



**Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association
Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, September 13, 2023
6:30 – 8:30**

Welcome/Introductions (Greg)

- History of CHNA
 - Created 15 years ago
 - Monthly meetings have been held for last 10 years
 - CHNA has a website, sends newsletters, flyers the neighborhood, has a social media presence
 - Bylaws/guidelines were approved by neighbors in 2018 following a year of public discussion/debate
 - No executive board
 - Work is by the committees
 - Power rests in the committees – anyone can join and become a leader
 - Various committees: Park, Mercy Housing, Communications, Porchfest, National Night Out, T-shirt, Treasurer, Garden Tour
- Asked for respect when speaking/making comments and to keep comments short as the agenda is packed
- Committee updates on the agenda will be skipped due to the agenda being full, will allow for updates if time permits

Colonial Heights T-Shirt Design Contest Voting (Greg)

- Contest created by Sarah Kerber
- Sign in sheet for meeting contains the voting for the t-shirt
- Asked to introduce yourself to a neighbor you don't know

Police Updates

- *Noted that homeless updates will be provided during the later part of the meeting*
- Lt. Sabrina Briggs & Lt. Neil Cybulski – Office of Operations, East Command ([Police District 6](#))
 - Lots of resources have been sent to Colonial Heights over the past 2 weeks
 - Crime Report Out
 - Typical crime seen: car burglaries, minor theft
 - Narcotics usage/sales
 - Will be ticketed and/or arrested
 - There is not a narcotics unit within the department anymore
 - Can only work on what they are doing now and moving forward

- Update from past week – 10 days ago
 - Spoke with a community member regarding recent activity and asked for patience from community
 - No less than 4 arrests
 - 2 narcotics sales
 - Acknowledged that sometimes the person arrested is let out within hours of arrest – this is not something the Lieutenant can not solve
- Crime to be reported to 911; non-emergent issues to be reported to 311

Government Representatives

- Supervisor Phil Serna, Sacramento County District 1 Supervisor
 - First elected in 2010
 - 97% of constituents are city of Sacramento residents
 - Recently finalized the \$8.1B budget
 - Largest local government in the Sacramento Valley
 - Current priorities
 - Enhancing the Child Protective Services protocols
 - Family first finding
 - Placing foster youth with their family first
 - Services the county are responsible for: parks, transportation, public health, etc
- Ron Linthicum, District Attorney, Community Prosecution Unit
 - DA office represents the entire County so they can cross district boundaries (city, county, unincorporated areas, incorporated areas, etc)
 - When crime happens, the DA gets involved
 - The criminal justice system is used as a tool to get the homeless population the help and services they need
 - *Question from Neighbor:* Is there a threshold for crime not being a crime because it is not severe enough?
 - DA's answer: No, the penal code lays out what is a crime. If the act falls within the penal code as a crime then it is a crime. DA needs to believe that they can prove the crime happened to try it in front of a jury.
 - *Discussion from Neighbor:* Bike chop shop
 - DA's response: It starts with the enforcement (police or sheriffs). The DA's office is for prosecution, not investigation. Investigation is done by the police and through their reports.
- Eric Guerra, City of Sacramento, Vice Mayor, District 6
 - Local resident, 58th St
 - 2024 Colonial Heights will be part of District 6; currently represented under the unincorporated area under the Mayor
 - Office Hours
 - 4th Friday at Tahoe Park during the food trucks event
 - 2nd Friday at Oki Park (East Sacramento)

- Mayor's Office
 - Represented by David Augusto, Jocelyn Navarro (not present at meeting but normally attends the CHNA meetings)
 - Community Engagement
- Jason Lee, Sacramento Fire Department, Fire Marshal
 - With the City for 20 years, Fire Marshal last 8 years
 - Fire marshal: fire code inspections, fireworks
- Hezekiah Allen, Department of Community Response
- Victoria Vasquez, City of Sacramento Parks and Community Enrichment Commission, Commissioner Chair, Council District 6
 - Local resident, used to be on 58th St

21st Avenue Parkway Discussion

- 21st Ave was originally the trolley line. The library was the turn for the trolley.
- Eric Guerra
 - How do we think about what to do with the 15 acre piece of land?
 - Asked for grant to improve the land
 - The 21st Parkway is an amenity for all and shouldn't be looked at as a dividing line between the surround communities (South Tahoe Park, Colonial Heights, Colonial Manor, Colonial Village, Tallac Village)
 - State directed all localities to reduce watering
 - This was an executive order that has since expired
 - 21st Ave is an easement because it covered the rail tracks
 - It is a median but also a park to the community
 - Community Development Block Grant from Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – planning grant
 - There's no money for new park improvements. There is money for drought tolerant areas.
 - Would love to see a walkway around the entire area (total of 5 miles of walking path), shaded area, placed without affecting the root systems
- Victoria Vasquez
 - Last year: hosted walk along the parkway and park survey
 - [Survey results](#) have been published
 - October 4th public meeting to review proposed park plans
 - Meeting location TBD
 - First time the public works plan is being shown to the public
 - The plan goes from the Parks Commission to the Council
 - 2 park proposal plans to review at the meeting
 - Low water plan
 - Functional turf
 - *Neighbors concerned of a low water plan due to homeless potentially taking over the area*

- Plan for 2 block area (1 acre of land)
 - Currently no secured funds for improvements to the proposed park
- *Comments from the neighbors*
 - Concerns about preserving the trees along the parkway
 - The water structure was put in to water the grass. The existing irrigation has to be reorientated to water the trees.
 - Drought tolerant does not mean trees get neglected.
 - Eric Guerra would like to see the tree canopy increased. Original trees were redwoods and not suitable for the area. Looking for native trees to add in.
 - How do we find out more information about the meeting on 10/4/23?
 - Eric to leave his contact information at the meeting
 - Can always email him
 - Governor's watering mandate expiration – state law requires reducing square footage of watering footprint
 - Legislation stalled this year, could come around again next year
 - Mature trees would be exempt from mandate
 - UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden as a model for the parkway

Holiday Party/Cookie Exchange Announcement (Greg)

- December event, cookie exchange
- Contact CHNA if you'd like to be involved

Safety and Homelessness in our Community

- Quick History of homelessness in Colonial Heights (Greg)
 - Has been present in the community for a number of years
 - Colonial Park's shaded area used to have walls. Walls were removed after a community vote.
 - Housing crisis circa 2008: homes occupied by squatters
- Neighborhood Coalition Presentation (Kendal)
 - Who we are
 - Came together about 2-3 weeks ago
 - KC facilitated a zoom call between citizens and local officials
 - This is a group of people tired of getting no help
 - Open 311 cases dating back to November 2021
 - We differentiated people's need for help and our safety
 - No one is being taken care of
 - Demand to get our safety back
 - Camps
 - Major one: Stockton Blvd
 - Residents' actions
 - Fencing around their yards
 - Locking up water access

- Bartering with prostitutes to not bring their John's on their street
 - Calling the police has been ineffective
 - Response from the police 'the DA doesn't prosecute so we're not going to do anything'
 - The homeless know and understand that Stockton Blvd is the dividing line between the City and the unincorporated County.
 - County did a sweep and the homeless moved to the City side of the street
- Some people are ready for help, while others are not
 - These two populations are not being treated the same or provided the same services
- Some people have gotten housing but didn't like it, so they came back to the same spot they left
- Stockton Blvd Partnership was able to step in and help
 - Cleared out the area
 - Provided security
 - Did this without the use of civil tax dollars
- Efforts
 - 311
 - Been told the first step is to report to 311
 - DCR was not aware of the issues
 - Police Captain also not aware until 2 weeks ago
 - Non-emergent Police Line
 - Told 'we've reevaluated your claim and we won't send out a police officer'
 - 911
 - Interrogated by dispatch asking if you really saw the crime happening (i.e. doing drugs, prostitution, etc.)
 - Calls/emails to officials
 - Eric Guerra
 - Only person to respond
 - Mayor's office
 - Hasn't responded to anything
 - Supervisor Serna
 - Auto reply email notifying that the email was received (confirmed by Supervisor Serna)
 - Kendal – "Are you going to respond?"
- Solutions
 - Greater police presence
 - Higher arrest rates
 - Bus stops to become critical infrastructure
 - More camping sites like Miller Park

- *Question directed to the DA: What does it take for you to prosecute?*
 - DA's response
 - No officer should say that because the DA won't prosecute to get out of filing a report
 - The report itself has evidentiary value
 - There is a disagreement between the policy approach
 - Supervisor Serna – The DA has taken a different approach to the homeless situation
 - Suggested to review the August 7, 2023 letter from the DA
 - Tangible suggestions and demands on how handle the situation with proposed solutions
 - Fair Oaks and Howe encampment given as an example of a cleared encampment
 - More enforcement is needed
 - Homeless people are victims of crime too
 - Prop 47 decriminalized drug possession and need to make that a priority again
 - Camps that develop
 - Ask and think through why are they there?
 - Availability of drugs
 - Water, electricity, shade
- *Community response to presentation*
 - Homeless isn't a crime. Prop 47 was due to overcrowded prisons.
 - Eric Guerra: Proposal towards 65th and the old Fijian church
 - Responses from the Vice Mayor's office (Eric Guerra) and the Mayor's office have been slow and nonexistent
 - Gate on 20th needs to be extended
 - Hypodermic needles, alleys on fire, hazardous stuff going down storm drains
 - The neighborhood is completely fed up and ready to confront the homeless themselves
 - What is the long-term solution?
 - We know that the cops have been around in the past couple weeks but its already come back
 - Comment to the Colonial Heights Neighborhood Coalition
 - Don't want to lose our humanity through this and requesting respect and to be mindful of the language being used
 - Neighbor was told by police that they were being recorded. Urged neighbors to not confront the homeless. They are unable to live in their own house. They are not safe in their own home at any hour.
- *Government Official's Response*
 - Eric Guerra
 - "I feel you, and I see you."
 - Did not want to get in a dispute with other officials present at the meeting but disagreed with Supervisor Serna and the DA's tone with their comments thus far
 - Can't control Prop 47

- Federal Courts restricted moving homeless camps – injunction put a stop to things for a month
 - 9/13/23: won extension of restraining order
 - Calling to build more shelters
 - City Council has been given the authority to find locations for safe grounds
 - There are a number of property owners willing to lease and participate
 - Have had property owners drop due to neighbors claiming to sue if they proceeded with it
 - Approach
 - Commitment with the County to find locations and beds, directive from the city manager
 - Potentially has a 12 acre site, cannot confirm any more details at this point
 - Expand hotel/motel opportunities
 - Safety is critical
 - Joint County/City/crisis support and receiving center up and running within next year
 - Directive that if a crime is in progress, there will be a response
 - Lack of resources
 - Currently down 101 officers
 - Only 15 people in 45 slots in the academy
 - Must have clinicians
- Supervisor Serna
 - Noted that there is a \$21.4M grant for encampments
- Hezekiah Allen (DCR)
 - Colonial Heights year to date statistics
 - 572 calls for service (comparison made to the entire City of 16,000 calls)
 - 540 calls were responded to
 - Engagement 3 times per week since May 16, 2023
 - Alternative response approach
 - 14 field staff
 - Goal is not to arrest but to provide services
 - Police department has 6 impact officers
 - Continuum of Care Report
 - 2,200 people experiencing homelessness on the waitlist for services
 - 700 families waiting
 - Long term solution: need more shelters and space
 - Shift in protocol (back in July 2023)
 - Before: DCR used to make the attempt/outreach
 - After: DCR and the Fire Department go together
 - Recently cleared 2 dozen cubic yards of waste in Colonial Heights

- *Question from Neighbor:* How soon can you connect people with services?
 - DCR response
 - There is a waitlist for services (referred back to the 2,200 homeless people from the Continuum of Care Report)
 - Could be as quick as 3 days for the highly vulnerable
 - A person on the waitlist gets timed out after 30 days and the process has to start over
 - There have been 4 people moved from Colonial Heights to Miller Park. These people were ready to move right then and there.
- Lt. Neil Cybulski
 - “This might not feel great, but this is the long-term solution.” (referring to the work being done now)
 - Regarding comments that officers are blaming the DA and therefore not taking action
 - Personal statement: It makes me sick. It erodes the model and trust.
 - Long Term Plan – differing to Jason Lee (Fire Marshall)
 - Solutions
 - Will do everything in our power to deploy resources to the East Command
 - Starting to see the model work by the movement that is already happening
- Jason Lee (Fire Marshall)
 - \$105,000 in violations for illegal fireworks
 - Incident Command System (ICS) – New model of addressing homelessness
 - Inter-agency response, making positive change and is a streamlined approach
 - 1 incident manager (Brian Pedro, Assistant Fire Chief)
 - 4 direct reports
 - Quick rapid response unit
 - Police, DCR, Fire go together
 - Lee personally reviews new homeless shelter sites and provides the legal fire code to support the program
 - 20th Alleyway is City property, 51st Alleyway is Department of Public Works
 - Have been out 4 times in past couple weeks
 - Trying to extend and properly secure the gate with a lock that emergency services can access
 - Neighbors’ response was positive to this information
 - Eric Guerra is trying to expedite this

Porchfest Committee Update

[Skipped due running out of time, notes added post meeting]

- Family-friendly music festival on October 7th 12-7pm
- Colonial Park serves as headquarters where there will be food and artisan vendors
- Performances will take place at four houses in surrounding the park, while the headlining band will close out the event at the park
- Perfect opportunity to meet your neighbors, make new friends, and strengthen the sense of community that makes Sacramento so special

T-Shirt Design Contest Results (Greg)

- First Place: Black and white picture of trolley car, palm trees, and 1910
- Second Place: Colonial Heights trolley car in red and yellow
- 55 votes



Next Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting
Wednesday, October 11th, 2023
6:30 – 8:00
Colonial Heights Library
(Stockton Blvd and 21st Ave)

Additional Resources

Darrell Steinberg

City of Sacramento, Mayor

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/mayor-council/mayor>

Email: Engage@CityofSacramento.org

Community Engagement Team: <https://engagesac.org/about-us/#staff>

- Jocelyn Navarro
- David Augusto

Eric Guerra

City of Sacramento, Vice Mayor, District 6

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/mayor-council/district-6>

Email: eguerra@cityofsacramento.org

Staff Contact Information: <https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/mayor-council/district-6/contact>

Phil Serna

Sacramento County, District 1 Supervisor

Website: <https://bos.saccounty.gov/District1/Pages/default.aspx>

Email: SupervisorSerna@saccounty.gov

City of Sacramento – Police Department

District 6, East Command

Lt. Sabrina Briggs & Lt. Neil Cybulski

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Police/Contact/Police-Facilities/Richards-Police-Facility>

City of Sacramento – Fire Department

Jason Lee, Fire Marshall

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Fire>

City of Sacramento – Department of Community Response

Hezekiah Allen

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Response>

Email: DCR@cityofsacramento.org

City of Sacramento – Parks and Community Enrichment Commission

Victoria Vasquez, Commissioner Chair, Council District 6

Website: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/ParksandRec/Parks-Rec-Commission>

Email: victoria_L_vasquez@live.com

Sacramento County – District Attorney’s Office

Website: <https://www.sacda.org/>

Community Prosecution Unit: <https://www.sacda.org/in-the-courtroom/criminal-prosecutions/community-prosecution/>

Sacramento City Express – news website for the City of Sacramento government

<https://sacramentocityexpress.com/>

T-Shirt Design Submissions

