

**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
JANUARY 2016 MEETING NOTES**

DATE: JANUARY 21, 2016

TIME: 6:30 PM

The first part of this meeting was a Business Meeting of the North Park Historical Society (NPHS) Board of Directors, and the second part was the activities discussion for the organization. These notes include updates as of January 29, 2016.

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY** February 18, 2016 at 6:30 pm in a second floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church, 3967 Park Boulevard.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The following members of the NPHS Board of Directors were present:

Katherine Hon	Randy Sappenfield
Steve Hon	Paul Spears
Michael Thornhill	Judy Ciampoli
Jody Surowiec	Sharon Turner

The following members of the NPHS Board of Directors were absent:

George Franck	Claudia Watts
Bob Bauer	Hilda Yoder
Bill Vivian	

Members Sue, Vicki, and Beth and our art consultant Gail Goldman joined us. Welcome!

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Katherine noted that as we agreed upon in November, the January 2016 meeting will focus on a presentation by our public art consultant Gail Goldman on examples of art concepts, media, and installations that may apply to our Water Tower project.

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The minutes from the November 21, 2015 NPHS meeting have been posted on the website.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials were sent to the Board in advance of the meeting. In the period from January 1 to January 18, 2016, the only financial activity was that NPHS paid for the permit from the City for the next car show that will be held on September 10, 2016. It's not too early to save the date!

Katherine noted that the Annual Report for 2015 was sent to the NPHS Board; this report presents an annual summary of financial information and project accomplishments. All of our friends and members received a summary of our project accomplishments, which included receiving a 2015 Excellence in Historic Preservation Award from the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board (HRB) for our Arcadia book, *Images of America: San Diego's North Park*, and establishing a Facebook page where you can visit and like us at <https://www.facebook.com/northparkhistory/>.

We also achieved designation of the Water Tower as a Local Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers, which was celebrated in the community park on November 5 at an event attended by elected officials, city engineering staff, members of the North Park Planning Committee, NPHS, and local residents.



From a financial standpoint, during 2015 NPHS sold 101 original North Park books, 10 Burlingame books, 22 Arcadia books, and 4 guidebooks separate from walking tours. We generated \$190 in revenue from the few walking tours we held, and received \$880 in royalties from Arcadia for their sales of *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* to retailers. We generated \$1,430 in revenue from the car show which was a little higher than past years because one generous sponsor who owns Hamilton's Tavern, South Park Brewing Company, and Monkey Paw Brewing Company paid for three sponsorships. We received approximately \$1,380 in memberships and donations.

Our main expenses in 2015 included \$788 for a portable scanner and a projector, \$1,156 for our annual liability insurance, \$981 for the car show (including \$330 for traffic police staff which was well worth it), \$461 for printing 100 more copies of the Burlingame book, and \$749 for the fabulous bronze plaque for the Water Tower's designation as a local historic civil engineering landmark. In summary, our 2015 income was \$8,897 and our total expenses were \$4,678. It was an excellent year!

Budget Update for 2016: Steve drafted a proposed budget for 2016, including funds we propose to request from the County in a Community Enhancement Grant application. The funds would be for continued support for the Car Show, year 2 of services from our Public Art Consultant Gail Goldman, and artist honorariums for a few selected artists to prepare detailed concepts for art at the Water Tower site (see more discussion below). As agreed upon at the November 19, 2015 meeting, the budget was reviewed by the NPHS Board of Directors and votes were sent via email. As of January 28, 2016, ten Board members had approved the 2016 budget including the County Community Enhancement Grant request (Randy, George, Sharon, Paul, Jody, Hilda, Judy, Claudia, Steve and Katherine), and no votes in opposition from the other three Board members have been received. The Budget is approved.

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

5. WATER TOWER PROJECT UPDATE

Art consultant Gail Goldman, now under contract with NPHS, and Steve and Katherine have met with City staff and have a good idea of the "canvases" that may be readily available for public art elements to explain and celebrate the Water Tower. Two different city departments control properties that are potential sites for art elements. The San Diego Public Utilities Department owns the Water Tower and the other active water facilities on the property north of Howard Avenue. The San Diego Park and Recreation Department controls the Community Park property south of Howard Avenue. Based on these initial meetings, the Public Utilities property north of Howard Avenue seems to offer the best opportunities for installation of public art element(s) in the near future.

On November 6, 2015, Gail, Steve, and Katherine met with City Public Utilities staff at the Water Tower site to discuss possible concepts for art elements on the north side of Howard Avenue.



Gail, Steve, and Katherine then met with Public Utilities and Security staff on December 21, 2015 to further define requirements related to fencing, decorative lighting, and specific areas that might be available for a plaque monument structure. Points made by Public Utilities Department staff at these meetings include the following:

- They are open to use of enhanced lighting; the engineers noted projection of an image onto the Water Tower tank could be difficult as the tank is so high, but spotlighting from the adjacent two-story stucco building might be feasible.
- They are also open to concepts using the walls of the rectangular reservoir that sits around the Water Tower (and on top of which many people play soccer), as long as the concepts would not harm the concrete walls or limit the City's ability to respond to emergencies and conduct their daily operations.
- Within the next few years, city Security staff may plan for replacement of the existing chain link fence at the Water Tower site. The city is open to coordinating design and construction of an enhanced "artistic" fence, as long as the fence meets all of their security standards and does not create any handholds for climbing. The community would have to fund the difference between the cost of a standard fence and an artistic fence.
- City Public Utilities staff are excited about the engineering landmark designation for the Water Tower and very positive about having the bronze plaque on the Water Tower property in an appropriate location where the plaque will be visible and close enough for the public to read, but also be secure and protected from vandalism.
- Installation of the plaque will have to wait until after the City has completed planned seismic retrofit construction on the site this year, but placing the plaque is feasible and we will continue to coordinate on this aspect.
- The City is required to select contractors through a competitive bid process. That precludes using any volunteer services for artwork site preparation and installation.

On January 13, 2016, Gail, Steve, and Katherine met with Andy Field, Assistant Director of the City Park and Recreation Department, and David Monroe, Deputy Director of Community Park II Division to explore art installation options in North Park Community Park. We gained a good understanding of the challenges associated with adding facilities or features in the community park. Points made by staff include the following:

- Their ability to clean graffiti off within 48 hours is compromised when the vandalized surface is uneven or made of different types of materials. The department has limited resources and any art elements added by a community project would have to be maintained by the community.
- Creating new seating or tables is problematic because of the large transient population who like to congregate at the park. The existing tables and benches at the park are routinely damaged and vandalized.
- The existing adult center building at the north end of the park with the meeting room and police storefront will eventually be demolished, although there is no schedule for that right now.
- Concrete etching, for example in the sidewalk at Bird Park, appears to be less vulnerable to graffiti. However, the new storm water control requirements are very strict, and creation of any new impervious surfaces may require an environmental document.
- Utility box wrapping with vinyl is doable but may not last as long as we would like.
- Banners on light poles can only be installed within a banner district, and banners typically last only about 3 to 6 months.

6. EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS

Photos from Gail's presentation are included at the end of these notes. Points made during and after Gail's presentation include the following:

- The type of "canvas" that is most readily available for our project is flat vertical surfaces, and possibly a fence as a later phase.

- Examples of San Diego installations that Gail showed are a painting showing a historical scene at Cass and Garnet in Pacific Beach, the Chicano Park murals, a large painting reproduced on aluminum panels at Waterfront Park off Pacific Highway, and the metal and plexiglass panels mounted on the Vermont Street bridge over Highway 163 ramps and Washington Street.
- Examples from other places include mosaics, etched concrete, terrazzo, a chain link fence with opaque plastic inserts that create an image from a distance, vinyl, ceramic tiles, etched glass, and painting.
- Paul noted that paint on masonry can affect the underlying surface because the wall material can't ventilate moisture through the paint. He also noted that the protective coat to resist graffiti can get washed off and may need to be reapplied frequently. He said porcelain tiles would be more durable than ceramic tile.
- Sue liked the tile but preferred the decorative concrete that had texture and relief.
- Paul suggested a new wall with precast concrete panels or formed panels could be part of a new fence.
- Vicki said telling the story is very important, including how the community developed and the role the Water Tower and other historical water facilities at the site played in that development. She wondered if developers in the area could contribute to funding the art installation.
- Steve noted that the story of the entire area, including the community park which was once a 17-million-gallon partially buried reservoir, needs to be told.
- Many attendees were excited by the aluminum panels that can be a surface for printing historic images or art, including one of our favorite images of the Water Tower under construction with the sign declaring it is the "largest elevated tank in the world."
- We want to communicate that the Water Tower is big, iconic, interesting, and still important, even though it is no longer in operation.

The next step in our process is for Gail to incorporate our input into preparation of a site description, our goals, and the range of artwork options. This write-up will be a guide for us and potential artists. Thank you, Gail, for all your help so far.

For those who missed this meeting, review the examples at the end of these notes and email Katherine at info@northparkhistory.org or call her at 619-294-8990 to provide your input.



Steve is preparing a County grant request to fund honorariums for up to three artists who Gail will help us identify to prepare proposals with art installation concepts and costs. We will then be able to use that information to select what we prefer and have the concept(s) reviewed and approved by the City, and then raise funds to make it happen. There is still a long way to go, but we are making steady progress!

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY** February 18, 2016 at 6:30 pm in a second floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church, 3967 Park Boulevard, corner of Park and Lincoln Avenue.

Prepared by

Katherine Hon

Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society





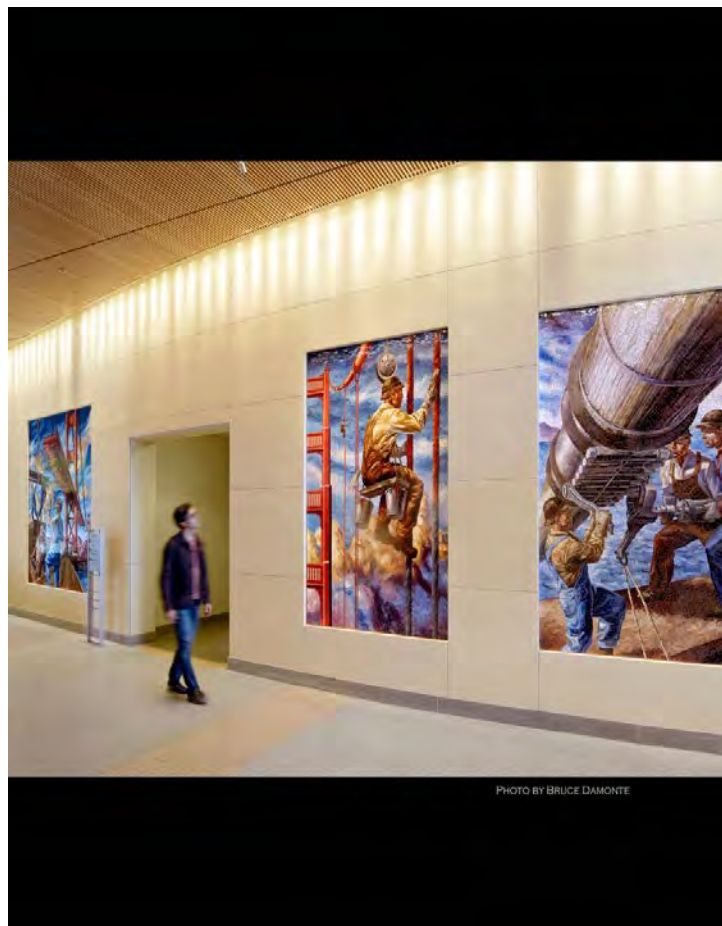


PHOTO BY BRUCE DAMONTE



