

# Allied Neighborhoods Association

February 17, 2004  
Eastside Library

## MINUTES

**Present:** Carrie Brown, Joe Guzzardi, Paul Hernadi, Jim Kahan, Joan Livingston, Bea Rosales, and Vijaya Jammalamadaka

Meeting was called to order by Jim Kahan at 7:05 pm at the Martin Luther King Room, Eastside Library, 1102 E. Montecito Street.

1. **Minutes:** Due to the lack of a quorum, adoption was deferred. Jim said he had some changes to the minutes which he will discuss with Vijaya by phone.

2. **Website:** Jim said he has obtained and “parked” an URL: [www.Allied-sb.org](http://www.Allied-sb.org). We need a volunteer to design the site and upload items such as the Bylaws, Minutes, meeting dates, neighborhoods, member organizations, etc.

3. **Location:** Jim noted that it was very educational to meet in the Eastside neighborhood, especially since he had never been inside it or walked around the neighborhood. We could try to meet in different neighborhoods through out the year. It was suggested that each group could take turns hosting the meetings. The next two meetings have already been arranged in downtown locations.

4. **Regular date of the month and time:** When Allied has met in the past, it has generally been on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 3 PM at the Red Cross Headquarters. But the Red Cross has started charging a \$1 per person attending and now requires a burdensome use agreement. Carrie noted that the Red Cross had always proposed to charge \$1 per head, but that was never put into practice. Instead, Rosanne paid them \$25 per use of room for a couple of times so far. The Santa Barbara Bank and Trust meeting room is free but parking is constrained. We could also experiment with the meeting times for the best attendance. Joan suggested that this be left up to the Executive Committee.

5. **By-laws:** Jim has obtained several versions of the by-laws, all dated August 1995 but with handwritten changes. Jim and Joan will work on consolidating changes before the March meeting and bring it to the Board for review and re-adoption. We need to make sure we are in compliance with the by-laws and with the rules of the Citizen’s Planning Association (the

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organization that initiated the formation of Allied).

**6. Membership:** Jim noted that the City's Land Use Plan identifies 30+ distinct neighborhoods. Some large groups are conspicuously absent from our membership, e.g., Hidden Valley, Peach Grove, San Roque Gardens (which are really part of the Hitchcock area and should be consolidated). Joan said balkanization is a good thing, especially if people will get enthused about their localized issues. She added, generally people get concerned when a project is being constructed. It was decided that we should concentrate on empowering and meeting the needs of our current members and that new members will join if we are successful.

**7. Letter and presentation to NPO Update Steering Committee:** The NPO Update Steering Committee will be meeting for the first time on Feb. 27 from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. Jim suggested that he, as Allied President, should write a letter and make a presentation at the SC meeting outlining Allied's positions on the NPO and asked the group for input. The group felt it was too premature to take positions when the process has not even begun and that the positions of Allied members are not really known. Jim said that 6 architects (of the 10 non neighborhood appointees) are on the SC and he might not have neighborhood preservation and compatibility as a major objective or interest. He was concerned that the presence of these 6 architects may overwhelm the voices from our neighborhood reps and we should be alert to the fairness of the process. The group had stories of how appeals to the Planning Commission have been summarily dismissed. It was generally agreed that the City's record in avoiding mansionization and bad modifications and variances in neighborhoods has been shameful.

However, it was also agreed that with the new Council, the City is showing a trend towards responding to neighborhoods, as evidenced in the recently updated Housing Element document. The group decided that Allied's letter should be amicable, thanking the City for inviting the neighborhood representation on the SC. It should also let them know that Allied will be a watchdog as the process proceeds. It will ask for meetings to be televised.

Paul Hernadi cautioned that the city may now be bombarded with ambitious proposals because the months ahead may be perceived as a period of laxness and uncertainty. While "moratorium" is a dirty word, he hoped that our Allied representatives will argue persuasively that projects requiring major exceptions to current standards and ordinances should not be approved until new rules of the game are established. He hoped that safety, appearance, creek and traffic management, the maintenance of urban vegetation, and the preservation of ocean and mountain views will remain important to our community.

The letter will emphasize that at least the most conspicuous projects in the City will be monitored by Allied to ensure that it will be harder to approve projects with modifications inconsistent with the existing ordinance. It is important for people to attend and speak up at the

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hearings as many bad projects are approved if no one protests.

Joan said because she is seen as actively advocating for the Westside many developers are approaching her for pre-approval of projects. She described her recent experience in successfully appealing a project on the Westside by citing a case called Topanga Canyon which deals with the abuse of discretion by a government agency and requires the agency to adopt three specific findings before making a decision. She will make her legal brief and details available to any group that would like to use it. It could be placed on the proposed Allied website as educational material.

It was agreed that Jim will draft a polite and amicable letter and circulate it to Joan, the Executive Committee, the Allied NPO reps and a few others for comments before mailing it. No presentation is planned. Many members have received postcard notifications for the SC meeting. The Allied members will be notified by e-mail too. Many plan to attend the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by

Vijaya Jammalamadaka, Secretary

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