

THE MOFFETT/WHISMAN ROAD NEIGHBORHOODS AREA MEETING REPORT

Responses to Issues Raised at the June 25, 2009
Council Neighborhood Committee Meeting

Presented below are the City's responses to various issues and concerns raised at the June 25, 2009 Council Neighborhood Committee meeting with the Moffett/Whisman Road neighborhood area. If you have further questions about any of the following responses, please contact the responsible Department at the phone numbers noted below. General questions can be directed to Linda Lauzze, the City's Administrative and Neighborhood Services Manager, at (650) 903-6379.

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE – (650) 903-6303

1. *How can we get more code enforcement in our area to address these violations: inoperable vehicles with expired tags permanently stored on driveways and lawns; large boats permanently stored on driveways; parking on lawns; front yard and driveway storage of junk/heavy construction equipment with expired tags (dump truck); and the nightly parking of heavy construction equipment on residential streets? You can see examples of all of these violations on Tyrella Avenue as well as other streets.*

Please call the code enforcement division at (650) 526-7713 to report any violations of the Mountain View City Code. We try to be proactive as caseload permit, but rely on your eyes and ears to initiate enforcement efforts. In response to the most recent neighborhood meeting, the officers have been spending time in the neighborhood to address the above violations and currently have open cases on at least 6 properties and are making progress on the above items.

2. *Many residents on Tyrella Avenue (between Middlefield Road and Gladys Avenue) keep their trash cans in front and on the street side. How do we get them to observe codes?*

The Mountain View City Code requires that garbage containers be stored in a location that is suitably screened so they are not visible from the public street and that the containers be returned to that location within twenty-four hours of garbage collection. Please contact the solid waste division at (650) 903-6311 for any complaints related to the storage of garbage containers.

3. *What can be done about the people at 532 #15 Tyrella Avenue? This has been going on for many years. They average seven vehicles parked on the street, some of which do not run very well, if at all. Two nights ago, the two brothers were working on their Camaro across the street – not in front of their own property (as they frequently do). After leaving their car jacked up for awhile they finally finished and left garbage (as they usually do). You can frequently hear them before they arrive because of their loud stereo. You can't always sleep after 6:30 a.m. on week day mornings. Three of their vehicles, one Camaro and two Chevy trucks either do not have*

mufflers – or have very loud ones. When they leave at approximately 6:30 a.m. they really let the neighborhood know. No other families at 532 have ever been as obnoxious.

One of the code enforcement officers has been working to address the complaints at this property and will continue to do so. It is helpful to call the code enforcement division at (650) 526-7713 to report any violations of the Mountain View City Code as they occur.

- 4. Can the City condemn and tear down old buildings? There is an eye sore building on the corner of Central Avenue and Moffett Boulevard. It has been vacant for years. What is the status? It gives a very dangerous impression on the gateway street to Castro Street.*

The code enforcement division monitors the properties on Moffett and they are currently in the predevelopment or development process. 300 Moffett was recently approved for a Dentist Office is currently in plan check with the Building Division. 265 Moffett (the building that had the fire) is currently working with Planning and is proposing to demolish and redevelop the building.

CITY MANAGERS OFFICE – (650) 903-6301

- 1. What quantitative analysis does the City staff and the Council perform before committing large amounts of capital or operating funds? How is expected utilization factored in? For example – renovation of (not very old, rarely used) Adobe House; \$1.4 million Stevens Creek trail overpass to save users a few moments at the Moffett Boulevard light; and the long-empty building at the Cal Train stop?*

Specifics regarding the reasons certain capital investments were made for the projects referenced were discussed at the meeting.

Decisions regarding expenditures of capital and operating dollars go through several financial, planning and decision processes that look at various issues including: long term operations and maintenance costs, Council goals, priorities expressed by the community, affordability, maintaining and capitalizing on investments already made, and the best utilization of city resources.. Ultimately, decisions' regarding expenditure of City funds comes through the adoption of the City's annual operating budget. This past year a 10 year financial projection study was undertaken and part of the analysis was the consideration of **O&M** costs for capital projects.

2. Public Schools

- Higher density housing and the development of low income rentals raise concerns that we do not have a neighborhood public school or community center (lower income families may not have transport to our public schools). How will you address this issue which I feel is vital for community building?*

- *What plans are there to improve schools in this part of Mountain View? The area has lost schools, which adversely affects children and their parents, as well as property values.*
- *What is the plan for schools in our quadrant? There has been the closure of two neighborhood schools with the following results; elementary schools are cramped; I purchased my two-bedroom townhouse in 1994 with two neighborhood schools to use that are now closed; and home resale value are not as robust.*

The City does not have authority over the school's locations or operation. City staff works with the School District through out the year and in doing so tries to address issues that impact neighborhoods. The City is concerned with all areas of the City and recent investments have been made in the area in the form of parks and open space.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT – (650) 903-6306

1. *Why is the area west [south] of El Camino not taking their fair share of new housing? Zoning is not a barrier.*

A number of new housing projects are planned or under construction south of El Camino Real, including the Grant Road/Levin Avenue development, the former Satake Nursery site on Marilyn Drive, and the former Southbay Christian Center site on Miramonte Avenue.

2. *Regarding the South Whisman development of up to 1,120 homes, where will all these families send their children to school now that Slater is closed?*

The approval of the South Whisman Precise Plan established the zoning allowance for up to 1,120 homes. Regis Homes represents the property owners of the South Whisman Precise Plan Area, and they believe the actual number of units that will be built will be less than 1,120 homes. Before anything is constructed, Planning and Building permits must be granted. At this time, the developer has not applied for planning permits.

Based on current school district boundaries, children will attend Landels Elementary School, Theurkauf Middle School and Mountain View High School, but the boundaries may change between now and the occupancy of homes in South Whisman.

3. *For a City that encourages businesses here, why are there less amenities and disappearing ATM's, post offices and such on "our" side of the railroad tracks?*

As part of the General Plan update process, the City received neighborhood input about the need for more services in the Whisman Planning Area as a whole. Another neighborhood meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 2009 where policies and strategies to achieve the neighborhood's needs will be presented. Please stay involved in these meetings so that the outcome reflects your concerns.

4. *What are plans for: 1) empty lot at Piazza Drive and Evandale Avenue; 2) empty lot near Rotten Robbie; 3) Old Denny's site; and 4) empty lot near 296 Tyrella Avenue?*

- 115 Evandale (Piazza and Evandale) – This site is zoned for up to 6 residential units. The City Council approved 6 row houses on this site in September 2005. The developer could not finance the project and the permit expired. A new developer submitted the first round of information necessary to reinstate the 2005 permit in November 2008, but they have not contacted the City since that time.
- 248 E. Middlefield (empty lot near Rotten Robbie) – This site is zoned for commercial-office uses. Habitat for Humanity considered rezoning the site for residential uses in late 2008, but they did not proceed with the project. The City does not have any additional information at this time.
- 870 Leong (old Denny's site) – This site is zoned for neighborhood commercial uses. A community center considered this site in late 2006, but did not proceed. In early 2009, a proposal for two new hotels replacing the gas station, the existing motel and the Denny's site was submitted, but the developer has not proceeded with the project. The City does not have any additional information at this time.
- 294 Tyrella (empty lot near 296 Tyrella) – This site is zoned for residential uses. The owner recently demolished a partially burned-down three-plex on the site. The owner is developing plans for an 8 unit row house project on the property.

If a formal application is submitted to the Planning Division for new development, a project announcement sign will be posted on the property, at which time interested residents can come to City Hall and view the proposed plans.

5. *Any information on multi-use in area of Terra Bella Avenue? Any changes?*

This question was referring to industrial land at the corner of North Shoreline Boulevard and Terra Bella Avenue that is on the market. Several inquiries have been received by potential developers, but no group has come forward with an application for the site.

6. *Can the City assist the area from Middlefield Road to Central Expressway between route 85 and Moffett Boulevard in forming a neighborhood association? A neighborhood association in this area would be especially useful in coordinating emergency response.*

The City has two resources that can assist you in forming a neighborhood association. The first is a Neighborhood Handbook that contains useful information on starting an association. The second is the Neighborhood Grant Program that provides funding for neighborhood associations and groups that are trying to start neighborhood associations. Applications for neighborhood grants are accepted every June and grants of up to \$1,500 are awarded by the Council Neighborhoods Committee. These grants can be used for picnics and block parties to generate interest in the neighborhood association and similar types of events and activities. A

more complete description of the Neighborhood Grant Program can be found on the City's website under the Community Development Department and Neighborhoods Division. If you would like information from the Neighborhood Handbook, please contact Linda Lauzze, Administrative and Neighborhood Services Manager, at (650) 903-6462 or linda.lauzze@mountainview.gov.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT – (650) 903-6331

1. *Would it be possible for a fence to be built in back of the tennis courts to fence off the dog training area from the apartment parking lots? This would make the training area more secure for dog training in the event a dog decides to run into the parking lots.*

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) does not allow fences to be built on the right-of-way and must be constructed on private property. In discussion with the SFPUC it appears that a portion of the apartment complex parking lot extends on to the SFPUC property. In order to construct a fence the existing parking lot would have to be cut almost in half. As the City does not own or control the right-of-way, construction of a fence is a matter between the SFPUC and the apartment owner.

2. *Why is there almost none or no basketball hoops or courts close to our residence? Slater school is next to our home but the basketball hoops have been removed to accommodate Google daycare.*

The design plans for converting the school into a daycare center included the construction of a public basketball court. City staff is currently working with the School District on the installation of two half-courts at Slater School that will be available to the public later this fall.

3. *Is the park/play structure at this school (German International School of Silicon Valley) going to get updated? Is it still open to the neighborhood after school hours?*

The play structure located at the German International School of Silicon Valley (GISSV) belongs to the Mountain View/Whisman School District. The City is not aware of plans on the part of the School District to update the play structure. In light of the current economic challenges the School District is facing, it is unlikely such an update will take place. Staff in the meantime has met with both the School District and with GISSV and has confirmed the school will continue to be open to the community after school hours and on weekends until ½ hour after sunset.

4. *I have a question concerning park maintenance and school hours versus park hours. The City maintains parks. School fields and playgrounds are part of this City maintenance. Non-school parks have no limit in hours of use from sunrise to sunset. Why are taxpayers limited in their use of school parks? Why are City funds used to off load school district funds?*

The City of Mountain View has a cooperative use agreement with the Mountain View/Whisman School District that benefits both entities. The City maintains what is referred

to as the “park area” or that area “upon which the recreational facilities, equipment and landscaping are located.” In exchange, the “park area” is made available to the public for park and recreation purposes after school, weekends and during the summer. The agreement helps address the City’s need for parks and open space while at the same time assisting the District with the maintenance and upkeep of these areas.

5. *Why are there no activities for youth in our area? Why nothing at Slater School park?*

Prior to the closure of Slater School and Whisman School the Recreation Division offered afterschool programs at both school sites. One of the goals of the recently adopted Recreation Plan is to provide recreation programs at school sites and in the neighborhood. The City has talked with the School District regarding the possibility of offering recreation programs at both sites in the future.

6. *Will the City plan more public recreational gardens such as Willowgate Community Garden since so many new units are to be added? High density living means people need green space.*

The City is currently working to identify another location for a new Community Garden. Once a possible location is determined then a series of public meetings will be held to gather neighborhood and community feedback. Any potential new garden locations would also be discussed before the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. For further information please contact the Recreation Division at 903-6331.

7. *What can be done about beautifying the entrance to our neighborhood at Moffett Boulevard and Leong Drive? Does it fall within the City’s domain or is it a Caltrans area? The landscaping (or lack of) needs something to add some curb appeal to our great neighborhood.*

The median that separates Leong Drive from Moffett Boulevard is in the City’s jurisdiction and is maintained by the Community Services Department. Any beautification of that area such as new plants, irrigation and fencing, would occur as part of the Capital Improvement Program which is annually adopted by the City Council. The City Council meets several times each year in March – May to discuss and adopt the Capital Improvement Program. For more information, please contact the Public Works Department at (650) 903-6311.

POLICE DEPARTMENT – (650) 903-6350

1. *In at least one instance, I reported to the police indications of people going through paper recycling totes. It seemed clear the intent was to accomplish identity theft. The police had no interest unless a crime was known to have occurred. There did not appear to be any interest in crime prevention. Why not?*

The department’s community policing philosophies focus on crime prevention as a key element and the department believes strongly that preventing crime is just as important as solving crimes after they have occurred. The Community Action and Information Unit regularly educates and advises community members regarding identity theft prevention and recommends

community members shred all important documents and mail prior to recycling. Additional crime prevention information is always available by calling or stopping by the department. If you witness somebody rifling through trash or recyclables, you should call the police department's non-emergency number as the incident is occurring (650-903-6395). Do not wait until later to call. Please have a description of the subject as well as information regarding what the subject is doing that is suspicious or illegal so that the dispatchers can determine how best to handle your call given other calls for service coming into the dispatch center.

2. *Where is a good location for a medical marijuana dispensary in Mountain View or Palo Alto?*

It is not clear if the person asking this question is wondering where they can find a dispensary in the city or whether they want to open a dispensary themselves. There are no medical marijuana dispensaries in Mountain View. Anyone interested in obtaining a business license to open a dispensary would need to go through the proper legal process. The Police Department does not recommend that a dispensary be opened in the city.

3. *Is the Stevens Creek trail patrolled? If not, why not? Is it safe for my 15 year old to traverse by herself?*

The trail is patrolled by both rangers and police officers. Criminal activity on the trail is very low however a few violent crimes do occur each year (usually in the form of robbery and fighting). The most common type of criminal activity on the trail is graffiti and the majority of more serious crimes occur at night when the trail is closed. Every parent must decide for themselves at what age they allow their children to partake in such activities as using the trail without adult supervision. The police department recommends the buddy system for teenagers using the trail and all teens should be educated in crime prevention tactics and should have the police department's non-emergency number programmed into their cell phones and on speed dial (650) 903-6395.

4. *Can cars be parked on the street for over three days and if not, what can be done about it?*

Cars can not be parked on public roadways in one spot for more than 72 hours. Cars parked in excess of 72 hours are determined to be "abandoned" and can be towed at the owner's expense. If you see an abandoned vehicle, please call the Abandoned Vehicle Hotline to report it at (650) 903-6358. A Community Service Officer will investigate the vehicle to determine if it is in violation of the 72 hour parking laws and will take appropriate action to have the car removed if it is in violation.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – (650) 903-6311

1. *In the interest of gas conservation, can the stop sign at the top of Easy Street (at Highway 85 on-ramp) be a yield sign as there is plenty of vision distance and no traffic coming from the left.*

Thank you for the suggestion. Since the intersection is an on-ramp to State Highway 85, it is under the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) jurisdiction and any changes must have their support. A review of the accident history at this location indicated one accident in the last eight years and no safety issues. Staff contacted Caltrans and will jointly study if the existing stop sign can be replaced with a yield sign and maintain safe operations.

2. *Are there any plans to take down or at least lower or thin out the number of new traffic signs on North Whisman that direct you to drive around the new medians. There are a lot of signs and for some in tall cars they block you line of sight.*

Initially, “Keep Right” signs and reflective markers were installed at each median island nose; in accordance with recommended design guidelines, signs at intermediate ends of divisional islands and medians are not mandatory. Now that motorists are familiar with the improvements, staff will review and remove some of the “Keep Right” signs and adjust any signs that obstruct line of sight.

3. *At the intersection of the Hetch Hetchy Trail and Tyrella Avenue the plant growth is high, making it difficult to see bicyclists and joggers. A year or so ago a Mountain View Parks worker trimmed the plant growth a little lower. Outside this school (German International School of Silicon Valley) you have a yellow sign stating that you must stop for people in the crosswalk. Why don't you have one in the middle of Tyrella Avenue at the trail crossing? A year ago I was stopped for a pedestrian and bicyclist to cross Tyrella Street and a driver in a black car from 470 Tyrella Avenue did not even slow down. He downshifted, sped up and flew past me.*

Parks staff will review the plant growth at the Hetch Hetchy Trail and Tyrella Avenue and trim as needed.

The sign outside the German International and Yew Chung International Schools on Easy Street is an In-Street Pedestrian Crosswalk sign directed at motorists to call their attention to the crosswalk and to remind them of their legal obligation to stop for pedestrians. Criteria for installing these signs were approved by the Council Transportation Committee (CTC) in June 2008 and staff has installed over 20 throughout Mountain View. Staff reviewed your request and will install an In-Street Pedestrian Crosswalk sign on Tyrella Avenue at the Hetch Hetchy Trail crossing within three to four weeks.

If you observe traffic violations or unsafe maneuvers, you can also leave a detailed message on the Police Department's Traffic Hotline at (650) 903-6146 and enforcement will be provided as resources are available.

4. *I believe we need a stop sign at the corner of Easy Street and Walker Drive. Drivers on Walker Drive routinely either stop (where there is no stop sign) or blast through the intersection at unsafe speeds. Walking my dog through that crosswalk makes me nervous. We need a four-way stop!*

A four-way stop study for the intersection of Easy Street and Walker Drive will be completed this fall after school begins. If the guidelines for installation are met, a four-way stop will be installed.

If speeding on Walker Drive is also a concern, the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) was established to help residents work with City staff to address traffic issues, including speeding, on local residential streets. To initiate the NTMP process, submit a petition to Sayed Fakhry, Senior Traffic Engineer, in the Public Works Department specifying your concern and asking that the NTMP process address the problem on your street.

Please contact Sayed Fakhry or Mike Vroman, City Traffic Engineer, at (650) 903-6311 to further discuss the NTMP process and to discuss traffic issues in this area.

As noted above, you can also leave a detailed message on the Police Department's Traffic Hotline at (650) 903-6146 and enforcement will be provided as resources are available.

- 5. At the intersection of Leong Drive to Moffett Boulevard, there use to be a yellow sign on northbound Leong Drive at the stop sign stating that: "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop". What happened to the sign? I am going northbound on Moffett Boulevard right at the jog and left on Leong Drive, but people going northbound on Leong Drive do not stop at the stop sign and seem to want to have an accident.*

Thank you for bringing the missing "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" sign to our attention. It has been replaced.

- 6. How can the City assist homeowners and homeowner associations in converting landscaping to water-wise plantings?*

You can find information and a list of upcoming classes about low-water use landscaping on the City of Mountain View website (www.mountainview.gov) and the Santa Clara Valley Water District website (www.valleywater.org). The District also offers rebates for replacing high water use plants, including turf grass, with permeable hard scape or plants from the District's water-wise plant list. Contact the City's water conservation program staff at (650) 903-6269 for additional information regarding classes or conservation and rebate programs.

- 7. Public toilets are needed at the downtown Mountain View station building. They should be open for use every day, especially on Sunday morning when the Farmer's Market is in operation.*

There are currently no public rest rooms at the station building. When the building was designed, the City Council decided not to provide public rest rooms due to the high maintenance costs and safety issues associated with an unsupervised facility. However, in the future, if the "ticket office" portion of the structure (closest to Castro Street) is leased as

retail space, access to a rest room will be possible. Depending on the type of business, it may or may not be open during the Farmer's Market.

8. *This part of Mountain View needs better public transport service. What plans are there to improve services, which have become degraded in recent years?*

Unfortunately, there will be no service increases in the near future. The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) owns and operates the bus and light rail systems in Santa Clara County. They are experiencing revenue shortfalls due to current economic conditions and are proposing an 8% service reduction beginning January 11, 2010.

9. *Is there going to be a shuttle from our side of town to the center and public places like library, post office and senior center?*

Bus service, including Community Bus, is provided by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). As stated above, VTA is proposing service reductions and will not be implementing any new service in the near future.

10. *Why does Mountain View not help with transportation to Mountain View High School? There is no safe transportation.*

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) provides daily bus service to and from Mountain View High School. Go to www.vta.org for the schedule.

Last year the high school and City jointly implemented several improvements, including allowing on-street parking on the school side of Bryant and Truman avenues; installing a loading zone on Truman Avenue; restriping the parking lots to accommodate more spaces; limiting school parking permits and increasing their cost, and installing additional bike parking.

Additionally, the City and the school district have been working collaboratively on a study of transportation and parking at the high school. The report will go to the City Council Transportation Committee (CTC) for review and comment this fall. It will then be forwarded to the full City Council for action. Watch the City website at www.mountainview.gov for the schedule.

11. *When will there be a separated railroad grade at Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue?*

The California High Speed Rail (HSR) project will construct grade separations at all railroad crossings, including Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue. The configurations are not known yet, but the CA High Speed Rail Authority will analyze all possible designs (elevated, tunnel, trench) at each intersection. The projected schedule shows environmental clearance and design complete in 2012 with phased construction to follow.

12. *Can the City do something about the debris from the garbage company and recycling blowing around the corner? (Resident's address is San Leandro Avenue)*

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Both the contractor that maintains the landscaping and Foothill Disposal, the site lessee, have been contacted to review the City's expectations regarding litter from the recycling center. If improvements are not noted, please contact the Solid Waste Manager at 650-903-6311.

13. *Can the City do something about the rose bushes at Evandale and Tyrella Avenues, which create a visibility issue and should be cut shorter? At the intersection of Tyrella Avenue and Fairchild Drive there is also a visibility issue and parking restrictions may be needed.*

Public Works staff reviewed the rose bushes at Evandale and Tyrella Avenues and Code Enforcement will work with the owners to have them cut shorter. In the interim, motorists should stop, yield to any pedestrians or bicyclists in the crosswalk and then slowly move forward into the intersection to see if any vehicles are approaching before pulling out.

No visibility issues were observed at the intersection of Tyrella Avenue and Fairchild Drive, but staff will continue to monitor Fairchild Drive to see if parking restrictions are warranted.

14. *There are several difficult intersections to cross while driving. These are the northwest corner of Evandale Avenue and Whisman Road, southeast corner of Murlagan and Tyrella Avenues and southeast corner of Easy Street and Gladys Avenue (trying to turn left on Easy Street). In each case, the property owners have a lot of plant growth and vegetation. After stopping at the crosswalk (before the intersection) you have to go forward into the intersection to see if any cars are coming.*

Public Works staff reviewed these three intersections, observed the plant growth and vegetation and has asked Code Enforcement to work with the owners to have the vegetation trimmed. As noted above, until the vegetation is trimmed, motorists should stop, yield to any pedestrians or bicyclists in the crosswalk and then slowly move forward into the intersection to see if any vehicles are approaching before pulling out.

15. *On Stevens Creek Trail bridge, over Cal train/Central Expressway, the landings on both ends of the bridge are made of wooden planks and they are deteriorating. Today I caught the front wheel of my bike in a crack between two of the planks and nearly fell. I suggest Trex or some similar and more durable planking.*

Thank you for sharing your observation regarding the landing areas on the Stevens Creek Trail Bridge over Central Expressway. Staff is currently evaluating different products to replace or upgrade the wood decking. Staff is looking for a more durable surface that also provides better traction when wet. Replacement/repairs are scheduled to begin toward the end of this summer.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

1. *I want to thank the Code Enforcement folks and the City Attorney for abating the blighted property at 294 Tyrella Avenue.*

