

Little Italy Residents Association

Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2004

Issues Discussed:

Traffic Issues:

Train Noise

Gary Smith (President of the Downtown Residents Group) provided an update on the progress of establishing a "Quiet Zone" for the trains passing through Little Italy and the remainder of the downtown area. The most important points of information are as follows:

- * Complete information on this issue can be obtained through Federal Railroad Administration Web site at www.fra.dot.gov under the category of "interim Final Rule on the Use of Locomotive Horns at highway-Rail Grade Crossings"
- * If a "Quiet Zone" is defined as a section of a rail liner that contains one or more consecutive public crossings at which locomotive horns are not routinely sounded.
- * To establish this "Quiet Zone" the federal government requires that all railroad crossings in the effected area comply with prescribed safety regulations. Two crossing in Little Italy (located at West Cedar and West Ash Streets) are not in compliance with these regulations. CCDC (Centre City Development Corporation) staff has requested funds to pay for these improvements and is waiting for approval of their proposed budget.

Automobile/ Pedestrian Safety

Gregg Masloff reported on the progress made in creating a safer pedestrian environment in our neighborhood. The two areas of greatest concern are the streets immediately surrounding the Washington Elementary School and along Kettner Blvd. Gregg's meetings with the SDPD Traffic division have resulted in increased presence of patrol officers in our neighborhood. Their present priority is to focus on traffic safety issues such as speeding and running stop signs. Working with CCDC, Gregg has also secured funds to pay for new "pop-outs" on State Street adjacent to Washington School. It was also noted that since Kettner Blvd. has been designated as a "preferred route" for ballpark traffic, these pedestrian issues will become even more critical in the near future.

Ballpark Traffic Implications for Little Italy

Officer Getz of the SDPD reported on the department's strategy for dealing with the increased traffic and visitor issues relating to events at Petco Park. The department will station additional officers in the vicinity of the ballpark, and all areas in downtown that are effected (Little Italy included). These officers are to remain in their designated areas until the traffic and number of visitors is reduced to the normal occurrence.

Parking

Jason Farran, the community representative for Supervisor Ron Roberts' office, reported on proposals for utilizing parking spaces in the proposed County Administration Office Building (to be located at West Cedar and Kettner). Although it is unlikely that many spaces will be available during the day for use by persons other than county employees, his office is aware of the parking difficulties present in Little Italy and will inform the group on any opportunities which arise from the planning process.

Jason also updated the group on the progress of shrinking the length of the bus stops and their relocation from West Cedar Street to West Beech Street. At this point in time, 24 new parking spaces have been created through minimizing the length of the bus stops and changing the parallel parking to diagonal parking along sections of Kettner Blvd.

Reporting of Suspicious or Dangerous Incidents

Officer Getz suggested that for all occasions where a person is exhibiting behavior that could be considered dangerous to themselves or others, call 911 directly. For all other non-emergency complaints call 531-2000. To inform the police department of an ongoing problem in Little Italy, call him directly at 685-8206 or send an e-mail to bgetz@pd.sandiego.gov

Miscellaneous

Minicab Company is offering a half price discount to anyone, including both businesses and residents, who would like to set up an account with the company. For more information call 619.234.1805.

Thank you to Kara Garcia Galasso and her staff for hosting the meeting.

Next meeting:

Thursday, March 18
Villa Maria
1528 India Street
6:30 pm