

**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
AUGUST 2017 MEETING NOTES**

**DATE: AUGUST 17, 2017**

**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 August 31, 2017.

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY** September 21, 2017 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:

Steve Hon	Katherine Hon
Jody Surowiec	Hilda Yoder
Claudia Watts	Judy Ciampoli
George Franck	Randy Sappenfield
Paul Spears	Michael Thornhill

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

Bob Bauer	Sharon Turner
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Member Turner also joined us. Welcome!

**2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The latest Pacific Beach Historical Society newsletter and PastMatters column in the *Uptown News* were circulated for viewing. PastMatters in *Uptown News* presented the car show poster and explained the multiple stories behind it. See the last page of these notes for how the article looked in the paper.

**3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE**

The minutes from the July 20, 2017 NPHS meeting have been posted on the website.

**BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING**

**4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The financials for the period of July 20 to August 13, 2017 were sent to Board Members before the meeting. During this period, we received the County grant check of \$3,000, and a bonus from our insurance company for \$100. We received two \$100 sponsorships for the Car Show (thank you, North Park Main Street and Jaye MacAskill Real Estate), and two \$200 sponsorships (thank you Tera Vessels Realtor for San Diego Vintage Homes, who wanted to be good through the 2018 car show, and car exhibitor Miles, who wanted to give us extra support!). Expenses in this time period consisted of \$413 for portapotties supplied by United Site Services, and \$200 for printing 100 canvas tote bags with our logo by AKA Printing in North Park.

## **ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING**

### **5. TOTE BAGS**

The finished product from AKA Printing was shown for all to admire. AKA did a great job placing the logo, picking the color (royal blue to match the tee shirts), and adding our website address. The group agreed that we will sell the bags for \$5 each (including sales tax) and will give as gifts for new members and donations of at least \$20 at our events. For the car show, exhibitors who win a gift as a "Business Favorite" will receive their gifts in a tote bag (which is like getting two great gifts!).



### **6. VALLE VISTA TERRACE HISTORIC DISTRICT LETTER OF SUPPORT**

The University Heights Historical Society requested North Park Historical Society consider writing a letter of support for designation of this historic district along Panorama Drive and Cliff Street north of Adams Avenue in University Heights just east of the Trolley Barn Park. See the next page for the excellent letter George wrote, which also supported extending the period of significance to 1950, and adding a bungalow court at 2206 Adams Avenue as contributing to the district. The letter was reviewed and discussed by the group. George moved and Judy seconded for sending the letter to the recipients listed, and the motion was approved unanimously. **Update:** The letter was emailed to the recipients on August 18, 2017, with this note to City HRB staff Kelley Stanco: "Kindly distribute this letter of support for the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District from the North Park Historical Society to HRB members and place it in the public record for the proceedings. City staff efforts in establishing this historic district (and all others) are sincerely appreciated."

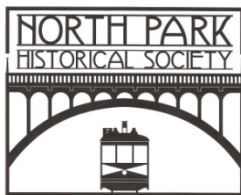
Upon receiving a copy of the letter, Ernie Bonn with the University Heights Historical Society wrote to NPHS: "Thanks so much for the excellent NPHS support letter. This is so important in getting the momentum going to have all of the potential historic districts identified in North Park designated."

### **7. WATER TOWER PUBLIC ART PROJECT**

We have been waiting for the City and San Diego Indoor Soccer, the organization who is the tenant leasing the space on top of the reservoir, to let us know a good date and time for the artists to get access to the soccer "fields" on the top of the reservoir so they can see the fence up close. **Update:** This onsite meeting was held August 29 at 1:00. The soccer organization representative was very interested in the project and the history of the Water Tower. Since the meeting took more time than expected to arrange, the September 15 due date for the concept proposals will be extended to November 10.

### **8. WEB MAINTENANCE CONSULTING PROPOSAL**

The NPHS website at northparkhistory.org has been successfully moved to new servers and more updated CPanel hosting on GoDaddy. But we need some professional help to accomplish some other maintenance tasks, including migrating the SSL certificate throughout the site, installing a "photo carousel" feature so we can upload multiple photos (like all the great cars that will be exhibited at the Car Show), and move our domain names to GoDaddy. Jim Tinsky, our consultant who developed the Word Press website several years ago for us, is still available. The group reviewed the draft contract and scope and fee. Jody moved and Michael seconded the contract be approved, and the motion was approved unanimously. Katherine and Steve will be in close touch with Jim and will be sure he lets us know before he exceeds his maximum of 10 hours work.



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

Historic Resources Board (HRB)  
City of San Diego, mail station #401  
1222 First Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92101

August 18, 2017

**Subject: Proposed Valle Vista Terrace Historic District**

Dear Chairman McCullough and Board Members:

The North Park Historical Society strongly supports the designation of the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District, by unanimous action of its Board of Directors on August 17, 2017.

Our book, "North Park, A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946" identifies Valle Vista Terrace as the first tract developed east of Park Boulevard, in the same year that the streetcar system was extended east of Park on both Adams and University avenues. In the original 1888 University Heights tract, this peninsula neighborhood overlooking Mission Valley was identified as a park. The subdivision of the neighborhood in its current form was recorded by the City in 1907.

The first home in the proposed district was designed by Master Architects Hebbard & Gill for George Hawley, who was president of the University Heights syndicate. Many other district houses were designed by master builders and architects. Based on the City's 2016 Greater North Park Community Plan Update, nine homes in the proposed District have already been historically designated. Of the 89 homes, a high percentage would contribute to the proposed District.

The University Heights community has raised two issues regarding the August 2017 staff recommendation. First, the bungalow court on Adams Avenue should be added as a contributing structure. Although many windows have been replaced and the street side of the courtyard has been fenced, we believe it retains significant historic integrity. Because neighborhood growth was initiated by streetcar service, this court provides a link to its status as a streetcar suburb. Second, the community has proposed the extension of the district's period of significance to 1950. This extension would add a handful of contributing homes that are good examples of the final growth period of the neighborhood following the Depression and World War II.

Because of the neighborhood's age, as well as the condition and the historic design of its homes, the proposed Valle Vista Terrace Historic District should be historically designated by the City of San Diego. Further, the North Park Historical Society supports the addition of the bungalow court at 2206 Adams Avenue as a contributing resource and the extension of the period of significance to 1950.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hon, President  
North Park Historical Society

c: University Heights Historical Society  
University Heights Community Development Corporation  
North Park Planning Committee  
Save Our Heritage Organisation  
Kelley Stanco, HRB Staff

## 9. CAR SHOW UPDATE

Steve reported that we will be "leasing" 40 A-frame signs and 6 barricades for about \$84. The signs will come already labeled with the date, which saves time, paper and effort on our part. Paul can help Steve set up the A frame signs in the tennis court parking lot on Wednesday, September 6.

Other people who have committed to help are:

- Early set up: Michael, Steve, Katherine, Sharon ARRIVE BEFORE 7:00 AM
- Car check-in: Michael and Katherine
- Parking Guides: Paul, Sharon, George, Hilda, Turner ARRIVE BY 8:00 AM
- Booth staffing: Judy, Hilda, Jody, Sharon
- Ballot counting and recording (a careful person with eagle eyes is required): Jody
- Helping with trophies presentation: Steve and Claudia (and staff from County Supervisor Ron Roberts' office)
- Clean up: Steve, Katherine, Claudia, Turner (others are encouraged to help!)

**Update:** United Site Services dropped their price by \$100 for a regular restroom, ADA restroom, and two-station sink delivered on Saturday at 8:00 am and removed the same day at 3:00 pm. We now have about 48 cars registered, so it is going to be a great show.

## 10. OTHER ANNUAL EVENTS

In addition to the Car Show, the upcoming annual events NPHS is participating in or organizing include the following:

- San Diego History Center Forum for Local History Groups: September 23, 2017. Last year's experimental forum was so successful, the San Diego History Center is hosting a second one on Saturday, September 23 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm at their auditorium room in Balboa Park. The topics will be a panel on Community Partnerships, a lecture on Event Planning, and a panel on Collections (acquiring, storing and exhibiting materials).
- Toyland Parade: December 2, 2017. We expect the parade to be held the first Saturday in December like last year. This year, Steve and Katherine will not be in town on parade day, so we will be looking for other volunteer(s) to coordinate participants and delivery of the water tower to the parade site if Victor is inspired to dance again as the most popular entry in the parade. **Update:** Michael may be able to provide transport.

## NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY** September 21, 2017 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  
Secretary, North Park Historical Society



# North Park Car Show

## The stories behind the poster

### PastMatters Katherine Hon

Every picture tells a story. The poster for the 2017 North Park Car Show tells at least five: the event, the poster designer, the car featured, the drive-in theater in the background, and the scene on the movie screen. Ready for some modern history? Hop in!

The North Park Historical Society (NPHS) will hold its eighth annual car show on Sept. 9 (the first Saturday after Labor Day). NPHS started the car show in September 2010 as a way to honor one of the saddest days in American history (Sept. 11, 2001) by creating a family-friendly community event. For the first two years, the event was held in the parking lot behind what is now the Observatory North Park theater.

In 2012, Balboa Tennis Club became the host site, and the event has been held in a relaxing park setting at Morley Field since then. It is free to attend. Car exhibitors pay only \$10 per car to show off their classic vehicles (pre-1990 encouraged, exceptions made for newer exotics). Register your car in advance, as we assign parking spots and make customized windshield placards. Email [info@northparkhistory.org](mailto:info@northparkhistory.org), call 619-294-8990 or visit [northparkhistory.org](http://northparkhistory.org) to get a registration form.

**The poster:** NPHS is grateful to Johnathan Harrison of JHDesign Co. for volunteering to develop the poster. He is a freelance designer specializing in logo design, branding, illustration and content layout for print and online resources. He is also a professional photographer. He can be reached at [harrison.johnathan@gmail.com](mailto:harrison.johnathan@gmail.com).

Harrison's design process was quite interesting. He selected the car featured on the poster from about 50 photos of the cars at the 2016 car show taken by Jim Brady of Brady Architectural Photography.

"I just looked for a car that spoke to me, and was one that could tell a story," he said.

Harrison described the car he picked, a 1961 Oldsmobile Starfire convertible, as "something that I had seen in older movies. It was a vehicle that looked like it would be at a drive-in [which was] something that many people would associate with ... I tried to make the vehicle look like it was popping out past the border and almost off the poster itself."

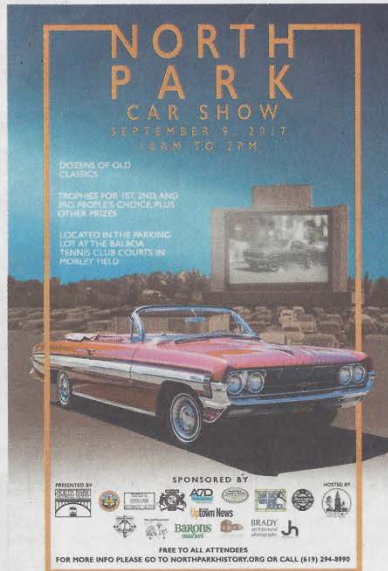
NPHS thanks Ryan Main, a local Realtor and North Park Community Association board member, for connecting us with Harrison. We also thank Vincent Rivera, former NPHS board member, for seven years of great poster designs.

**The car:** Harrison did indeed pick a car with a story to tell. The 1961 Oldsmobile pictured is named Marilyn because she is unique, iconic and stunningly beautiful. She was recently owned by John Thurber, who passed away on April 23, 2017 and will be greatly missed. He had participated in the North Park Car Show since 2013, bringing the Oldsmobile, his 1952 Ford pickup truck, or his 1963 Austin Cooper. Thurber gave Marilyn to his good friend Peter Julian, who will always treasure it. Julian was thrilled to learn the car is featured on the poster and has already registered it for the car show.

Oldsmobile first used Starfire for a 1953 dream car named after the Lockheed F-94 Starfire jet fighter. The first generation of Starfires started with the 1961 convertible model. With a base price of \$4,647 in 1961, it was the most expensive Oldsmobile, and 1,500 were sold that year.

**The drive-in:** Harrison picked a photo of the Campus drive-in to fit the perspective and feel he wanted for the poster. Jay Allen Sanford tells the story of this drive-in and many others in his Aug. 1, 2008 San Diego Reader article, "Drive-In Theaters in San Diego: Complete Illustrated History 1947 thru 2008."

The Campus drive-in theater opened at El Cajon Boulevard and College Avenue on Aug. 18, 1948 and closed in February 1983. The drive-in was famous for its back screen neon sign of a 46-foot-tall marching majorette twirling a baton in front of the old main building and bell-tower quadrangle of San Diego State University. The neon majorette still sparkles at College Grove Shopping Center.



**The movie:** The image on the drive-in screen is from the 1968 thriller, "Bullitt," starring Steve McQueen. The film is famous for its high-speed muscle car chase through San Francisco, where McQueen maneuvers his 1968 Ford Mustang GT

behind the bad guys who were tailing him in a 1968 Dodge Charger R/T, then forces the villains off the road into a gas station and a deadly fiery explosion.

The car on the screen is one of two stunt Mustangs used to film the chase. One Mustang was preserved, but the other had been missing since the film's completion. The stunt car was found in March 2017 rusting in a Baja California junkyard and was confirmed to be that very car by Ford historian Kevin Marti through its VIN plate. It is now being restored, just in time for the 50th anniversary of the movie that made it (and it made) famous.

How's that for a history trip?

—Katherine Hon is the secretary of the North Park Historical Society. Reach her at [info@northparkhistory.org](mailto:info@northparkhistory.org) or 619-294-8990.\*