

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Art Liberman, BPA President



The controversy over rezoning the Maybell-Clemo property for a senior housing project plus single family homes removed most of the oxygen from the air

in Barron Park during the past six months. The election outcome of Measure D on Nov 5th, with a resounding, and for some surprising, rejection by Palo Alto's voters of the rezoning proposal, will reverberate through the corridors of power and in the minds of voters over the next year. For us in Barron Park, residents can now move forward and focus their attention on the next local zoning and land use issue coming our way.

Next up: Buena Vista

The Buena Vista Mobile Home Park (BVMHP) is owned by the Jisser family who announced about a year ago their intention to close it and sell the property to Prometheus, a large privately held developer of apartment buildings in Silicon Valley. Prometheus disclosed their concept for the 4.5 acre section of the mobile park site directly behind the stores (Barron Park Newsletter, Winter 2012). Their plan is to redevelop the site, removing the 104 trailers and 12 cottages and replace them with a 180 unit rental apartment complex.

Whether BVMHP should stay, and what sort of project should replace it if it does close, involves a number of complex issues. These include:

A) BVMHP as affordable housing: Most of the 375 or so residents who call BVMHP home could not afford to live in Barron Park or elsewhere in Palo Alto or perhaps even in neighboring communities without some subsidy to their rent or a dedicated affordable housing apartment. Many of the trailers cannot be moved and there aren't any mobile home parks in the area able to accommodate those who can.

B) Property owners rights: The Jisser family or any property owner has the right, within the bounds of legislation and law, to determine the use and the disposition of his property, including maximizing the benefit of the investment. While the conditions of the sale contract of the BVMHP between the Jisser family and Prometheus are not public, the owner's appraisal of the property itself – without the mobile homes – was about \$29 million. The appraised value of the site as is, with the current mobile homes, was about half that, or \$14.5 million. In September, the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park Residents Association offered that amount to Jisser to purchase the site using private and residents' funds plus state and federal loans. Their offer was turned down by the Jisser family's representative. No reason was given, but one might surmise that money is one factor, that the costs of closure subtracted from the appraised value of the property itself are still well above the BVMHP Resident Association's offer.

C) BVMHP residents' rights: Closure of the BVMHP would present a very difficult situation for the residents. The City of Palo Alto acknowledged that fact about 10 years ago and passed a set of ordinances listing the steps that a mobile home park owner must follow to close a mobile home park. The ordinances define a set of rules for determining the impact of closure on the mobile home park's residents and the amount of relocation assistance they should be given. The process is being reviewed carefully by the City's legal department. The process is complicated. The owner hired consultants, conducted meetings and held interviews with residents and submitted several sets of reports, but as of the writing of this article (end of Nov) the City is not yet satisfied. Only after the reports are deemed complete will a Hearing Officer hired by the City conduct a public hearing. He will determine whether the relocation assistance measures proposed by the park owner are adequate to mitigate the adverse impacts on the displaced residents. The hearing will also provide an opportunity to consider objections by residents. The outcome of the hearing may be appealed to the City Council.

D) Zoning density: From what has been revealed, Prometheus' conceptual plan is for a 180 unit apartment complex of 1- and 2-bedroom rental apartments in a cluster of 2, 3 and 4 story buildings up to 50 feet in height with underground parking. Their proposal would require a zoning change to 40 units/acre from the current 15 units/acre (which allows structures up to 35 feet in height). Prometheus has not submitted their proposal to the City of Palo Alto Planning Department nor have they presented it to the Council for a "pre-screening" review.

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Before doing either of these actions, they agreed to present their proposal to the Barron Park residents in a community meeting, but only after the City has approved the closure of BVMHP.

E) City Council, Commissions and Boards: The role of the City Council in the closure decision was mentioned above. If the closure proceeds, the focus will turn to the Prometheus proposal. In its current form, the proposal is likely to be subjected to especially intense scrutiny because of the new owner's desire to increase the zoning density when the effect of the BVMHP closure on its residents and their struggle against it would still be fresh in peoples' minds.

Here are a few of the questions that come to mind: Will Prometheus designate some of the units as affordable in this new development and offer them to displaced BVHMP residents and if so, how many? And would that be enough for the Council to approve a zoning change? Will Prometheus instead offer to provide more affordable housing elsewhere to displaced residents or make other concessions? Will PAHC or some other affordable housing developer enter into the discussion? Will the Council be inclined to support higher density zoning because of the ABAG requirements the City included in its recent Housing Element? Will the recent Measure D election have an impact on the Council action? What would Prometheus do with the property if a zoning change is denied?

The Friends of Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, a group led by Winter Dellenbach and includes other Barron Park residents, is actively lobbying and seeking to find solutions for the residents; one of those was mentioned above—to find financial resources that would enable them to purchase the park and keep it in operation. However, the views of the neighborhood as a whole on the BVMHP issue are not known and the BPA Board will be listening to comments by members of the association and others in the community before taking any position.

Thank you.

This is my last message as President of the BPA. It has been a privilege to have been the President of the Barron Park Association during the past eight months. The BPA Board updated the BPA Bylaws this year, setting a one year term for the President. So, in that context, my period of service is not unusually brief. But, I've decided it's time for me to move on and to let someone else

pick up the reins of leadership. I want to thank the Barron Park community for the opportunity to serve and hope that I have provided some clarity to you on some of the issues facing our community and our City.

To recap, during this year the BPA Board took some positive actions for the neighborhood.

- The Maybell-Clemo project was controversial and so the Board decided to first ask our membership by a survey / vote whether to financially support the signature gathering effort to put the measure to a referendum; the response was an overwhelming (but not unanimous) yes.
- We altered our bylaws to establish an annual election cycle for the BPA President and Vice President.
- We responded to the comments and concerns of our members and developed guidelines for subscribers and also (for the first time) guidelines for the list manager of the BPA email lists.
- We also responded to comments from members and voted to sever our relationship with the Boy Scouts of America as a BPA chartering organization next year because of their discriminatory policies on adult volunteers. In actuality, there hasn't been an active connection between the BPA and the scout troop for some years.
- We worked with City officials and the bicycle community and convinced the City to install 'share the path' signs along the Bol Park Bike path as safety reminders to both walkers and bicyclists.
- With the energetic involvement of Dick Placone, we were able to have the City complete the multi-year effort to convert the space alongside the Matadero Well site into an attractive pocket park.
- With the participation and expertise of Dick Whitmore, we helped facilitate an agreement between the Acterra / Donkey Handler group and James Witt over the use of his property as donkey pasture for the Barron Park donkeys.
- And we've continued our ongoing activities; we produced quarterly issues of the BPA Newsletter under the editorship of Nancy Hamilton with articles contributed by Doug Graham and others; used our website, www.BPApaloalto.org, to regularly publish posts with news and information of interest to the neighborhood along with events on a community calendar; organized several social events during the year, in-

cluding a highly successful repeat (the 36th edition) of our May Fete coordinated by John King, and added some new events—a Chinese New Year's celebration with Lion Dancers and a Movie Night in the Park—both organized by Lydia Kou. Our Membership Chair, Lisa Landers, has compiled the Babysitting list and distributed to those who requested it. Our Welcoming Chair, Gwen Luce, prepared and delivered information packets to newcomers. And during the year I voiced the concerns of the Barron Park neighborhood on the pace of development and the concerns about traffic at numerous neighborhood and City meetings.

The BPA Board Needs You!

I have tried very hard to represent the interests of the membership as a whole, to respond to your comments and concerns, to provide information to you about the Board activities and the measures the Board deals with and votes upon, to support initiatives that I feel are of benefit to the community and oppose those that conflict with our mission as a community organization. In short, to make you—each member of the BPA—aware of the issues that come before the Board and hopefully interest some of you, especially new residents or older residents who haven't been active before, in participating in the Board activities. It can be a very rewarding experience.

Our Board members are public spirited, community minded folks. Some BPA Board members have served on the Board for 20 years or more. But times change and new issues arise. Barron Park is a much different place than it was 20 years ago. And we face challenges in 2013 not imagined in 1993. Just as is the case with every sports team or the cast of Saturday Night Live, the BPA Board needs new talent to keep it vital, to update its organizational structure, to make it more responsive to the neighborhood's needs and to relieve some of the veterans. Doug Moran and Linnie Melena, both past Presidents of the BPA, left the Board this year. Peter Mueller and Mircea Voskerician joined recently, and Lisa Landers (who has become our Membership Chair) joined earlier in the year.

Yet, to keep BPA Board vital, it needs an infusion of more new faces, people with new ideas about how and what the BPA can do to enhance our community life—and with the energy and drive to carry them out. Please step forward and devote some of your time and talent to our neighborhood association. Contact any member of the BPA Board (BPA-board@googlegroups.com).

BPA BOARD TRANSITIONS

Outgoing Board Members:

Lynnie Melena has resigned from the Board after an almost seven-year membership. See separate article by Art Liberman below.

Doug Moran, on the board for 19 years (since 1994), including six years as president (2002 to 2008) and before that as vice president (1997 to 2002). He served on the board's liaison committee to the County Water District regarding the Creek Bypass project (flood control), and was very actively involved in other community affairs: Co-webmaster (along with Nancy Hamilton) of our original Website, 1995 to present (BPAonline.org). Created and managed our BPA mailing lists for 15 years. More to come in the next issue of our newsletter. Doug is currently blogging for PaloAltoOnline.com

Incoming Board members:

Peter K. Mueller, new Vice President,



in air quality. The research included leading various groups studying and resolving now familiar topics. These groups included members of local, state, national and international governments as well as private and academic sectors. Peter says, "To apply such experience in the service of my local community is a welcome opportunity."

Mircea Voskerician, new Zoning and Land Use (ZALU) Membership Chair, moved to Barron Park in 2007. There are many land zoning changes being proposed

moved into Barron Park in 1980 after starting a two-decade career at EPRI on Hillview Ave., his first job that was within easy bicycle distance. He is an environmental chemistry research scientist specializing



voices are heard by the city officials.

Change of Board Officers:



for Palo Alto that affect Barron Park. As a board member, he looks forward to learning more about Barron Park's concerns, understanding the city's plans, and ensuring that Barron Park residents'

Markus Fromherz (see article page 5) will be stepping into the President's position in January, replacing Art Liberman (see President's message page 1)

With thanks to Lynnie Melena for her service to the BPA

By Art Liberman

Lynnie Melena announced her resignation from the BPA Board in mid-November. On behalf of the other Board members and the Barron Park Community, I want to extend our sincere thanks for her many years of dedicated service, her leadership as BPA President, and for all of her efforts to make Barron Park a better and friendlier place.

It was in large measure due to her tireless efforts and her relentless focus on the Matadero Well site area, the small piece of land adjacent to the water well (recently rehabilitated by Utilities Department as an emergency water source), that brought the resources to bear to transform the site from a crumbling eyesore—as it was in 2009—to the lovely and welcoming 'parklet' with benches and attractive plantings that it is today (see article in the Fall BPA Newsletter about this site and the recent dedication ceremony).

Lynnie served on the Board for 7 years, 5 1/2 of them as President. This was a second 'career' for her, something she decided to do as a way of contributing to the community in which she and husband Joe have lived for many years and where they raised their children. Before joining the Board, Lynnie was a city planner who worked for many years for the City of Palo Alto and then for the City of Mountain View. She brought to the BPA Board her knowledge of the complexities of the planning and zoning regulations and an understanding of how city staff evaluated projects. She also brought her considerable organizational skills that kept the BPA Board members focused on the topics of current concern and the monthly meetings running smoothly.

Lynnie brought to the BPA a special focus on environmental and ecological issues. For many years, she has been active in

native planting projects, in pursuing a way of life in harmony with nature through a greater reliance on renewable energy sources, and using more of our own personal energy with greater use of bicycles. Lynnie continues to be a very active member of the Barron Park Green Team, one of a group of city affiliated neighborhood groups that focuses on energy conservation and reducing energy waste. In 2010, Lynnie led a group that organized a Green Tour of Barron Park, which included visits of homes all around the neighborhood that were outfitted with solar and energy conserving systems of various types, along with displays in Bol Park from vendors and the City of Palo Alto. This was a great success. I know she will continue with the Green Teams, and so I wish her the very best with those projects and in all of her future endeavors to make Barron Park a better place to live for us all.

BPA Membership 2013 Update

By Lisa Landers, Membership Chair

2013 membership increased 6% and dues/donations to BPA increased 20%. BPA sponsored community events, popular BPA email lists, and community issues along with an improved economy, likely contributed to these positive changes.

The BPA Board has always solicited the views of the neighborhood by conducting polls by mail. In recent years, we've conducted polls on the Internet with the option for members to mail in or "drop off" their opinions. The BPA, through our email lists and polls, can influence community developments that have a lasting effect on our residents for years to come. This past year, BPA board members considered the need to understand members' views on situations that could impact our community. It was uncertain how membership would respond to this effort, but overall

the response was encouraging.

Participation and service is essential to the success of BPA, while financial support enabled several newer projects to begin this year. Membership dues and volunteer efforts support many ongoing activities including the BPA Newsletters and May Fete celebration. The Spring 2014 Newsletter will have an updated membership form listing new involvement opportunities and the option of receiving an online Newsletter. BPA looks forward to increased member participation at all levels and thanks members for their continued support.

Recent BPA Supported Events:

Lunar New Year of the Snake, July 4th Palo Alto Chili Cook Off, Movie Night in Bol Park, Community Opinion Polls through Survey Monkey, Juana Run Support

Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!



All those who care about Perry and Niner seek to guarantee their proper on-going care and shelter, as well as to ensure that funds will be available for health concerns as the donkeys age. The handlers hope that those generous neighbors who have contributed in the past will consider increasing their support this year. Contributions for the donkeys' care may be sent to: The Palo Alto Donkey Project, ACTERRA (Action for a Sustain-

able Earth), 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303-4303. The check *must* be made out to "ACTERRA-Palo Alto Donkey Fund." All of the above must be included.

For further information about making a contribution on behalf of the donkeys, or if you would like information about how to become one of the volunteer donkey handlers, please call Bob Frost, 493-8272 or email at bobfrost34@yahoo.com.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Art Liberman, President

Markus Fromherz, Vice President

Lydia Kou, Secretary

John King, Treasurer

Linda Elder

Nancy Hamilton

Christian Kalar

Lisa Berkowitz Landers

Gwen Luce

Mircea Voskerician



Committee/ Activity Chairs

Businesses Liaison: Markus Fromherz

Civic Affairs Liaison: vacant

Parks & Creeks: Christian Kalar

Environmental: Art Liberman

Green Team: Lynn Melena

History: Doug Graham

Holiday Party: Vacant

May Fete: John King

Zoning & Land Use: Mircea Voskerician

Membership: Lisa Berkowitz Landers

Neighborhood Safety & Preparedness:

Lydia Kou

Newsletter: Nancy Hamilton

Seniors Lunch: Bob Frost

Traffic & Streets: Vacant

Welcoming: Gwen Luce



BPA meetings are held the 3rd

Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m.

E-mail President@BPAPaloalto.org

for location

www.BPAPaloalto.org

MARKUS FROMHERZ INCOMING BPA PRESIDENT

I am honored to take on the position of President of the Board of Directors of the Barron Park Association for 2014. First off, I'd like to thank Art Liberman, who presided over the board for much of 2013 during some difficult activities for the BPA and the neighborhood. The Barron Park community is very important to Art, as he has shown over many years of service, and he made an even stronger effort to support the BPA this year. The same can be said of Lynn Melena, who was president for over six years until spring of 2013. I'd like to thank both of them for their leadership, passion, time, and diligence.

I have been on the BPA board for about three and a half years. I enjoy living in Barron Park; like many residents, I would like to contribute to the well-being of our community. The BPA can be and has been an effective and even essential organization to support this goal. I think of the BPA's mission as having three parts: to work within, outside-in, and inside-out the neighborhood. What do I mean by that? First within: the BPA plays an important role in supporting and organizing communication and events within the community. This helps us come together (e.g., in the May Fete), learn about our lives and backgrounds (e.g., through the newsletter), help each other where needed (e.g., through the mailing lists), and become a joyful and resilient community. Next outside-in: the BPA is connected to the city and other neighborhoods and regularly informs the neighborhood of what is happening around us that is of relevance to us. This helps us be aware of events and actions that will impact our homes, schools, parks, businesses, and so on (e.g., development and traffic plans); it helps us be informed citizens and allows us to take advantage of what the city has to offer (e.g., disaster preparedness). Finally, inside-out: the BPA gives the community a voice at decision-making bodies outside Barron Park that affect us. This helps us be an active participant, in particular in city government, the school district, and the business community, where the neighborhood's opinion is regularly sought (e.g., on traffic and zoning plans) and supported (e.g., on park beautification).

The Barron Park Association today is a strong organization. In 2013, the BPA had 458 members, up 6% from 2012 and 11% from 2011. The BPA board has 11 directors, which includes both members with long-time BPA board experience and three members who joined within the last 18 months. The BPA organizes various events for the community, from the iconic May Fete to movie nights to disaster preparedness to cultural diversity events. (These events, though, rely heavily on volunteers, which has led to the demise of some long-time events in recent years, such as holiday caroling and the neighborhood welcoming party.) The BPA further issues an exceptionally rich newsletter that reaches its members quarterly and all Barron Park residents once a year. Last but not least, the BPA is very active online: it supports three mailing lists that have been a backbone of neighborhood communication for many years and are as alive and relevant as ever (with 760 subscribers on bpa-news alone); has set up a new website (BPAPaloAlto.org) which members can use to voice opinions, give feedback, view archived newsletters, register to receive them online, and more; and has contributed to the setup and growth of the Next-door community social network (with about 1600 members from Barron Park

and neighborhoods immediately around us). All of these offerings and services by the BPA, I believe, contribute immensely to the well-being of our community.

As President of the BPA board, I don't see myself so much as a leader or manager and more as a facilitator. As head of an organization, or *primus inter pares* in this case, I try to ensure we have the structure and processes that empower individuals to take action within the mission and values of the organization. I've found that this is even more important and helpful in a volunteer organization. I'm open to any suggestions to help strengthen the BPA. I'm big on delegation and autonomy. Given the time constraints many of us face as volunteers with day jobs, much of the work in the BPA needs to be distributed among the board and its committees. Here I would like to put in a plug for joining the BPA board. Whether you have a great new idea to improve this neighborhood or just want to contribute to the BPA's mission and an existing committee, please consider signing up. Talk to any of the members of the board to find out what it takes. Through the BPA, you can have a direct and lasting impact on our community.

Respectfully, Markus Fromherz

BARRON PARK HISTORY

Doug Graham was unable to give us an article for this issue. However, here is a letter to him which he's hoping will encourage others to write in with their information/stories in the future.

Hi Doug,

I enjoyed your article about the wells in Barron Park.

There were also private wells. My house (3880 La Donna Ave) was built in 1947. The previous owner of the house next door on La Donna told me that a well in his backyard supplied his house, my house, and two others built by the same builder. I sup-

pose the houses were hooked to city water soon after it was brought in.

Another utility item—there were no sewers. My house originally had a septic tank in the back yard. When another neighbor mentioned that there had been septic tanks I realized why a part of my yard was sinking. I dug up the old tank, and removed as much of it as I could, and filled it in. It had been built in-place, out of cement blocks. (The houses are also built from cement blocks.) The top was cement poured over redwood boards. When the sewers were put in a line was put in out to the street, and the old pipe was cut off and abandoned.

Regards, Paul G.

Results of City Council study of Risks to Residents from CPI Hazardous Material to be Released in January

By Art Liberman

Barron Park residents may soon move a step closer to a resolution of their concerns about the hazardous materials at the neighboring CPI manufacturing facility in the Stanford Research Park. Sometime in January, the City staff will reveal the results of an independent study authorized by the City Council in April 2012 of the risks associated with the use, storage, handling and disposal of hazardous materials at the CPI site.

CPI uses large amounts of some extremely hazardous materials—concentrated acids and cyanide compounds—in their metal plating operations. The City stipulated that the assessment of the risks should not be limited to just those hazardous materials, but also include chemicals used to support the plating activity and the combinations of chemicals. This is important because some of the most hazardous fumes could be formed in chemical reactions from inadvertent or accidental mixing of the cyanide and acids.

When the Council authorized the study, they stipulated that it include one other provision: to provide advice to the City staff on 'best practices' zoning approaches used by other jurisdictions to avoid or mitigate the impacts of hazardous materials when the sites are adjacent to or near residential areas. Depending upon the recommendations from the consultant, the City staff may propose fire code and/or zoning code changes to the Council.

This is the latest episode in a long struggle the residents have been waging, beginning in 2006 when an industrial accident at CPI released toxic nitric acid fumes that wafted into the neighborhood. Shortly after that event, and while the City Fire Department was investigating the accident, residents in the neighborhood near CPI organized and worked with City Planning Department staff to incorporate provisions in a zoning ordinance update. The new regulations were subsequently passed by the Council in 2007, and while this 'grandfathered' CPI's use of hazardous materials, it made them a non-conforming use. That section of the ordinance specifically pertained to the hazardous chemicals used and stored

by CPI in quantities above the 'Title 19' threshold level. Title 19 is a section of State of California laws that identify certain extremely hazardous materials and require companies that use them above specific threshold levels to follow additional regulatory measures.

The next major step was an 'amortization' study, initiated in 2010. Amortization of a nonconforming use is intended to phase out a use that is either incompatible with adjacent uses or where a change in use is desired as an orderly planning transition to other uses. The objective of this amortization study was to establish a reasonable period of time to allow CPI to recoup their investment before the non-conforming use (hazardous materials above the 'Title 19' thresholds) must be terminated. The consultant factored in the cost of the investment by CPI and the length of time it has existed, the cost of moving it, as well as possible threats to the public health, safety or welfare.

The consultant's conclusion was that CPI be allowed to continue their use until 2026, or about 20 years after CPI had last rebuilt their chemical plating facility.

The amortization study was estimated to take two months, but it was two years before residents learned of the results, at a Council meeting in April 2012. The study itself was actually completed almost a year earlier, in July 2011, but CPI immediately applied political pressure on the City Council to keep it from being released and also hired a law firm who implied it might take legal action if amortization was enacted. Something quite unexpected happened during that one year period: at the meeting the following April, CPI announced they had reduced the amount of extremely hazardous materials on its site to (just marginally) below the Title 19 thresholds, which they had said a few years ago they could never do.

This removed a principal legal basis for the amortization, and the Council took no action on the amortization proposal at that Council meeting. The Council did review the confusing and inconsistent risk assessments that CPI had provided

over the years; the geographical extent of the health risk from the spread of toxic fumes was initially estimated as ½ mile and subsequently, by a different consultant, as 33 feet. Because the hazardous materials are so close to residences and of concerns expressed by many residents who spoke at the meeting, the Council decided to authorize the independent study described above.

So, there is considerable anticipation about the results. Residents have once again been waiting for a much longer time than had been advertised at the start. The study was intended to take 6 months, but it was one year before a consultant firm was identified. A group of residents met with a consultant and City staff in July and provided some suggestions for some additional tasks that were included when the Council provided some additional funding. The City has said that (as of the writing— end of November) the consultants have now completed the draft report and the City staff, including the Fire Department, is reviewing the draft report and providing comments to the consultants. The City staff has said the final report will be released to all parties at the same time, and they will not provide CPI with an advance copy, other than a 3 day "trade secrets" review, which will not allow CPI to prevent its immediate public release as was the case with the amortization study.

Volunteers Needed for Newsletter Staff

Sometime last spring we conducted a survey asking for comments regarding the newsletter and also for volunteers who were willing to serve on the newsletter staff: Asst. editor, proofreaders, copy readers, reporters and photographers.

Unfortunately we didn't ask for email addresses for those who responded indicating their willingness to help.

Please write to me and tell me your area of interest. Thanks, Nancy Hamilton *njh.bpa@gmail.com*

ART IN THE PARK—SHIRLEY GAINES



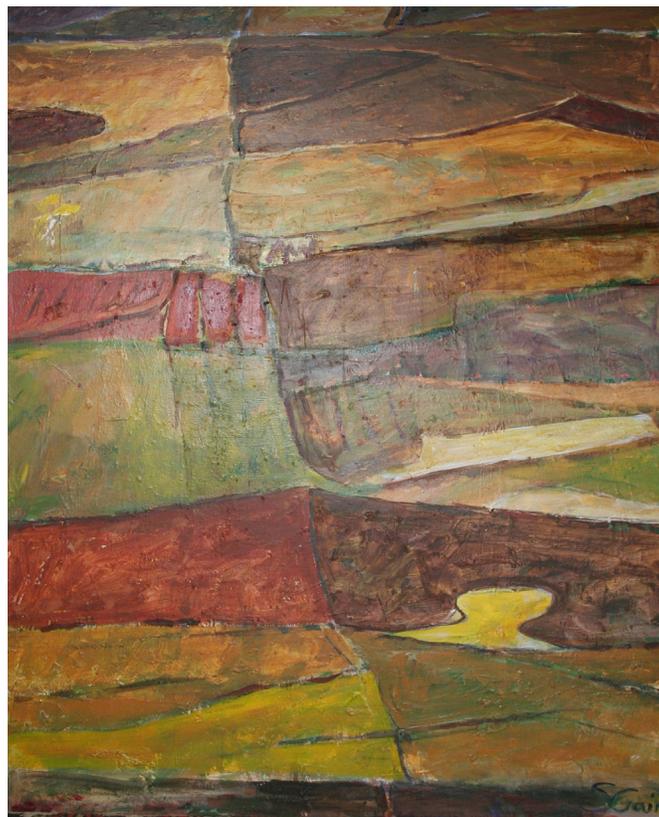
Escarpment



The Keeper of Horses



Bird in Winter



The Palouse Prairie

Her work is a fusion of painting, collage, writing poems and small theater pieces, the next of which will be performed March 2014. Throughout her life she's worked in most media: painting, lithography, sculpture, assemblage and performance art. Because of its fluidity and sensuousness, oil painting is probably her favorite, although she loves it all.

Shirley, resident of Palo Alto for 48 years, lives in Barron Park with her husband, Ed, a geophysicist, their two small, black, rescue dogs, Roadie and Sasha, and, her tuxedo cat, Bella. Email: sgaines.artist@gmail.com and www.cyberstars.com/shirleygaines

Update on the Matadero-Margarita Bicycle Boulevard

By Art Liberman

The City's Chief Transportation Official, Jaime Rodriguez, presented his proposal for the Matadero-Margarita Bicycle Boulevard to the Planning and Transportation Commission in mid-November. The proposal followed two Barron Park community meetings, in May and September of 2013. The proposal includes:

- Laguna/Matadero Intersection: crosswalk and bike markings to aid pedestrians and alert drivers to presence of bicyclists
- Along Matadero from Laguna to El Camino: speed humps to calm traffic and sharrows painted on the roadway to position cyclists
- Tippawingo/Josina/Matadero intersection: 3 new crosswalks, including one

raised (speed table) across Matadero, and pedestrian refuge areas at the Josina corners

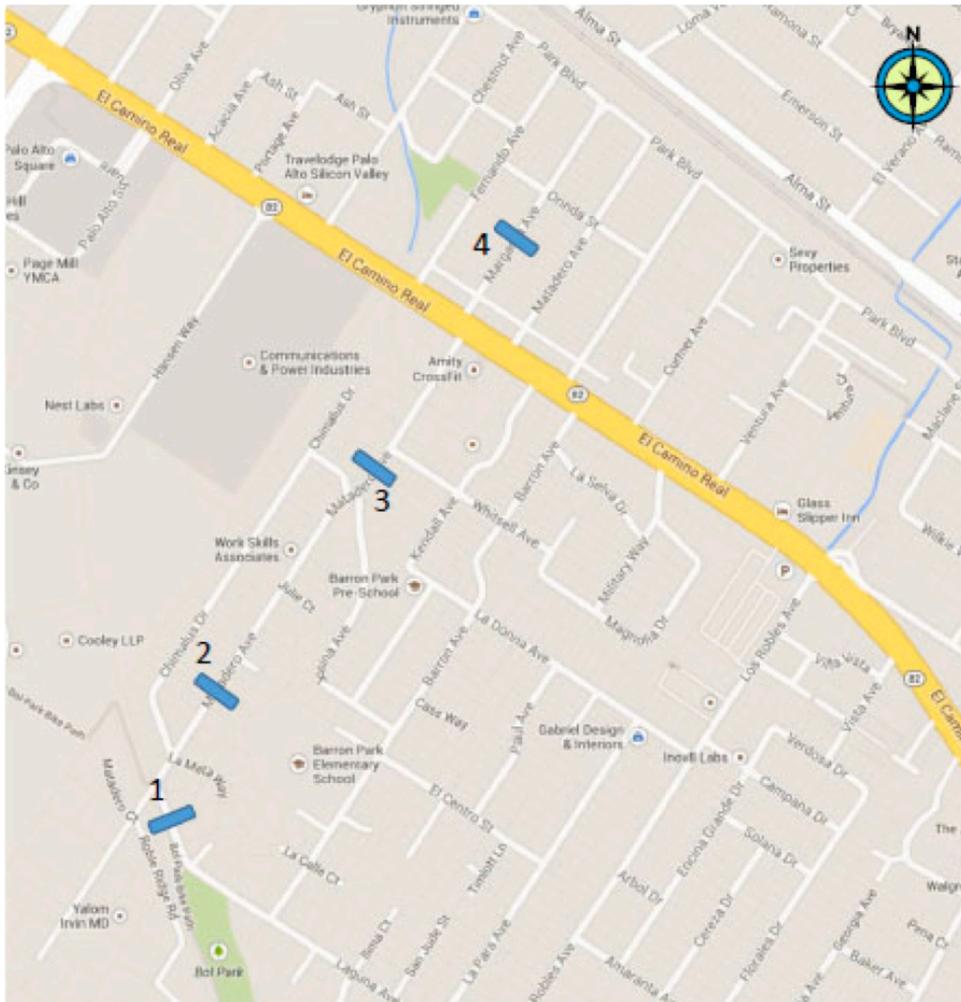
No bicycle lanes were contemplated and none were included because Matadero itself is too narrow to accommodate them. Photos of the design concept were posted on the Barron Park Association website, <http://www.bpapaloalto.org/2013/08/25/initial-concept-plan-for-matadero-margarita-bike-boulevard/>.

At the November meeting, the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) did not approve the proposal and send it on to the City Council. Instead they asked the staff to return with some bicycle-traffic data. Several commissioners expressed

concerns about the safety of bicyclists who would use the route and others raised questions about the lack of data about the number of bicyclists who now use the route and the projected future volumes.

To respond to these objections, the Transportation Division has said they are planning to collect additional traffic data, possibly in early December or else in late-January or early-February, depending upon the weather. The bicycle counts will be collected using video cameras for 7-days with someone subsequently reviewing the video in an office. In addition, there will be roadway tube counters at the same time to collect vehicle counts/speed data. The following image shows the locations where the data will be acquired.

According to the Transportation Division, it is unlikely that the proposal will come back to the PTC before early February. If the project does move forward, the speed humps/tables on Matadero could be installed in late-summer.



7-Day Video/Tube Counts:

- 1-Bol Park Trail Path**
Video for Bikes/Peds by Direction on Trail (N/S)
Tubes on Laguna for Auto Count/Speed
- 2-Matadero Av between Chimalus Dr and Emma Ct**
Video for Bikes/Peds by Direction (E/W)
Tubes for Auto Count/Speed
- 3-Matadero Av between Josina Av & Whitsell Av**
Video for Bikes/Peds by Direction (E/W)
Tubes for Auto Count/Speed
- 4-Margarita Av between Alley and Orinda St**
Video for Bikes/Peds by Direction (E/W)
Tubes for Auto Count/Speed

EMAIL LISTS

The BPA has four email lists: bpa-news, bpa-issues, bpa-misc and bpa-jobpostings. They are hosted at Google Groups. To join, go to the BPA Website: BPAPaloalto.org and click on the tab "BPA Email Lists." This provides an easy means to subscribe, and information about the lists.

Juana Run 2014—February 22 (The last?)

By Linda Lui

Mark your calendars and save the date! The 18th annual road race through the Barron Park neighborhood will be happening on the last Saturday in February, a great way to spend time with your freshly minted valentine!

Background on the Race

The Juana Run was the brainchild of Barron Park parent Karen Saxena. When her oldest child was a 2nd grader at Juana Bionnes elementary school in 1996, Karen and other PTA members were brainstorming ideas to raise funds. The usual fundraising ideas were mentioned—bake sales and selling gift wrap. An avid runner and married to a sports medicine podiatrist at PAMF, she brought up the brilliant idea of a road race. Her suggestion was met with a long silence. Finally, another parent said, "But where would the cars be racing?" (It must be hard to be so ahead of one's time.)

But fast-forward almost two decades and the Juana Run has become one of the most beloved activities in the Barron Park community. A pancake breakfast awaits the weary 8K runners and burgers are available for a lunch purchase, making this event a great family activity. Proceeds benefit registered participating schools, Terman Middle School PTA and the Gunn High School Sports Boosters.

But here's the kicker: Karen's youngest child will be graduating from high school this spring! Although Karen wants to be

involved in this race in the future (if it continues), someone else needs to take on the main responsibility of making the event happen. Karen can guide them on what needs to be done and there is an army of community volunteers willing to be worker bees. A volunteer coordinator for this year's race is needed and would be a great way to learn the ropes. If you are interested in this position, email your curriculum vitae to [Karen at juanarun@aol.com](mailto:karen@juanarun@aol.com).

Race Details

The 8K starts at 8:30am on Maybell Avenue. Kid races start at 10:00am for 5th graders and continue down by grade level until 11:00am for special needs racers. 5th through 3rd grade half-mile races start on Amaranta, 2nd grade through Kinder quarter-mile races start on Orme. The Pre-K 200 yard dash and the Challenger (special needs) 100 yard race are also on Orme. To register, go to www.juanarun.org.

Contributors to this event include: Palo Alto Grand Prix, The Barron Park Association, Anderson Honda, Gwen Luce of Caldwell Banker, Agile Physical Therapy, Amol Saxena DPM, Alhouse King Realty Inc., Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto, Sportissimo, On Your Mark Basement.

B U S I N E S S B E A T

By Bob Moss

There continue to be a few changes in occupancy on El Camino between Adobe Creek and Page Mill since my last report in April. Here are some of the changes and pending changes in the area.

Corner Bakery replaced Boston Market at 3375 El Camino this summer. I have eaten there once, it is casual and reasonable, food is good.

Ernie's Liquors has done a series of shuffles. They were at 3866 next to Ace of Sandwiches and moved out to the Century Liquors site on Middlefield at Loma Verde. Ernie's now is back at 3870.

The buildings at 4214 to 4220 between Midas Muffler and Hobe's were demolished the beginning of April and a 4-story hotel that should open in mid to late 2014 is under construction.

Manpower at 3825 on the corner at Curtner moved out in early February relocating to California Street by Showers in Mountain View. It will be replaced by a medical group, but they need a conditional use permit since non-retail uses on El Camino over 5000 sq. ft. require a permit. Since Manpower got one this should just be a formality. The nearest competing medical group is a few hundred feet away at 3737 El Camino.

The store at 3775 that was GNU Nutrition will be occupied by Eye Level Learning. The site has been vacant more than five years. We must be short of tutoring services since all that we have nearby are Jewish Study Network at 3636, Think Tank Learning at

4131, and C2 Education at 3990.

The former bike shop at 3944 El Camino now is Stanford Pet Clinic. 4111 is vacant for rent.

The former Blockbuster site by Los Robles opened for the new Korean spa in late May.

Vacancy Rate Nov. 2013 Nov. 2012 June 2011

	Nov. 2013	Nov. 2012	June 2011
El Camino on Ventura Side:	11.79%	10.5%	9.00%
El Camino on Barron Park Side:	0.97%	2.3%	7.52%
El Camino Way:	16.26%	16.26%	16.01%
Total Vacancy including El Camino Way:	6.29%	6.4%	8.65%

The vacancies on El Camino Way date mainly from when Su Hong moved to El Camino next to the Cabana and less than a year afterwards all the other shops in that strip mall closed too, and it has been vacant ever since. There is a rumor the property owner wants to redevelop it for housing, but no formal application has been filed.

Four councilmembers asked that development along El Camino be reconfigured so that instead of the big slabs right up to the sidewalk that have been built or soon will be, new developments will have to be set back at least four feet from the sidewalk. There have been lots of complaints about the big bulky buildings being built right by the sidewalks, so some councilmembers took note and proposed a setback and scale improvement for future developments. So far nothing formal has been adopted on this.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Palo Alto, California 94306

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NEWSLETTER
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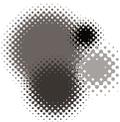
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