

Upper East News

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Upper East Association

September 2012



A Message from the Board President ...



You have in your hands the annual printed newsletter of the Upper East Association. It's our opportunity to tell all our neighbors in the Upper East about the association and what

we've been doing this year, and to invite you to join for 2013.

If you live or own property in the Upper East you know what a lovely and historic neighborhood it is. The association's goal is to keep it that way.

We serve three key roles:

- Monitor local government initiatives affecting the Upper East and keep our members informed.
- Share the Upper East perspective with local government officials.
- Promote activities to beautify the neighborhood and enhance the quality of life of our residents.

We send out an email newsletter most every month alerting our members to coming events and newsworthy issues. We invite members to let us know about quality-of-life issues, and in a number of cases we've been able to do something about them. We maintain a website with up-to-date information about the community and the association. Finally, each fall we distribute this printed newsletter to every residence in the neighborhood.

The association has grown to comprise over 215 member households. Our ability to draw the attention of City officials to our issues is only as strong as our membership roster. The more members we have, the greater our influence.

I hope you'll join us.

Milt Hess
President, Upper East Association
Board of Directors

Our Redesigned Website



We started 2012 with a redesigned website that is kept current with upcoming events and neighborhood news. You'll find it at www.SBuppereast.org.

During the year we've published items about Southern California Edison's smart meter program; Nixle, the Police Department's new public information system; MTD's proposal to cancel Line 22 bus service; Cottage Hospital helicopter meetings; Marborg's accepting plastic bags in the recycling bins; plus a number of others.

There's also a comprehensive description of the Upper East neighborhood, information about preservation, traffic and safety, and links to other useful websites.

Become a Member for 2013



It's time to renew your membership in the Upper East Association for 2013, or to join if you are not yet a member. The annual dues for next year will again be \$15.

By strengthening our voice with City officials you will be supporting our efforts to maintain and improve the quality of life in the Upper East. As a member you will receive our monthly email newsletters informing you of upcoming events and developments in the neighborhood.

If you are currently a member we hope you'll rejoin for 2013. If you're not yet a member, please join us.

Monitoring City Initiatives



From time to time issues arise in the City that affect the Upper East and merit our oversight and community input. The UEA Board has stepped forward in a number of such situations during the past year:

Historic Resources Element. We have monitored the ongoing effort to create an Historic Resources Element (HRE) for Plan Santa Barbara. The HRE is intended to guide City officials and commissions in preserving Santa Barbara's historic resources when considering future development. We attended many of the meetings of the HRE Task Force and reviewed working drafts to see if any of the provisions would have a significant impact on the Upper East.

Mission & State Street Development. We reviewed proposals for the vacant property at the corner of Mission and State Streets and attended the meeting of the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) where the latest proposal

was submitted for approval. UEA Board members Fred Sweeney and Joan Livingston urged the HLC to require a design for the property that reflects the importance of its location as a gateway to the Old Mission and the upper State Street parkway. As of this writing the developer has not yet returned to the HLC with a new design.

Traffic Safety. Last year we proudly reported on safety improvements at the corner of Anacapa and East Los Olivos Streets. After the winter slurry seal, however, not all the new street markings were replaced. UEA Board members followed up with the Public Works Department, and after many phone calls and a letter to the Director the intersection is once again clearly marked to discourage drivers from turning into the wrong lane of Anacapa Street.

Street Trees. When the oleander trees on Pueblo Street were dying a member of the association asked for our help to get them replaced. Board members contacted the Parks and Recreation Department and the City Arborist and participated in discussions about an appropriate replacement. Last fall the oleanders were removed, and young crepe myrtle and mytan trees were planted in their place this spring.

Garden Street Academy. The Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) is reviewing the Garden Street Academy's ongoing construction work for compatibility with the requirements of El Pueblo Viejo II and the Old Mission Santa Barbara National Historic Landmark District. Situated on the grounds of the former St. Anthony's Seminary, the site is historically protected and any alterations must satisfy these requirements. The chain link fences, gates and overhead power lines are non-compliant, and the HLC has directed the Garden Street Academy to present a master plan and schedule for completing the construction and restoring the historic landscape.

Safe Passage between Mission Historical Park and Mission Canyon



For decades our community has lived with the vehicle and pedestrian safety issues present in the bottleneck of roadways and intersections on both sides of the Mission Creek Bridge. This area is home to numerous historic resources and as such is a key part of our community's historical heritage.

Those most affected by this bottleneck include residents in the adjacent neighborhoods, workers at and visitors to the many institutions and public parks, and the schoolchildren who attend the nearby public and private schools. Improvements have been proposed in the past, but to date no significant changes have been made to reduce the safety risks despite increased traffic volumes.

When the Natural History Museum announced its modernization plan in 2011, UEA Board member Don Olson recognized an opportunity to address this safety issue. He assembled a working group comprising representatives of adjacent neighborhood associations, institutions, preservation groups and property owners to identify the problems and constraints, and to support improvements to this historically significant part of our community. UEA Board members Fred Sweeney and Steve Forsell also participated in the working group.

In June 2012 the Concerned Citizens for Safe Passage Working Group published a comprehensive Information Packet documenting both the safety issues and the many historical resources that must be considered in trying to solve the problems. The Information Packet is available on the UEA website. Several walking tours of the corridor have been conducted for City and County officials and interested citizens.

As a result of the Working Group's success in documenting the issues, Caltrans has awarded the County of Santa Barbara an \$88,000 grant to develop a conceptual improvement plan for the corridor. The City of Santa Barbara will be an active partner with the County on the project along with Concerned Citizens for Safe Passage.

Visit us on the web at www.SBuppereast.org

Adopt-a-Block



Santa Barbara created the Adopt-a-Block program to promote teamwork between City staff and residents to keep our neighborhoods clean and clear of graffiti and litter.

Residents who join the program make a one-year commitment to keep a block free of graffiti. Our goal is to have one resident on each block in the Upper East sign up for Adopt-a-Block.

Please contact us at ueacomm@gmail.com to obtain a free graffiti clean-up kit, which includes a plastic bucket, spray bottle of graffiti remover, application brush, safety goggles, rubber gloves, towel and directions for use. These kits are provided by the City Public Works Department through Looking Good Santa Barbara.

Garden Exchanges



We held five successful garden exchanges this summer, with more to come. Please mark your calendar for the next one, on Saturday, October 20th from 10am to noon at 14 East Los Olivos St.

The idea of a garden exchange is simple ... if you have excess garden goodies – vegetables, fruit, plants – bring them for others to share. If you don't have anything to bring, come anyway. After all, someone has to take home all those extras. There will be coffee, tea and munchies plus the opportunity to meet and chat with your neighbors.

Police Department Beat Coordinators



The Santa Barbara Police Department has designated four beat coordinators to improve coordination of crime prevention in the City. For the Upper East,

the beat coordinator for the area below East Los Olivos St. is Officer Kasi Beutel; for the area above East Los Olivos it's Officer Jonathan Reyes. The UEA Board met with Officers Beutel and Reyes in March to understand their new role and how we can best coordinate with them. Their goal is to identify emerging public safety issues and coordinate the police response that will prevent them from escalating.

Nixle, a Community Notification Service



The Santa Barbara Police Department has launched a new community notification service called *Nixle* to improve communication with people who live and work in our area.

Nixle provides a quick, efficient and secure way to get neighborhood-level information out to community members via email and text messages. It's available to residents at no cost, though standard text message rates apply for subscribers who do not have text plans with their cell phone providers.

The Police Department has used Nixle to send out alerts, to seek help from the public in locating suspected criminals, and to report on arrests and current crime trends.

Sign up at www.nixle.com.

Annual Meeting



The Upper East Association holds an annual meeting each November to report to our members on our activities, membership, and finances. This year we are arranging the

meeting as a garden party, with food, beverages and the opportunity to meet and socialize with other UEA members.

Nicole Hernandez, the recently appointed City Historian, will be our guest speaker. Prior to her

new position she served as a Building Plans Examiner and Architectural Historian for the City of New Orleans. Before that she worked as project coordinator at Nostalgic Stone in Denver and at Historic Denver, Inc. where she served as the Program Director of the organization's Sacred Landmarks Preservation Program. She holds a Masters in Fine Arts and Historic Preservation from Savannah College of Art and Design.

All UEA members will be invited, both current and new (for 2013). If you are not yet a member and would like to be included, be sure to send in your application.

Upper East Association Board

The UEA Board of Directors currently consists of nine members, each elected in 2011 to a one-year term:

Milt Hess – President
Steve Forsell – Vice President
Joan Livingston – Treasurer
Marie-Paule Hajdu – Secretary
Lisa Burns
Tony Fischer
Don Olson
Beth Perry
Fred Sweeney

At its July 2012 meeting the Board adopted an amendment to the UEA bylaws to establish two-year terms for Board members, with one-half of the Directors to be elected in even-numbered years and one-half in odd-numbered years.

The election of Board members for the 2013-14 term will be conducted in November 2012. Prospective candidates for the Board are invited to contact us at ueacomm@gmail.com to express interest and to schedule a meeting to discuss what the role entails.
