

**SAMARKAND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
BOARD AND ASSOCIATION MEETING
January 17, 2008, 5:30 p.m.
Location: Chapel Room, Samarkand Retirement Community**

Minutes

<p>Guests: Bill Mahan. Bill is a former member of the Santa Barbara Planning Commission and current chairman of the Single Family Design Board.</p>
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1. **CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:** Meeting called to order at 5:33. (Approximately 35 in attendance.)
2. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY BILL MAHAN:** Mr. Mahan was introduced by John DeVore, who reviewed his credentials, including 13 years on the Architectural Board of Review, numerous City committees, and currently the Save El Pueblo Viejo Committee.

Mr. Mahan expressed a theme, a truth, that “We are all growing older,” including our city. This process is best done gently, and, it seems that trends in the city are moving toward the development of large buildings and ungentle growth. Chapala Lofts, a building as high as the Courthouse, led the way. Mr. Mahan defines a tall building as a building higher than 45 ft.

Mr. Mahan traced the construction of tall buildings in Santa Barbara. There are fifteen buildings slated for imminent construction, as many as have been built in all the years since the 1930’s.

The current charter has a 60 ft. height limit. (Charter, ordinances, and guidelines are used to define the rules for building. The charter is key.) Mr. Mahan shared a map that showed where the charter guidelines allow 60 ft buildings. He suggested that a 40 ft. limit within the “El Pueblo Viejo” area (EPVA), based upon a charter amendment, had support but would just push tall buildings outward (popout) from the Pueblo Viejo area. Based upon this, a decision was made to encourage a 45 ft. building height citywide.

Realistically, this would discourage “popout,” and only affect the desired targeted area of the City. Further, Mr. Mahan demonstrated that 45 ft. is still sufficient to allow a four story building. Low income housing could still be reasonably constructed (8 ft. ceilings), and split level construction would allow higher ceilings on the commercial side of the building. Mr. Mahan demonstrated visuals to support the 45 ft. limit as reasonable for a charter amendment. Other visuals demonstrated tall buildings currently under construction, and areas that will be built upon, projects in the “pipeline.”

The charter amendment initiative needs signatures in order to be placed on the ballot for November. Mr. Mahan speculates that if the amendment does not pass this time, there will be a second wave of fifteen buildings. Charter section 1506 is the section where language changes would be made to set the 45 ft. limit, with a 40 ft. limit in the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District. Mr. Mahan noted that the measurement of height can be controversial, as well.

Mr. Mahan explained that City Council was unwilling to place the amendment on the ballot. They wanted to wait until the General Plan update had been completed. Mr. Mahan noted that the 1962 version of the General Plan, supported by the 1998 review, indicated that the electorate should be involved in setting building heights that maintain the character of the built environment within the city.

Mr. Mahan surmises that architects, developers, and a few businesses downtown will be the opposition for this Charter amendment.

Charlie Stapleton, former SNA Boardmember, inquired about setbacks. Mr. Mahan explained that the setback issue would have to be dealt with separately. Charter initiatives are limited to single issues. Moreover, the ordinance process is better suited to deal with the setback issue. If the Charter amendment passes, the City Attorney will have to decide which projects, currently in the pipeline, would be allowed to proceed. Mr. Mahan also noted that this charter initiative would protect the upper State Street area as well.

The amendment is estimated to cost \$50 to \$60,000 to pass. Mr. Mahan requested assistance.

Mr. Mahan introduced James O. Kahan, who spoke for a more restrictive amendment, one of 40 ft. citywide. Mr. Kahan handed out materials to support his argument, noting that the *News-Press* also supports a more restrictive amendment. Discussion followed.

3. **ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:** Wayne Beckman, John DeVore, Joyce Duncan Falk, Kelly Griffin, Darwin Holter, *Terry Johnson*, Fred Marsic, Jack Meyer, Jim Smith, and Ruth Young. (Italicized names are absent.)
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES*** Approved (M/S/C Beckman/Marsic)
5. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Jim reported a balance of \$1006.82. Post office fees, and one more membership renewal will take us to \$955.82.
6. **COMMITTEE UPDATES:**
 - A. **ZONING:** No report at this time.
 - B. **ALLIED NEIGHBORHOODS:** No report since Allied meets next week.
7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
 - A. **BOARD POSITION:** We are still looking for a replacement member.
8. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. **TRAFFIC COMMITTEE:** A motion was proposed to form an SNA Traffic committee. This committee will study traffic related issues such as cut-through traffic, noise and nuisance, and parking issues. The committee will make recommendations to the SNA. The committee will be formed initially with Arthea and Tom Hermann, Dan Brooks, Jean Sanky, Kelly Griffin, Mary Lindenstein, and Wayne Beckman (M/S/C Smith/Young).
 - B. **NEWSLETTER:** We are still soliciting articles for a newsletter. John noted that there is an option of sending articles out as emails, a cheaper and more efficient method of maintaining contact, which unfortunately would not reach the entire membership.
9. **OTHER BUSINESS:** More discussion about Mr. Mahan's presentation followed. One option is to can support both proposals. Mr. Mahan's initiative group, however, seems more well organized and farther along at this point. General discussion about future guests followed.
10. **COMMUNICATION:**
 - A. Confirmation of meetings:
 - i. Next meeting: February 21, 2008
 - ii. Guest/location: Chapel Room
11. **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

* Minutes and other organization information may be found at:

<http://samarkandneighborhoodassociation.org>