**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
**OCTOBER 2026 MEETING SUMMARY**

**DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2026 TIME: 6:00 PM**

These notes summarize information that was presented at the October 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 October 18, 2026. Board Members Steve, Katherine, Allison, Jody, George, Claudia, and Michael attended. Members Turner and Kit also attended. 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 November 19. The November 19th meeting will be the last meeting for 2026, as we do not meet in December.**

## 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

We hope all our members and friends have a fun Halloween!

## 2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The meeting notes from the September 17, 2026 meeting have been posted on the website. That meeting was devoted to a special presentation by retired architect Steve Fobes about the origins and architecture of the Burlingame Historic District.

## BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

## 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials for this meeting are for September 16 to October 13, 2026 and were sent to Board members on October 14, 2026. In this time period, ten members renewed (thank you, James, Tom & Claudia, David K., Ed O., Tera, and Board Members Steve, Katherine, George, Randy, and Sharon!), and six renewing members gave additional donations (thank you, James, Tom & Claudia, and Board Members Steve, Katherine, Randy, and Sharon!). We received cash donations of $30 at the Burlingame presentation on September 17, and sold two spiral-bound North Park history books wholesale to Verbatim Books at $13.31 each. Total income in this time period was $656.62. Expenses totaled $47.38 for renewal of two domain names with GoDaddy.

## ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

## 5. BURLINGAME WALKING TOUR ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

Our Burlingame tour guide last year, Steve Fobes, conducted a walking tour of the Burlingame Historic District on Saturday, October 10 starting at 10:00 am. Allison, Claudia, Katherine, and Steve assisted. A flyer for the walking tour was emailed to NPHS membership separately, and was available on Instagram and Facebook. The online invitation with Eventbrite that Allison set up at https://NPHSBurlingameWalkingTour.eventbrite.com recorded 17 registrants, and Katherine received emails from 6 additional attendees. A total of 16 people came to the tour.




*Tour attendees admire the varied architecture of homes along "Kalmia Row" in the Burlingame Historic District*




*Tour guide Steve Fobes (center, facing) introduces the tour to the group*

**6. JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMERCIAL AREA WALKING TOURS**

We will guide two classes of 3rd graders at Jefferson Elementary School on a ½ mile walk along North Park Way, Ray Street, and University Avenue on two successive Mondays on November 2 and November 9. We will start at 9:30 am (mobilizing at the school at the corner of Utah Street and North Park Way at 9:15 am). There are about 26 students in each of two 3rd grade classes this year. The teacher will divide each class into two groups. We will provide two guides and photobook holders each day, so each team will have 13 students. On November 2, Steve Hon and Michael will guide, with George, Ed O., Sheryl, Tom & Claudia, Jody, and Christine helping. On November 9, Steve Hon and either Michael, George, or Katherine will guide, with Ed O., Jody, and Christine also helping.

**7. CITY POLICIES AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD UPDATES AND SOHO ECONOMIC STUDY**

- 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

Package A was approved by City Council on February 24. Package B, which will include potential changes to the Mills Act program, is now the focus of City staff. George noted he has not received a response to his outreach to City staff, and neither has SOHO.

**8. COMMUNITY COORDINATION AND ACTIVITIES**

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

1. The city is starting planning a new Balboa Park Master Plan. They sent an email noting: "The City of San Diego's City Planning Department is beginning the first comprehensive update to the **Balboa Park Master Plan** since 1989 and is inviting community members to help shape the future of the park. The Master Plan Update will establish a new long-range policy framework for the 1,200-acre cultural and recreational destination at the heart of San Diego. It will aim to balance Balboa Park's recreation, historic and cultural resources, natural habitat, public access and economic vitality. Community members are invited to share their thoughts through the **Balboa Park Master Plan Initial Survey**, which is also hosted on the Master Plan Update website. Questions and comments are welcome by email to **planbalboapark@sandiego.gov** "

2. Steve was interviewed by KPBS reporter Elaine Alfaro about Huffman apartments and other development along and near El Cajon Boulevard on October 15, 2026. Steve took the reporter to the Huffman apartment building on Cleveland Avenue he lived in from 1972 to 1974, and discussed the history of Ray Huffman's buildings, which look quite compact and small-scale compared to multi-family housing being built today.



*KPBS reporter Elaine Alfaro, Steve Hon, and videographer Roland Lizarondo.*

3. George drafted a letter to the City declaring our support for the activation of the former Pekin Café at 2877 University Avenue, which we emphasized should include restoration and historic designation of the neon sign on the building facade. The letter is included at the end of these notes. We received a reply from the City staff person processing the permits for the property. Her reply follows, and she noted that the application for full-service dining and an alcoholic beverage program with live entertainment is not requesting demolition of the existing building or removal of the historic neon sign.

   Thank you for your email and for providing the North Park Historical Society's letter regarding the former Pekin Café property at 2877 University Avenue.

   I appreciate the Historical Society taking the time to provide its comments and information regarding the historic property and the preservation and restoration of the existing neon sign. I have received the attached letter, and it will be included in the project record for consideration as part of the City's review.

   For clarification, the current project scope is as follows:

   NORTH PARK (Process 3) – A Conditional Use Permit to acquire an Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Type 47 On-Sale General – Eating Place License to allow a full-service dining and alcoholic beverage program, along with live entertainment, at Chop Suey Lounge located at 2877 University Avenue. The 0.11-acre site is in the Commercial–Community (CC-3-9) Base Zone, Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay Zone (San Diego International Airport), Airport Influence Area (San Diego International Airport – Review Area 2), and Federal Aviation Administration Part 77 Noticing Area, within the North Park Community Plan Area and Council District 3.
   The purpose of the current discretionary application is primarily to obtain the required City land use approval for the proposed alcoholic beverage sales and associated use. The applicant is seeking an ABC Type 47 license; however, the State ABC licensing process and the City's land use review are separate processes. Where required by the San Diego Municipal Code, the City must first evaluate the proposed alcoholic beverage outlet through the Conditional Use Permit process and determine whether the required findings can be made.

   As part of the Process 3 review, City staff will evaluate the application for consistency with the applicable regulations and required findings. Other reviewing disciplines may also evaluate issues within their respective areas of responsibility, and the San Diego Police Department provides its

Conditional Use Permit recommendation regarding the proposed alcoholic beverage outlet. Ultimately, the Hearing Officer is the decision maker for this Process 3 Conditional Use Permit.

Based on the current project scope, the application is not requesting demolition of the existing building or removal of the historic neon sign. If the applicant proposes changes to the building, façade, sign, or other features beyond the scope currently under review, those changes would need to be identified in the project plans and evaluated for any additional applicable City review or permit requirements.

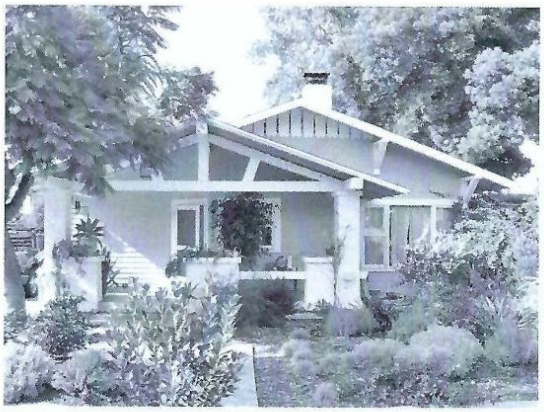
Thank you as well for offering to provide additional historical background regarding this important building and sign. If our review staff needs additional historical documentation or information during the review, I will be happy to reach out.

Thank you again for your participation in the City of San Diego's development review process and for providing the North Park Historical Society's comments.

Best regards,

May Rollin
Development Project Manager II
City of San Diego
Development Services Department
☎: 619-446-5432
📲: MMRollin@sandiego.gov
SanDiego.gov/DSD

4. Michelle asked about the origins of her house on Pershing Avenue in the North Park Dryden Historic District. The house was built in 1912 and the first owner was Charles F. Naylor, a sanitary inspector for the Health Department. This house is included in the NPHS walking tour booklet for the historic district, shown below.

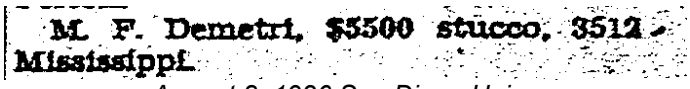


3520-22 Pershing Avenue
Walker & Hazen, 1912

Walker & Hazen completed this one-story, single-family Craftsman home in 1912. The house has contiguous street-facing gables, with the front porch offset to the south and the open-trussed porch gable supported by thick rectangular piers. An angled front door is accessed from the front porch and exposed beams extend beyond the roof deck. The house is sided with shingles. Charles F. Naylor and his wife La Donia are identified as the original owners and residents. Mr. Naylor was the assistant sanitary inspector for the Health Department.

Subsequent owners listed in the City Directories include William L. Matts, a gas station operator, and his wife, Mildred, from 1931 to about 1934; George L. Morse, a San Diego Police officer, and his wife, Vivian, in 1935 and 1936; Frank Chessman, a cashier at the San Diego Hotel in 1937; and Mrs. Winifred D. Chessman, widow of A.F. Chessman, in 1938. During the 1980s, the house was the site of the San Diego Siddha Yoga Center.

5. Via our website submission form, Lori asked for an evaluation of the house at 3512 Mississippi Street, which is within the tour area of our Pauly's Addition walking tour. We found the first time a value of improvements for the Spanish Revival house was listed in the City Lot Books was January 1927. The owner of the lots the house was built upon was Michael Demetre starting in 1925. Michael Demetre pulled a building permit for the address in August 1926.


M. F. Demetri, $5500 stucco, 3512 - Mississippi

*August 8, 1926 San Diego Union*

Michael and his brother Frank worked at the University Fish & Poultry Market at 437 University Avenue. Their brother John, who lived on Herman Avenue, worked in the fish industry at 3019 University Avenue. Their mother also lived at the Mississippi Street house. The family came from Turkey.

6. Aaron asked about his recently purchased two-story house at 2846-2848 30th Street. The house is on Lot 1, Block 1 of the Aurora Heights subdivision, a one-block subdivision bounded by Dale and 30th streets on the west and east, and by Palm and Nutmeg streets on the north and south. The map for this little subdivision was filed as Map #1489 on November 6, 1912. City Lot Books indicate the first time a structure was on Lot 1 was January 1914. The owner of the vacant lot in immediately prior years was William B. Gross, who was actively dealing in real estate at the time. The owners of the lot with the house in 1914 were William and Mary Rickerson. They appeared in the 1914 City Directory as living at 2846 30th Street, and as grocers at 2848 30th Street. William Rickerson lived at 2846 30th Street (the second floor) until his death in December 1932, and Mary Rickerson continued to live there until she moved in with her married son, Ernest, around 1951. She died in 1954. The first floor operated as a grocery store for decades, primarily as the Palm Street Grocery.

7. Allison's friend Lauren has approval from Arcadia Publishing Company to prepare an Images of America book about Hillcrest. We can provide a letter of support if she needs it.

**9. PAYMENT FOR NPHS MEMBERSHIP**

As a standing item in the meeting notes, we can accept membership dues and donations via Venmo @ northparkhistory, and if a number code is requested, use 1274.

**10. 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 November 19. The November 19th meeting will be the last meeting for 2026, as we do not meet in December.**

Prepared by

Katherine Hon

Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

THE LETTER TO THE CITY REGARDING THE FORMER PEKIN CAFÉ FOLLOWS ON THE NEXT PAGE

North Park Historical Society
2226 Dwight Street
San Diego, CA 92104
(619) 294-8990

September 25, 2026

City of San Diego Development Services Department
Attn.: May Rollin, Development Project Manager
MMRollin@sandiego.gov

**Subject: PRJ-1159438, Conditional Use Permit, Process 3 for 2877 University Avenue**

Dear Ms. Rollin:

The North Park Historical Society (NPHS) supports the retail restaurant use of the proposed project at 2877 University Avenue. This project should include the restoration and historic designation of the Pekin Cafe neon sign on the building façade, pictured here in its finer days.




This neon sign is part of a grouping of neon signs including the reconstructed Community sign in the median of University Avenue and the restored vertical North Park Theatre sign in the center of the North Park village. These signs are a major stop on a walking tour of the central commercial North Park historic district proposed in the Community Plan.

In cooperation with North Park Main Street, NPHS members have been giving this tour for about 20 years. This tour was last given on September 16, 2026 for the North Park Main Street Board of Directors, and for the last three years it has been given for third grade students at Jefferson Elementary School. Especially for the third graders, the neon signs were a tour highlight.

Please let us know if the NPHS can assist in providing historical background of the building and neon sign by contacting the NPHS Secretary at khon@honconsultinginc.com

Sincerely,

Stephen Hon
President, North Park Historical Society

c: Suzanne Segur, Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison Historical Resources City of San Diego
Development Services Department ssegur@sandiego.gov
(also emailed to North Park Main Street)