

NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY JANUARY 2026 MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: JANUARY 15, 2026

TIME: 6:00 PM

These notes summarize information that was presented at the January 15, 2026 Business Meeting of the North Park Historical Society (NPHS) Board of Directors, and the activities discussion for the organization. These notes include updates as of January 18, 2026. Board Members Steve, Katherine, Paul, Jody, Allison, Michael, and George attended. Member Sheryl also joined us. Welcome!

All future public meetings scheduled for the **third THURSDAYS of the month starting at 6:00 p.m. WILL BE** held in a meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church. In addition, we continue to provide information to all who contact us with questions about North Park history and document those communications in our monthly meeting notes. **Our next meeting will be February 19.**

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

We hope all our members and friends had wonderful holidays!

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The meeting notes from the November 20, 2025 meeting have been posted on the website. NPHS does not meet in December, and no meeting summary was prepared.



BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

The financials for the entire year of 2025 were included in the Annual Report sent to Board Members on January 5, 2026. The **SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025** is in these notes on pages 4-9.

The financials for this meeting are for November 18, 2025 to January 13, 2026 and were sent to Board members on January 14, 2026. In this time period, four members renewed for one year (thank you, Stuart, Donald, Robert, and Alan!), one member renewed for 5 years (thank you, Beth!), and two new members joined (welcome Laura and Jim!). Three renewing members donated (thank you, Stuart, Donald, and Robert!) and one new member donated (thank you, Laura!). Arcadia Publishing gave NPHS an extra payment of \$205 for allowing our 2014 Images of America book content to be used for their AI training project, as approved by the NPHS Board to be allowed in July 2025. Total income was \$535.00. Expense of \$45.38 was to GoDaddy for renewal of two domain names for one year, and a miscellaneous expense of \$0.47 was the payment to the State for extra sales tax due to rounding, and for paying sales tax owed (\$2.00) online via credit card.

The following state and federal organizational reports for the 2025 fiscal year were/will be filed on the dates indicated below:

- 199N State income tax report was filed online on January 6, 2026.
- State sales tax of \$2 was reported and paid to the State online on January 6, 2026.
- 990N federal income tax report will be filed online as soon as the irs.gov website allows.
- California Registry of Charitable Trusts Registration Renewal form RRF-1 will be filed online after the federal 990N form is filed.
- Statement of Information with the Secretary of State was filed online on April 20, 2024. The next Statement of Information will be due in April 2026.

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

5. CITY POLICIES AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD UPDATES

- The following link on the Planning Department webpage has the city's info about the review process and timeline:
[Preservation and Progress | City of San Diego Official Website](#)

George reported that the City Land Use and Housing Committee heard Part A of this revision process to City historical resources policies and approved it to be considered by City Council. A requirement for staff to report to City Council on the number of appeals to historical designation decisions was added. The City Council will hear Part A on February 10.

6. NPHS INVOLVEMENT IN 45-YEAR REVIEW PROCESS

Paul explained that if a permit is requested for any structure older than 45 years, the City flags that address to allow 5 days for the community to comment if a historic report should be prepared. The addresses are posted on a website at the address below:

<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/work/historic-preservation-planning/reviews-over-45>

Paul reviews the list nearly every day, and in 2025 provided input on whether or not a full historical report should be required for 155 building permit applications. Paul noted that as part of the 155 building applications, requests were made for 234 ADUs. Paul has been doing this for more than 5 years, and George did this review for many years before him. Paul noted that in 2025, the city did not require a historical report for any of the structures he commented on. Sheryl asked what the benefit to participating in this review would be, and the group decided the main benefit is that the City knows North Park, through NPHS, is interested in what is happening to our historic structures. George noted that next year the City will address if they will eliminate the 45-year review process entirely. He also reported that staff is claiming this process takes a lot of staff time they could spend on processing individual designation nominations and historic districts. Note that they promised to process multiple historic districts in the North Park Community Plan Update in 2016 and have not followed through on any since 2020. Paul said he will continue to monitor the 45-year review list for another 6 months, and if the City decides to keep the process, the NPHS Board will look for other people to do this.

7. UPDATE ON BUNGALOW COURT HISTORIC DISTRICT

George reported the project is proceeding with University Heights Historical Society (UHHS) taking the lead role, and Hillcrest and NPHS the funding partners. South Environmental prepared the application, which has been submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation and is still under review by State staff.

8. WALKING TOURS IN 2026

Katherine noted NPHS may conduct Dryden District tours as part of OH San Diego in March, and the AIA conference in June. She also reported that our Jefferson Elementary School teacher contact has asked us to come back in November 2026 to guide more 3rd graders around the nearby commercial area. Steve said he will ask if our Burlingame tour guide last year would like to do another one, as it was a very popular tour last year.

9. COMMUNITY COORDINATION AND ACTIVITIES

In January 2026, we responded to requests for information (and received interesting information) and participated in community activities as summarized below.

1. Long-time member Ed C. wondered if the Minimal Traditional houses in the 3500 block of Pershing Avenue in the North Park Dryden Historic District were classified as contributing and therefore eligible to apply for Mills Act. Katherine verified that both structures were classified as contributing when the District was established in 2011.

The front house at 3565-67 Pershing Avenue was described in the District application as built by building contractor Robert R. West in 1941. The next year, West sold the house to San Diego Police Department Inspector Ralph E. Whitney and his wife Edna. Whitney later became head of the San Diego Police Vice Squad. The DPR states, "This house is one of several houses built on vacant lots in older communities in the 1940s in an attempt to accommodate the demand of defense-related factory workers for housing."



10. ACTIVITIES IN 2026 DISCUSSION

The following activities were suggested as our focus in 2026:

- Walking tours mentioned above.
- Exhibit in Morley Field, with tours of the Morley Field area and Pauly's Addition.
- Finish the website redesign and update.
- Ask A7D if there are any events planned as part of Explore North Park that we might participate in.

11. WEBSITE REDESIGN UPDATE

Allison, Steve and Katherine have been preparing text and placing it in the template arranged by A7D, following their guidance regarding word count. The team also has been compiling photos to illustrate the topics in the Web Content Flow Diagram the Board approved at the November 2025 meeting. Allison showed the template text on her laptop to meeting attendees. The Board said draft content looked good so far. The team will meet with A7D soon to discuss colors, fonts, and overall design.

12. PLAQUE FOR WATER TOWER

Coordination with City Public Utilities Department staff regarding the feasibility of placing the plaque in a boulder or some kind of low wall next to the two-story building at the Water Tower site is pending completion of the city's construction activities at the site, which are still ongoing.

13. PAYMENT FOR NPHS MEMBERSHIP

As a standing item in the meeting notes, we remind everyone that we have activated Venmo for people to use for membership dues. Our @ is northparkhistory, and if a number code is requested, use 1274. We have modified the membership form to note that people can pay via Venmo, and they can find the membership form on our current website at [Membership Information | North Park Historical Society \(northparkhistory.org\)](https://northparkhistory.org/membership-information)

14. FUTURE MEETINGS

All future public meetings scheduled for the **third THURSDAYS of the month starting at 6:00 p.m.** in a meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church **WILL OCCUR in 2026**, and we are still providing information to all who contact us with questions about North Park history. Our next meeting will be on **February 19**.

Prepared by

Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

SEE PAGES 4-9 FOR THE SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

Accomplishments in 2025

The accomplishments of NPHS in 2025 grouped by the seven objectives stated in our Bylaws under the primary purpose are summarized below.

Objective 1. To market and distribute printed and digital publications consistent with our purpose (e.g., *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946*, our book on the history of North Park's first 50 years).

- Local stores continue to sell the book we prepared in 2014, *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* published by Arcadia Publishing Company. During 2025, it continued to be available for retail sale at various locations. NPHS sold one Arcadia book to an individual in 2025, for a total of \$20.41 in revenue. We received a royalty payment of \$81.00 from Arcadia in 2025.
- We did not sell or donate any copies of our "original" history book: *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946* by Donald Covington, which is published and distributed by NPHS. Since publishing the book in 2007, we have sold a total of approximately 2,895 copies. We have 38 spiral-bound copies and 16 perfect-bound copies remaining at the end of 2025.
- One Arcadia book was taken from the NPHS inventory in 2025. We have 74 copies remaining at the end of 2025.
- We sold 10 copies of the book, *Burlingame, the Tract of Character* by Donald Covington wholesale to The Book Catapult in 2025 for \$75.00 in revenue. We have 71 copies remaining.
- In 2017 we had 100 canvas tote bags with our logo printed at [AKA] Apparel-Supplies-Printing. We sold no bags in 2025. We have 20 bags remaining.
- In June 2023, we had 48 branded ballcaps produced by AKA Printing (12 navy, 12 khaki, and 24 black), and in August 2023 we ordered 40 additional navy and 20 additional khaki ballcaps. A total of 108 ballcaps were produced. Via email discussion in 2023, the Board approved providing one free ballcap per household current on member dues in that year and to new members when they joined. In 2025, we gave 6 navy, 6 khaki and 4 black ballcaps for free. We have 18 navy, 8 khaki, and 11 black ballcaps — a total of 37 — remaining.
- Venmo continues to be a popular way for people to pay membership dues and give donations.



Objective 2. To coordinate with other organizations on public historical education and preservation efforts, including designation of historical districts and/or structures.

- NPHS Board Members Paul and Claudia continued a free advice service helping to inform people on the potential for their house to be designated as a significant historic resource. NPHS received and responded to a total of 3 requests in 2025.
- NPHS sent a letter to city staff and the real estate agent regarding the sale of 3501–3535 Park Blvd, noting the four classic apartment buildings facing Park Boulevard (pictured below) were constructed by Master Builder Edward F. Bryans and their redevelopment would be a significant loss to the North Park and Uptown communities.



3501 Park Blvd.



3511 Park Blvd.



3521 Park Blvd.



3525 Park Blvd.

- We coordinated with the owner's representative regarding restoration proposed for the 1926 Stern's Gym/New Life Chinese Laundry Building at 3829 Granada Avenue. The owner's consultant said they are going to proceed with preparing a historic designation report, and that City staff have told them the building should qualify under both Criterion A ("Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping, or architectural development"), and Criterion C ("Embodies distinctive characteristics of style, type, period, or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship"). They will appreciate a letter of support when their designation package is presented at the HRB for approval.
- Paul provided input on whether a full historical report should be required for 155 building permit applications to the City of San Diego for changes to buildings more than 45 years old. As part of the 155 building applications, requests were made for 234 ADU/JADU.
- We responded to 13 email requests for information about historic homes, historic photos, and other questions.
- We sent ten photos including the two below to Ken Kramer for his use in an "About San Diego" episode on the Water Tower, which aired on September 18.



2008 Toyland Parade



2009 Toyland Parade

- NPHS remains committed to installing the bronze plaque that NPHS paid to create in 2015 recognizing the Water Tower as a Local Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, but communication with the City has been hampered by construction going on at the Water Tower site.

Objective 3. To develop and conduct walking tours relating educational information about the history of various areas in North Park.

- ***Commercial Area Walking Tour*** We guided three classes of Jefferson Elementary School 3rd graders around the heart of the North Park commercial area, as discussed under Objective 7.
- ***Dryden Historic District Walking Tour*** Simoni and Halla requested a walking tour of the Dryden District, which Katherine provided on March 1.
- ***Morley Field and Pauly's Addition Walking Tours*** We conducted advertised tours of Morley Field and Pauly's Addition on April 26. There were about 7 people in each tour group. George, Jody, Paul, Sharon, Allison, Steve and Katherine helped on the tours and at the canopy.



George and Allison at a French Eclectic house on Upas Street, and a Spanish Revival house on Mississippi Street. Both houses were built by Master Builders.

- **Burlingame Historic District Walking Tour** On July 12 we conducted the Burlingame walking tour event. There were 33 advance sign-ups and we had a total of 29 attendees. Our guest guide, Steve Fobes, led the first group of 20+, and George took the rest. We received a total of \$200 in donations. Helpers were Claudia, Allison, Sharon, Steve and Katherine. Jody placed flyers around. It was a very successful event!



Looking west along the south side of Kalmia Street from 32nd Street, in 1912 and now. The middle house was rebuilt in a different style after a fire in November 1977 destroyed the 1912 house.

Objective 4. To research and write objective articles about the history of North Park's people, landmarks, architecture, homes, commercial buildings, tracts, and other topics for publications.

- More than 1,000 people like and follow our North Park History Facebook page. We posted 10 items throughout the year, including a post with a photo of a typo in concrete at Ray and Gunn Street. "Gun St" should have been "Gunn St" for Douglas Gunn, editor/owner of the San Diego Union newspaper from 1870 to 1886 and San Diego mayor from 1889 to 1891. This post got 19 likes and several comments, including "Ray Gunn is the corner I always wanted to live on."



Objective 5. To make and sponsor presentations of information useful to helping the public understand the origin and significance of historical resources in the community, including buildings, landmarks, and other structures.

- NPHS Secretary Katherine Hon gave a PowerPoint presentation over Zoom on North Park history focused on the people behind various street names, including Douglas Gunn and Edwin Capps. The lecture was arranged by SOHO, and was second year for their monthly series they called “Penning the Past: Insights into San Diego’s Historic Neighborhoods and Architecture.”
- NPHS organized a well-attended lecture by historian Alexander Bevil on September 18. Alexander prepared the successful National Register nomination documents for the North Park Water Tower and the Georgia Street Bridge. He discussed the history and importance of these two iconic landmarks.
- The NPHS Board approved a contract with North Park media consultants A7D to update our website. As of the end of 2025, the Board approved the Web Content Flow Diagram developed by A7D. Next steps include NPHS providing the content for each web page and A7D developing a home page design including a signature pattern to use on the site, adding brand colors, and brand fonts.
- The NPHS Board met in person at meetings open to the public in January through November 2025, except for May. Meetings were held at Grace Lutheran Church. The Secretary emailed a “meeting summary” to all NPHS members each month containing information we shared.



Objective 6. To organize, convert to digital format (when possible) and provide the following materials for research and other purposes: documents, slides, data, notes, photos, and various ephemera and records related to history donated to the North Park Historical Society, and to establish a North Park collection for eventual donation to the San Diego Historical Society for preservation.

- NPHS is scanning slides and notebooks with photos and notes from the Covington Family and other sources. Professional photographer Stuart Hartley is helping us with this effort. He is working on scans of oversized materials.
- We shared 14 pictures in the monthly meeting notes distributed to NPHS members through the year. This photo is of Dan Harmer (co-owner of Harmer & Dent, a prominent shoe store at 2936 University Avenue) on the left advertising that he won a 1927 World Series bet with another important North Park businessman, Paul Hartley, who is operating the “Fresh Air Taxicab” carting Mr. Harmer. This photo was scanned from slides made by Don Covington from photos shared with him by the Hartley Family.
- We scanned the Klicka Job Record Book, with more than 1,000 buildings listed from 1937 to 1941 including information such as contractor, job address, and customer.



- We discovered the history of the North Park sign, which originally had a rectangular shape and was hung above the intersection of 30th Street and University Avenue in 1935. That sign was replaced with a different hanging version with the classic scalloped shape on November 22, 1948 because the neon of the original sign was faulty. The scalloped shaped sign was removed in 1966 and the sign we see today on a pedestal to the west of the intersection was placed in 1993.
- Treasurer Allison started an Instagram account for NPHS where she has posted historical photos and flyers for the various walking tours we conducted this year. We have 108 followers as of December 2025.

Objective 7. To conduct outreach to schools regarding North Park history consistent with our purpose.

- In November/December 2025, we coordinated with Jefferson Elementary School teacher Caroline to conduct a third set of downtown North Park walking tours for three new classes of third graders. Each class was divided into three groups, and the tours for each class were held on three different days. George, Katherine, Steve, and Michael were guides, and Ed, Jody, Tera, Christine, Robert and Sheryl were photo book holders. Just like in the two previous years, the students were amazed that so many buildings were older than their grandparents, and that there had been so many grocery stores in their immediate neighborhood. Caroline has invited NPHS back in November 2026 for another set of tours.

Accomplishments in Previous Years

Accomplishments of NPHS since forming in 2008 include the following:

- Successfully nominated John Pearson, a craftsman builder in North Park in the 1920s, as a Master Builder in 2016.
- Received a 2015 Excellence in Historic Preservation Award in May from the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board (HRB) for our new book *Images of America: San Diego's North Park*.
- The City of San Diego HRB designated the Water Tower and surrounding historic district of water infrastructure as a local significant historic resource on April 23, 2015.
- The Water Tower was proclaimed a Local Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) San Diego Section on January 27, 2015. NPHS had a bronze plaque made and a ceremony was held on site on November 5, 2015 to celebrate. Many community group representatives and elected officials attended, including County Supervisor Ron Roberts.
- Prepared *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* which was published by Arcadia Publishing Company in November 2014.
- Received a 2014 SOHO People in Preservation (PIP) Award for successful designation of the water tower and surrounding water supply facilities on the National Register of Historic Places, sharing the award with University Heights Historical Society, McKinley Elementary School, and historian Alexander Bevil, who prepared the historical designation application.
- Achieved listing of the Water Tower and surrounding area of past and present water facilities on the National Register of Historic Places on June 25, 2013.
- Launched revised website in 2012.
- Achieved local designation of the North Park Dryden Historic District on June 23, 2011.
- Reprinted *Burlingame; the Tract of Character* by Donald Covington, 2010.
- Won community awards from San Diego Historical Resources Board (2011 and 2012), SOHO (2011), and the American Planning Association (2011).
- Conducted numerous walking tours of Burlingame, Dryden District, commercial area, "Pershing Heights," and Morley Field.
- Held annual car shows from 2010 to 2019 (ten shows).
- Continued successful marketing of our first book, *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946* by Donald Covington, published in 2007.



END OF SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025