings. Two weeks ago a pothole was paved over and restriping was done.

- In regards to the speeding on Alves Ranch Road is there a way to purchase a flashing speed reader with personal funds?
- What is being done with the large piece of land owned by Mt. Diablo School District?

- \*AJ Fardella – Mt. Diablo School District is not anticipating adding a school there although this school is at full capacity. No application has been made to the state to build a school which means it will be at least 5 years out from seeing a school on that property. There is not much we can do about it.
- Is there a way to find out what the voting history is?
- \*AJ Fardella – Go to the board meetings and under Public comment hammer the board. Make noise to push this along.
- Can we move this land into the Pittsburg Unified School District?
- \*AJ Fardella – It would take a ballot initiative to petition the land into PUSD
- Germany has speeding cameras, why don't we do that here?

\*\*The camera has to be so sophisticated to prove who the driver is.

- You stated there will be softball fields at the new park, will there be lights? How will you keep riff-raff out of the park at night? Will there be security after hours?

\*\*The City is not looking at lights right now. It is slated to be a youth field so in the summer people will be off of it by 9pm. The park will have LED lighting which will be nice and bright to deter riff-raff. Park Patrol works seven days a week from 5:00pm-11:00pm. They lock gates and bathrooms up and always call PD with suspicious activity. City of Pittsburg Park Patrol (925) 382-5098

\*\*Park Patrol and the PD have a good relationship and the PD hasn't had to assist them with anything recently. Parks are usually empty at night with no problems. In the event they may have to call PD they PD will address whatever is needed.

\*\*Engineering and Parks and Rec work with the PD in the design process and take away any obscure visibility places. The park will also be prepped for City cameras which won't be installed until needed.

- Does the PD have a program in place to avoid use of force situations?

\*\*In California the officers' use of deadly force training is better than the rest of the country. There are quarterly trainings with scenarios, on lethal use of force, alternate methods of use of force, mental health training. Dealing with the mentally ill is very challenging. Scenario based training is the biggest part of our trainings. We go over Taser use, OC Spray, baton use and then officers articulate why a certain force was used. Pittsburg PD and Richmond PD were the leaders in body cameras two years ago. All of our officers wear the body cameras including our Code Enforcement officers. Admin is constantly doing audits to make sure body cameras are being used. Every use of force goes to a review board or an Internal Investigation. This is not necessarily for negative reasons but more to protect the officers and people we are making contact with.

- I appreciate the service you are giving us. I don't hear any bad reports about Pittsburg Officers.

\*\*This is the most officers the City has ever had, at 81. The City is very proud of that. The Police Department is a top priority because we all need a good strong law enforcement to keep everyone safe.

- What is the City's crime rate?

\*\*Homicides this year are at 4 – 2 were street level violent crimes and the other 2 were domestic issues. The City crime rate has been declining rapidly for several years. During the State of the City the Police Chief included the crime stats on a power point. That power point can be found on the City's website. The City's crime stats are right in line with Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill. We are all taking turns at being the lowest.

- What is going on with the W. Leland expansion?

\*\*This is an expansion from San Marco to Willow Pass Road. To do it now it will attract traffic and make intersections more congested. The City of Concord has to agree with us to do the project and as of right now they aren't willing to expand Avila Road. They want to keep it a 2 lane road only. Right now they don't see the need to extend over the hill and make a wonderful parallel road to Hwy 4. There needs to be an agreement between two cities (Pittsburg & Concord) whether the expansion will be 2 or 4 lanes.

- Does the City have an annexation in place for the southwest hills?

\*\*An environmental review was done on approximately 600 acres south of San Marco. San Marco Road is supposed eventually to go thru and connect to Bailey Road. The City is working with a developer for a conceptual development plan in this area. The planned roadway will be included in the Master Plan and the environmental document should be available for review online in the spring.

- Even though we are Pittsburg the Postal service has us designated as Bay Point.

\*\*The City will follow up on this and request a possible Zip Code change for Bay Point.

- How will people switch from the current BART to the new one?

\*\*The new BART portion is a different type of train. People will get on it in Antioch at Hillcrest and can ride the train to a transfer platform that will be located just before the Pittsburg/Bay Point station. There they will get off of the new BART train, walk across the platform and get onto an older BART train. It will be a 10 minute ride from Antioch to the Pittsburg/Bay Point transfer platform. There is a simulation video that BART put together that is available on You Tube under "Pittsburg BART". The great thing is you will be the first ones on the older BART train. You can also find a spotlight promotional video on the City website.

- You mentioned the San Marco Park will have the first phase complete in fall 2017. What are the 2 phases?

\*\*Eastern side of the park (first phase) will have a playground, picnic tables, shade structure, bathrooms and a trail. Second phase will include a recreation facility, like a basketball court or tennis court, baseball/softball field or soccer field.

- How will it align with Toscana? It seems like there will be a speed hump in the roadway.

\*\*There will also be a dog park. (Dick Abono handed business card out for follow up.) Developers include park dedication fees in the sale of the homes for park development and improvements. When you go into the park you will make a left turn but there will be no left turn out of the park.