



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 13

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DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2010 PAUAAH COMMUNITY CENTER

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Frank Lavoie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. **with a quorum of six (6) members present.** Note – This nine (9) member Board requires five (5) members for a quorum and to take official Board action.

Members Present: Alvin Au (Arrived at 7:39 p.m.), Anthony Chang (Arrived at 7:08 p.m.), Frank Lavoie, Lynne Matusow, Carlton N. Middleton, Dolores Mollring, T.A. Ruby, Tom Smyth and Stanford Yuen (Arrived at 7:28 p.m.).

Members Absent: None.

Vacancies: None.

Guests: Sandra Pohl (Friends of Chinatown), Sgt. Blancaflor, Capt. William Axt, Maj. McCauley, Sgt. Santos and Officer Richard Fikani (Honolulu Police Department), Holly Huber (Queen Emma Gardens), Filipina Rivera, Emelita Wright, Teodoro M., Z. Bumeo, Alfonso Ronquillo, Diane Ronquillo (River Pauahi Citizens Patrol), David Chang, John Martin (Marin Tower), Richard Garanson, Steve Lohse (Chinatown Gateway Plaza), Firefighter Mark Nakagawa (Honolulu Fire Department), Alan Feliciano (Safe Haven), Sandra Pohl and Barbara Hao (Friends of Chinatown), Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Shawn Hamamoto (Councilmember Rod Tam's Office staff), Gwen Abella, Warren Okazaki (Chinatown Manor), Connie Geisler (Winston Hale), Bill Brennan (Mayor's Representative), Scott Truesdell, Kent Anderson (Family Promise), Tyler Burner and Kazu McArthur (Neighborhood Commission Office staff).

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS: Those present introduced themselves.

CITY MONTHLY REPORTS:

Honolulu Fire Department (HFD): Firefighter Mark Nakagawa reported the following:

- **July 2010 Statistics:** Included 7 structure fires, 10 rubbish fires, 10 medical emergencies, 1 rescue, 1 miscellaneous call and 135 total alarms.
- **Fire Safety Tip:** A home fire escape plan is an integral part of your family's safety. Having an advanced warning sound from a working smoke alarm increases your family's ability to exit safely and quickly. Fire can quickly fill a home with toxic smoke, creating a dangerous environment. A well-prepared and practiced escape plan may save your family's lives.
- **Prepare and Practice Home Fire Escape Plan** – Prepare and practice a home fire escape plan; identify a meeting place where everyone can meet outside; ensure that family members know two ways to exit every room in your home; sleep with bedroom doors closed to minimize smoke from traveling through your home; maintain windows to ensure they open easily from the inside in case it is needed as an alternative escape route. Once safely outside, call 911 immediately.

Honolulu Police Department (HPD): Sgt. Blancaflor reported the following:

- **Introduction:** Sgt. Blancaflor, Maj. McCauley, Capt. Axt and Sgt. Santos were introduced to the community.
- **July 2010 Statistics:** Included 7 assaults, 2 burglaries, 10 drug offenses, 7 driving under the influence (DUI), 4 graffiti, 90 motor vehicle collisions, 2 motor vehicle thefts, 10 property damage cases, 6 robberies, 3 sex assaults, 8 prostitution arrests, 8 unauthorized entries to a motor vehicle (UEMV) and 119 miscellaneous calls. It was also reported that a thief on a bike was apprehended by HPD. It was noted that crime trends indicate a decrease in crime statistics as students return to school.



Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Camera Status Update: It was reported that all cameras are operational.
2. Motor Vehicle Collisions: Matusow relayed instances of drivers running the red light on Beretania Street at Maunakea and drivers traveling the wrong way on Pauahi Street. It was asked if anything is being done to prevent motor vehicle collisions.
3. Police Stalls: Middleton informed the community of designated police parking stalls on Maunakea Street. HPD clarified that the designated stalls are located on the Koko head side of Maunakea Street, mauka of Hotel Street.

Chang arrived at 7:08 p.m.; **seven (7) members present.**

4. Pauahi Street: Middleton requested that parking stalls on Pauahi Street allow public parking after 8:00 p.m.
5. Tent City: Middleton inquired about HPD's position on a tent city. HPD stated homeless persons cannot be forced to move and must remain neutral on a decision for a tent city.
6. Truck Crossing: Smyth circulated photos to HPD of trucks parked in "No Parking" areas at the Queen Street/Fort Street Mall crosswalk. A concern was raised that the parked trucks prevent oncoming traffic from seeing pedestrians entering the crosswalk. HPD advised the public to call 911 to report any illegal parking activity. It was noted that all 911 calls will be responded to. Smyth asked if trucks with a permit can park at the "No Parking" intersection. HPD stated that the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) is responsible for issuing permits. HPD has increased the amount of officers on Fort Street Mall.
7. Click it or Ticket: Middleton asked if the "Click it or Ticket" campaign was effective. HPD stated that the campaign was very effective.

Neighborhood Citizens' Patrol: Mollring reported that a recent neighborhood patrol was cancelled due to rainy conditions. It was also reported that numerous citizens' patrols will gather at Windward Mall for a national night out on Saturday, August 7, 2010. It was also reported that Kekaulike and River Street/Pauahi Street patrols have been taking place every Tuesday and Thursday.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

Hawaii Pacific University (HPU): No representative was present; no report was available.

Honolulu Culture and Arts District: No representative was present; no report was available.

Safe Haven: Alan Feliciano reported that two (2) residents have moved out and two (2) residents have moved in to Safe Haven in July 2010. It was also reported that two (2) residents have moved into Safe Haven since the beginning of August 2010. It was further reported that Safe Haven will have an informational booth set up for the River Street Block Party. It was also noted that there are ongoing problems of urination, graffiti and loud noises occurring in the alley. Safe Haven is seeking ideas to celebrate a 15 year anniversary.

Honolulu Rail Transit: Lavoie reported that the design contract for the Waipahu transit center has been awarded to HDR Pacific Engineers. Comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) need to be sent to the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in writing by August 16, 2010.

Chinatown Business and Community Association (CBCA): No representatives were present; no report was given.

Public Concerns:

1. Queen Emma Gardens: Concern was raised of loud noises emanating from glass being recycled at the Island Recycling redemption center on Vineyard Boulevard next to Safeway. It was stated that noises bother residents at Queen Emma Gardens. Noises occur between 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., from Monday through Saturday and between 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. It was noted that various government

departments have found the redemption center has not been following rules. Smyth clarified that the City has a noise task force and suggested that the issue be brought up with the task force.

Yuen arrived at 7:28 p.m.; **eight (8) members present.**

2. Fresh Café: Lavoie relayed a concern from Councilmember Tam of Fresh Café making noise late at night. Matusow clarified that Fresh Café is not in the Downtown Neighborhood Board NO.13 area.
3. Cause of Fire: It was asked if HFD knew the cause of a past fire at the Lusitana Street/Pele Street intersection. It was asked if the occupancy of the building was a factor in the fire.
4. Sidewalk Laws: It was asked if it was illegal to have lawn chairs on the sidewalk. HPD stated that as long as there is ample room for safe pedestrian ingress and egress on the sidewalk, no citations can be made.

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mayor's Representative: Bill Brennan reported the following:

- Leaf Blowers/Generators: The City street cleaner begins sweeping the streets of the downtown area at 3:30 a.m. but does not operate any leaf blowers or other motorized equipment at that time. If the noises can be pinpointed, it is suggested that a complaint be filed with HPD for investigation.
- Fort Street Mall Benches: The benches were removed in the past due to constant use by homeless individuals, and were rarely available to other mall visitors. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) tried using benches with armrests in the middle in an attempt to discourage extended use by homeless individuals; however it was concluded that the armrests did not keep homeless from taking over the benches. The rules and regulations governing the use of pedestrian malls do not mention anything about it being illegal to sit on the planters. Toadstools are a possible future option being considered and discussed with the Chinatown Business Improvement District (BID) when funds are available. The toadstools would be intended for short-term use by any individual. Presently there are no funds for any new seating.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Signage: Smyth stated that the planters have signage indicating the restriction of sitting on the planter. It was stated that it is possible that the Business Improvement District (BID) installed the signage.
2. Reallocation: Smyth suggested that four (4) benches with center dividers be reallocated from the makai end of Fort Street Mall to the mauka end. It was also noted that HPD stated that more segway officers would be assigned to patrol Fort Street Mall.
3. Preference: Ruby noted that street people prefer to linger between the Hotel Street and Beretania Street section of Fort Street Mall due to the amount of restaurants, foot traffic and activity in the area.
4. Light Timing: Matusow stated that the timing of traffic lights on Hotel Street from River Street to Richards Street is causing buses to run behind schedule. As a result, busses are being routed to King Street when late, avoiding Hotel Street and passengers are missing the bus.

Au arrived at 7:39 p.m.; **nine (9) members present.**

5. Elderly Need: Matusow Stated that senior citizens are suffering due to the lack of benches on Fort Street Mall. It was expressed that law abiding citizens need benches. It was noted that Chinatown Gateway has new benches by the bus stop while Fort Street Mall is still waiting. It was suggested that the City install benches similar to those at Chinatown Gateway. It was noted that similar benches are found at Times and Foodland on Beretania Street.
6. Tent City: Middleton asked what the Acting Mayor's position on a tent City was. Brennan stated that the Acting Mayor has been involved with homeless issues for the past few months. It was stated that the Acting Mayor is open to safe zones as a possible solution to homeless issues.

7. Synchronization: Smyth noted that traffic lights at the Hotel Street/Bishop Street and Merchant Street/Alakea Street intersections change to yellow ten (10) seconds after the pedestrian crossing countdown has ended. It was noted that most other traffic lights turn yellow immediately after the crossing countdown has expired. Smyth raised concern that pedestrians accustomed to entering the crosswalk immediately after the other crosswalk has ended could be hit by traffic. It was requested that all crosswalks be made uniform to avoid an accident.
8. Bus Stop: Ruby relayed an incident involving a mother and child being injured due to a poorly maintained bus stop at the Hotel Street/ River Street intersection. It was noted that the curb should be level with the edge of the bus steps. It was requested that necessary changes be made.
9. Synchronization Plan: Middleton asked when the master traffic light synchronization plan would be finished.
10. Homeless Plane Tickets: It was asked if the State is purchasing plane tickets to send homeless individuals back to the mainland. Smyth clarified that the plane tickets were provided to certain homeless individuals by a couple of legislators as a private act of good will. It was also stated that the tickets were purchased on the premise that family members would be present to receive the individuals at the airport.
11. Crosswalk Button: Au stated that the crosswalk button on the mauka side of Beretania Street at Smith Street is broken and is in need of repair.
12. Tsunami Maps: Smyth stated that persons residing within the area between Waikiki and the airport were not included in a series of meetings to inform the public of the new tsunami maps. It was also expressed that a publicly posted meeting to receive public comment on the new tsunami maps was not well advertised. It was noted that the new maps directly impact the businesses and residents of Downtown. It was requested the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) schedule another meeting to inform the Downtown community and other interested individuals about the new maps. It was also noted that DEM has been contacted to remove outdated maps posted on its website.

Councilmember Rod Tam: Shawn Hamamoto circulated a handout and reported that Bill 34, regarding a consumer fireworks ban had passed the Public Safety Committee and has been submitted to the full council for final reading. The Planning Committee has approved funds to hire a consultant to work on the Chinatown Special District plan after Ewa, North Shore and Waianae plans have been completed. Community members are encouraged to submit ideas for the plan to the Mayor's office. A request has been submitted to DFM to look into establishing intermittent freight loading zones for Kekaulike Mall on Hotel Street.

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland: No representative was present; a handout was available.

Senator Brickwood Galuteria: No representative was present; a handout was available.

State Representative Karl Rhoads: No representative was present; no report was available.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Fort Street Mall Benches: Item was discussed during the Mayor's report.

NEW BUSINESS:

River Art Wok: Sandra Pohl and Barbara Hao announced that Friends of Chinatown will be sponsoring a River Street block party on August 21, 2010 at Sun Yat Sen Mall and College Walk from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Activities include a Chinese lion dance, saimin eating contest, various educational and food booths, games, plein art, a graffiti paint out, crafts and art on the fence. The block party will also highlight the floating of lit woks down the river, accompanied by Hawaiian chant. Addresses regarding community patrols and the vision of Chinatown will be given by the HPD Chief of Police and Acting Mayor.

Family Promise of Hawaii: Kent Anderson reported that 25% of homeless individuals are children. It was further noted that 40% of the homeless community is comprised of working families with children. Family Promise of Hawaii works with local ecclesiastical congregations to find temporary housing for homeless working families with

children. It was noted that over 80% of families that have worked with Family Promise have transitioned into regular housing within four (4) months. The program is always seeking volunteers and other partners to assist with temporarily housing working families with children.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Funding: Smyth noted that many individuals have difficulty moving into any type of housing due to the security deposit required. It was stated that although funds are available to assist individuals with paying the security deposit, it is not well publicized. It was further noted that many individuals are not aware that they can contribute to the fund. It was suggested that second-hand furniture stores be contacted to donate repairable furniture to be used by families as they find housing.
2. Census Bureau: Middleton asked if homeless individuals involved with the Family Promise program were housed in safe and accessible environments to allow participation in the 2010 Census. It was stated that Family Promise worked with Partners in Care and other organizations to ensure that the homeless individuals were accounted for by the census.
3. Contact Information: Family Promise of Hawaii can be contacted at 548-7478 and is open 24 hours.
4. Private Non-Profit: Matusow noted that new laws require all private non-profit organizations to file federal tax returns to retain a non-profit status.
5. Safe Areas: Middleton stated that census enumerators have difficulty in counting individuals housed in dangerous or inaccessible areas.
6. Tent City: It was asked what Family Promise's stance on a tent city was. It was stated that homeless providers will be meeting together to discuss homeless issues; and that most homeless providers prefer housing as the solution to homelessness.
7. Room Density: A resident inquired about the number of persons being allowed in a room for safety and security purposes. Anderson stated that there are rules in place that dictate the number of persons that are allowed to sleep in a particular room. It was expressed that each family demographic is different and specific needs should be taken into account.

City Resolution 08-108, CD1: Steve Lohse requested that the Board support City Council Resolution 08-108 that was passed in 2008; to ensure sale of City owned affordable housing meets the requirements of residents to keep the units affordable. It was stated that the City currently owns 12 properties. It was noted that Resolution 108 was proposed by the residents.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Rent: Smyth noted that affordable housing rent was below current Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards at the time the resolution was made. It was noted that there was a proposition to raise rent levels to HUD standards to generate more money for the maintenance of the facilities. It was asked if the City would raise rent if the housing is not sold. It was stated that the City contracted managing agents will monitor the housing market and advise the City on any incremental rent adjustments that occur.
2. Income Percentage: A resident asked if 30 percent of the tenant's income is below HUD standards. Lohse stated that 30 percent is the HUD standard. It was clarified that the City is not pleased with the market value of the housing.
3. Resolution Documents: Lohse stated that Resolution 08-108, CD1 is posted on the City Website.
4. Email: Lavoie stated that an email testimony was received from a Marin Tower resident with strong support for the proposed Board resolution.

Smyth moved, Matusow seconded that the Board support Resolution 08-108, CD1 as written. The motion was ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, 9-0-0 (AYE: Au, Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Middleton, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen).

Bill 10-38: Lavoie entertained a motion for the Board to support Bill 10-38, regarding the banning of gas powered leaf blowers and limiting use of electrical powered leaf blowers.

Mollring moved, Matusow seconded that the Board support Bill 10-38.

Discussion followed:

1. Council Agenda: Matusow asked when Bill 10-38 would be put on the City Council agenda for discussion. It was stated that Bill 38 would be placed on the September agenda.
2. Residential Areas: Matusow asked if language in Bill 10-38 would ban leaf blower use in Business Mixed Use (BMX) zoned areas.

Matusow moved to amend the motion, Ruby seconded that Bill 10-38 include the language “or mixed use which includes residential”. The amendment was ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, 9-0-0 (AYE: Au, Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Middleton, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen).

3. Reoccurring Issues: Middleton questioned how serious the leaf blower issue is. It was stated that nothing has changed over the last twenty (20) years. It was stated that there are other issues that are never discussed by the Board.
4. Agenda Items: Lavoie responded that the current Chair has never denied an item to appear on the agenda if two (2) or more Board members or any one (1) community member have requested it.
5. State Law: Smyth suggested that a review of the amended motion be made to ensure that the amended motion is in harmony of State noise laws.
6. Government Workers: Lavoie asked if Bill 10-38 would exempt government employees. Board members clarified that the City bill would not exempt government workers from using leaf blowers.
7. Enforcement: Au noted that the State law allows a thirty (30) minute time limit to complete leaf blowing activities. It was expressed that the bill is unenforceable. Smyth noted that State laws allow counties to set stricter requirements.
8. Alternative: Middleton asked if there is an alternative to gather leaves if leaf blowers are banned.
9. Useless: Mollring stated that leaf blowers are useless. It was stated that workers only kick up dust and move the leaves further down the street.
10. Time Limit: Smyth clarified that State law allows crews thirty (30) minutes to pick up trash and blow leaves.

The amended motion was ADOPTED 7-2-0 (AYE: Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen. NO: Au and Middleton).

Castagnolas Pizzeria: No representative was present; item will be deferred to the next meeting.

Pacific Liquor and Grocery Store: No representative was present; item will be deferred to the next meeting.

United Chinese Society of Hawaii’s Mid-Autumn Festival: Lavoie reported the offer was extended to the Board by the United Chinese Society of Hawaii to set up a free informational table at its Mid-Autumn Festival at the Cultural Plaza. It was stated that a Board member would be in charge of setting up and overseeing the table if the Board decides to set up the table. There were no Board members interested in setting up an informational table.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The July 1, 2010 Downtown Neighborhood Board No. 13 regular meeting minutes were UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS CORRECTED, 9-0-0 (Aye: Au, Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Middleton, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen). Corrections included the following:

- Page 1 – Following Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) should read...Fire Fighter 3 Kahahawai reported:

- Page 1 – Following Honolulu Police Department (HPD) should read...Sergeant Y.K. Chan reported:
- Page 2 – Under Safe Haven should read...**Alan** Feliciano...
- Page 3 – Under Queen Emma Condo Conversion should read...Queen Emma Street and **Remodel**...
- Page 3 – After Queen Emma Condo Conversion should read...Questions, comments and concerns followed:
- Page 6 – Following Chairs Report should read...Chair Frank Lavoie reported:

BOARD REPORTS:

Chairs Report: Chair Frank Lavoie reported;

- Other Liquor License Applications or Street Closures: Smith's Union Grill is requesting to change its name to Smitty's on Thursday, September 16, 2010. Chin's Harbor View and KAGE Hawaii will be having preliminary hearings. Waterfront at Aloha Tower will be holding events on Thursday, August 5, Saturday, August 7 and September 4, 2010. Murphy's will be closing the street on Friday, August 27, 2010. The Board has never had a problem with Murphy's.
 - Indigo Restaurant: Au stated that minority owners of the Indigo Restaurant are looking in to opening seven (7) days a week, with entertainment. It was noted that the restaurant currently has a 2:00 a.m. closure license. It was stated that Chinatown Gateway residents will be affected by the noise.
- Future Agenda Items:
 - Tsunami Maps: Smyth requested a presentation by DEM to explain new tsunami maps and evacuation plans.
 - Newsletter: Matusow requested that the Board vote to publish a Board newsletter.
- Neighborhood Commission: Matusow noted that the Ewa Neighborhood Board has been suspended for two (2) months and will be required to attend parliamentary training. It was stated that the Chair was not allowing certain items to be placed on the agenda. It was also noted that a Makakilo Board member has been suspended.
- Queen's Medical Center Update: Lavoie reported that Engineering Concepts, Inc. (ECI) is preparing drawings of the recommended traffic improvements for the Lusitana Street/Lunalilo Street intersection for the City's renewed approval. Construction on the Kinau off-ramp is going well. The City is currently reviewing plans for the Lusitana Street to Vineyard Street on-ramp.
- Office of Information Practices: There was no report.

Treasurer's Report: Mollring reported a balance of \$1,967.41. The report was filed.

Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OMPO): Smyth reported that OMPO is working in conjunction with other Oahu agencies to pursue a \$385,000 grant to study the impact of climate change on transportation projects. There are two University of Hawaii groups that have already conducted similar studies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 2, 2010 at the Pauahi Community Center; 171 North Pauahi Street at 7:00 p.m.
- The Neighborhood Citizen's Patrol meets each Tuesday on the Diamond Head side of Kukui Plaza at 8:00 p.m. Please consider joining the patrol and supporting its efforts as they express their service and pride in our Downtown/Chinatown community.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Submitted by Kazuaki McArthur, Neighborhood Assistant.

Reviewed by Frank Lavoie, Chair