



# THE ROSE GARDEN NEWS

Publication of Rose Garden Neighborhood Preservation Association Dec 09

## Dec 2009

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## RGNPA Board Meetings All Welcome

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 Meetings Listed Below  
 Community Center @ Hoover  
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 1635 Park Ave  
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*Side entrance across from Antonella's*  
 Jan. 4, 2010 - 6:30 p.m.  
 Mar. 1, 2010 - 6:30 p.m.  
 May 3, 2010 - 6:30 p.m.  
 Questions?  
 www.RGNPA.org



## Proposed Amendment to The Midtown Specific Plan

By Jennifer Kurrie

On December 1st, the San Jose City Council heard Green Republic's request for a General Plan Amendment (GPA) change that would allow additional height and density within the Midtown Specific Plan. The entitlement is a critical milestone in the development approval process, and it comes with high expectations from the partnership, the city planning department and the District 6 community at large.

The General Plan Amendment allows Green Republic to build structures up to 150 feet in height with a density of 125 units to the acre. This amendment was needed to create a more efficient transit oriented development and will allow for a better design, incorporating significant open space, pedestrian walkways and bike paths to transit and downtown San Jose. The council approval of the requested GPA will ensure The Ohlone is a high quality, transit village, mixed-use development that is consistent with San Jose's General Plan 2020 and its future General Plan "Envision 2040".

Over the past few months, we have been working closely with many local organizations including the Greenbelt Alliance, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Housing Action Coalition, and West San Carlos Street Neighborhood Business Association to get their perspective on the project. We are thrilled they are supportive of the General Plan Amendment as they see the potential as being a model for future transit oriented development in the San Jose. We look forward to working with these organizations in the future to insure a quality design incorporating sustainable and green building techniques that will help foster San Jose's "Green Vision".

Since the start of the Ohlone, Green Republic has made a commitment to the community and local neighborhood groups to engage in an open dialogue about the city process, the GPA policy and the ultimate design of the structures. To date, we have held over 15 community meetings which have allowed us to address numerous community and neighborhood concerns. In 2010, as we begin the Planned Development Zoning and Planning Development

Permit processes, we intend to hold additional dialogue with the overall District 6 community with special emphasis inside the Burbank-Del Monte Neighborhood Action Council. We are very proud of the work we have done inside the District 6 community, and we are excited to move forward in 2010 with design ideas that we think will result in a landmark project at The Ohlone.

We know there are concerns in the District 6 community over how this project will look, feel and function. The Green Republic team will be approaching the design process in a fresh new way focusing on how the project will be an asset to the existing neighborhood, as well as how residents, visitors, shoppers and neighbors will use the end product. We have hired Rob Steinberg, of The Steinberg Group who has developed most of San Jose's most notable structures including Plant 51, San Jose City Hall and the new terminal at Norman Mineta International Airport. The Green Republic Team, which is owned and controlled by resident San Jose Developers, Barry Swenson (Rose Garden) and Michael Van Every (Evergreen), are serious in working with The Steinberg Group to incorporate San Jose and Midtown's unique history. The Ohlone history stretches over 100 years from its days as Martin Sunol's residence to its hey day of supporting the Del Monte Canning Empire. A landmark can be created by mixing history, the present and the future, and we intend to work hard and take input from all stakeholders to insure success.

Finally, The Ohlone will bring much needed green space to District 6. As part of the first Phase, we will be dedicating a four acre located at Auzeais and Sunol Streets directly across the street from the project site. Adjacent to the existing dedicated land by KB Homes, a future seven acre park will be built and include elements in the GreenPrint including youth and adult ball fields as well as more passive uses for our children and animals. We are excited to make the planning of the parkland part of the PD Zoning process, and we look forward to working with the City and the Parks and Recreation Department to help facilitate this vital neighborhood asset.

To be sure you are notified of all upcoming community meetings please sign up at our website [www.green-republicsj.com](http://www.green-republicsj.com). We look forward to meeting with you in the spring to work on this next exciting phase.

# What is up in the Hood

by Bob Sippel

Construction projects in the Rose Garden Area are coming to a close. All the sewer work down Naglee and surrounding is finished and due to diminishing funds, I doubt too many other projects will begin without funding. I know from personal experience the quest to get lighting of any kind is difficult at best.

While our city is in less trouble than most, we have like all others had cut after cut after cut. Diminishing funds means forget any project that is not under grant money, already scheduled or an absolute necessity. I know on my own block I have fought for years to get lighting as ours is nonexistent. The best I have done was up to number ten in the city and if we wanted historical lighting we would all be assessed a huge fee. So once again I add it to my list of "continue on projects". I am sure our sewers in the City need looking at as many are very old and due to be redone. When that occurs I shall let you know of the projects and areas of concern.

For those that haven't had the chance to follow there are a variety of projects in the area for development. The latest victory (a word not often heard when battling developers and the city) was the Sunol/San Carlos Project. While I did my part that victory is truly an effort of many to include Burbank, SHPNA and D6 and the RGNPA. If it hadn't been for the group of dedicated soldiers from SHPNA who managed to get a 90% signature base in protest, this project would have been a done deal. It was then through the tireless efforts of many doing one on one's with council and the mayor in order to beat this project. Had it won we would have had a huge, multi story low income housing development, without park space. No one was fighting the low income housing, but yes all the other issues concerning this property. The night of the decision at Council thanks to Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Chirco and our Council Pierluigi we were able to get the right number of votes to defeat this project. Rose Herrera was not there and her vote may have made it a done deal for the developer. A rare victory but shows us that when being strong and uniting with other neighborhood leaders... we can win.

Crime has not escalated but as long as these economic times are around, we shall have it. Once again people leaving windows open at home and stuff in their cars are the biggest culprits. While the Rose Garden Area itself sees little, our neighbors in SHPNA seem to have more. I will go out on the limb and state that is due to the vigilant gang activity by the San Carlos Boys, which is the gang closest to us.

Halloween proved to be a biggie this year and I hear from many neighborhoods the turnout was grand. Very nice I think... I remember the days we could all wonder the streets getting anything on Halloween. It's nice to see resurgence and I have so say of the 130 plus that came to my door... they were really polite. We should all be proud of the many gorgeous displays, the RG Library event and more. We need more than ever to give places and things kids can share in and be safe.

I understand several streets are considering adding new trees to their blocks and I can't say enough about how important trees are to the health of the planet. I know our block is on a quest to remove the near dead and replace with new trees and best count is around 20. Hopefully your blocks will consider the same. If you ever walk down the blocks with grand canopies... it not only looks nice but is cooler in the summer.

Don't forget the Alameda the plan for a beautiful way project. I happen to be on the Alameda Steering Committee and we have already had numerous meetings with the RDA and the Architects and as many neighbors as could make it to the meetings. The input from the neighborhoods is amazing and since this grant specifically states that neighborhood input must be there... go get them. If you haven't had a chance to project your opinion, to help in sculpting what you would like to see the Alameda be as an area, then your next chance is Nov. 16th. Go to the City of San Jose, Redevelopment agency site and you can pull down all the information. Remember is you don't have input you are not part of the plan and image.



## Services for Rose Garden Seniors

By Monica Ferrier

Seniors in the Rose Garden area have access to a wide variety of services, ranging from home care and day health and activities programs to residential retirement and assisted living communities. As family members from out of town gather together for the holidays, it is not unusual for some to notice changes in their elderly loved ones that may indicate a need for changes in their housing and/or care. Difficulties managing medications, poor hygiene, inadequate nutritional intake, and behavioral changes may indicate that more support is needed. Falls in and around the home remain a serious risk. While it can be challenging to talk about these concerns, it may be important to respond to warning signs early in order to avoid crises later. Seniors who are independent and in good health may also want to visit local retirement and assisted living communities to familiarize themselves with options available for future needs. Talking with friends and family members about their experiences with local housing and care providers can help to guide choices. Resources and information can be found on websites for local agencies and service providers, including the Council on Aging ([www.careaccess.org](http://www.careaccess.org)) and Eldercare Scout ([www.eldercare scout.com](http://www.eldercare scout.com)).



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*Volunteers Welcome*



## Land Banking Without Public Spending

By Perluigi Oliverio

Last month, at the Council meeting a housing developer asked the council to approve rezoning of land for a 117-unit affordable Shared Room Occupancy (SRO) development.

There were business owners, adjacent property owners, and residents who did not support this project. I have been a councilmember for more than two years and I have never seen each of these groups on the same page. Over two thirds of the adjacent property owners were against the rezoning. They took the time to file and get their signatures notarized for a zoning protest application.

This level of protest from adjacent property owners is unheard of—thus showing a high level of opposition. One of the adjacent industrial property owners said, “where will people work in San Jose if the Council continues to change land for jobs to land for housing?” Industrial uses are becoming harder to locate in this City since residents do not want noise or truck traffic.

For many of the residents, this was their first experience with the City of San Jose since their neighborhood was being annexed. I am a member of the General Plan 2040 Task force (GP2040) where we decide how San Jose grows by the year 2040. This makes me think of the best long-term uses of land citywide. In the past the council has made decisions based on the short-term rather than the long-term view. GP2040 is about learning from historical mistakes, being strategic with land use and planning our future.

The council has spent over \$100 million being strategic by land banking to provide development sites which have led to economic development. However, we also have the power to land bank without spending a dime ... by simply voting no on projects that do not have the best long term interest for the City. I believe that just saying no to the conversion of commercial/industrial land equals more land for jobs and a tax base to pay for neighborhood services.

The proposal was a gateway parcel on San Carlos linking Downtown to Santana Row. The proposal would have divided two other parcels which would not allow for a devel-

opment that is more focused on economic development. This odd shaped parcel did not allow for proper parking to be built out underneath since it divides two other properties. Otherwise the proposed parking was problematic for the neighborhood since it only provided 65 parking spaces for a maximum occupancy of 234 people.

Neighborhood association board members have said, “If we are going to get a baseball stadium, wouldn’t this land would become more valuable?” I agree with them. This parcel should have an economic development aspect that could also have housing (affordable or market rate) on the top of significant retail by developing the entire parcel and not a divided one.

The proposed affordable housing proposal would not have paid park fees or construction tax fees that paves roads in a neighborhood that is identified as park deficient. We spoke about this deficiency Sept. 8 at the council study session for the Greenprint, and this rezoning would exacerbate the problem. San Jose has lost out on as much \$60-90 million in park fees alone from affordable housing developments since they are exempt from paying many fees that everyone else has to provide.

There was concern about the concentration of affordable housing in this area. There is an affordable housing project right down street at the old Fiesta Lanes Bowl (another commercial-to-residential land conversion). 1,000 feet away we have affordable housing on Bird and San Carlos and 300 feet from that another affordable project. 2500 feet north there is a 100% affordable project, affordable housing next to MidTown Safeway. 400 feet the other direction 777 Park Ave will be another 100 percent affordable project of 200 units. The Council just approved 42 affordable units on San Carlos and Meridian this Spring. In December of this year, the Council will get another proposal on a mixed use project right across the street however that parcel is already zoned residential and would create a park larger then our beautiful Municipal Rose Garden. Unlike the 1,500 additional housing units where housing was not planned, like DelMonte Cannery (600 units), Lou’s Village (100 units) and Sobrato office park (800 units).

Based on annexation zoning rules we can look at this parcel in two years when we know if there will be a future ballpark or not. Construction on this development was not going to occur for 2-3 years anyway so it was the wrong time to rezone and there was no viable argument that this will spur construction jobs.

The proposed SRO would be in the vicinity of a proposed light rail station that another developer has given \$1million towards; however, the VTA has not given a firm commitment to fund the station. (By the way, a light rail station does not need to be artwork, just give me an ADA compliant concrete slab and then in the future if we have the money we can do something fancy.)

The rezoning was denied by my vote and votes from Mayor Reed and Vice Mayor Judy Chirco. The rest of Council voted in favor of the rezoning.

It’s not about the project; its about the loss of employment land and the loss of infrastructure fees for the City.

It is not about affordable housing it is about a lost opportunity to develop land with more emphasis on economic development.

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## An End to Garbage as We Know It

By Rod Johnson

By looking at the title, you might have been hoping for piercing political analysis. If that is the case I hope you won't be disappointed by an article on a more mundane topic that many of us encounter daily in our homes. Recycling may not satisfy the politicians among us but at least it's something we can have control over.

Reduce, reuse, recycle. The citizens of San Jose have put this phrase into action and the residents of the Rose Garden neighborhood have taken it to heart. Recycling is one of those activities that is its own reward and once you get started, it can become a passion. Those of you who are avid recyclers might be interested to know that the City of San Jose recycles 62% of its solid waste stream which ranks as the fourth highest rate in the nation. A pat on the back is deserved, but it's just the start of a program to achieve zero waste by the year 2022. Zero waste might sound impossible but according to San Jose's Environmental Services Department it isn't. You don't need a PhD in waste to help San Jose reach its goals but it might be helpful to understand what's being recycled today and what's still going in the trash bin.

According to the latest issue of San Jose's "curbside courier" newsletter, 22% of what's currently going in the garbage can be recycled. 44% of what we throw out is organic and could have been composted. It appears that we still have room for improvement and room to catch our famous neighbor to the North -- San Francisco, currently recycling 69% of its waste stream.

I thought I knew what can and can't be recycled but I still found a few surprises on the sjrecycles.org website. Did you know that blue glass can't be recycled in SJ? Although I was unable to any information from California Waste Solutions on the matter, I was able to find some guidance on the web. According to the website www.earth911.com, blue glass does not mix well chemically with the other glass colors so some recyclers don't want to deal with it. According to the site, Ranch Town Recycling Center located on 775 Lincoln Ave will take blue glass.

Did you know you can recycle steel cans and steel bottle lids? Maybe I'm the only one who didn't know that but I'm learning! Who knew you can't put rotten veggies in the yard waste bin? The green waste rules published by the city of San Jose state that food waste such as fruit rinds or vegetable cuttings are not allowed in the green waste stream that is picked up loose in the street. That would include citrus fruit in cuttings. The information I found on the Green Waste website says fruits and vegetables are OK with the trimmings. Although I was unable to get any information from Green Waste to clarify the matter, I would suggest going with the City rules. I'll follow up to try and get clarification for the next edition.

Clear, brown and green glass, go in the recycle bin and ceramics, mirrors and incandescent light bulbs belong in the regular garbage.

It's common knowledge that newspaper –and this newsletter can be recycled, but less well known items like phone books, egg cartons and envelopes with plastic windows are also recyclable. Some items that might seem recyclable really aren't, such as pizza boxes, cardboard take-out containers and any paper contaminated with grease or paint.

Polystyrene is that white foam used for things like "packing peanuts" and take-out food containers. It's recyclable after all the food is rinsed off. Plastic shopping bags don't belong in the recycle bin but they can be brought to collection centers like the one at the Safeway near SCU.

I hope this article has been informative and if it helps just one more Ketchup bottle lid grow up to be a sports car instead of ending up buried in a landfill, then I consider it a success.

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## Presidents Message

by Bob Sippel

Well the end of another year is upon us. Halloween just passed and was a roaring success in the Rose Garden and surrounding neighborhoods. Elections will be this evening as I write this message and can only hope this will not be my last Presidents message. The board and I have worked diligently to improve the communications, the web site, the newsletter and more. While I wore the cap of President, without the tireless efforts of all the board, nothing would have happened. This year our website was improved dramatically. Were we used to be lucky to have a sole look at our website it now receives 2400 plus hits a month with almost a quarter of them surfing the area. The last newsletter was 16 pages and had many an interesting article. We had a Grand Easter Hunt and An Ice Cream social. We supported the Rose, White and Blue Parade for the second year as well the Friends of the Rose Garden. Many of the board and our members in fact are master gardeners for the same. Our Rose Garden looks grand and we not only are recognized again but have the

prestigious honor of being a Test Garden for the AARS Society. We continue to try and make our neighborhoods a better place to live. We continue to work with our members, the surrounding leaders and our elected officials. I know I am gone enough my wife has had to put a picture on the mantle to be sure when I come in the door it's me. That being said without input from all our members, we only travel in the direction we see fit. While I am sure most of us have the same wants and desires, we need to hear from you to try to enact change. We moved back to the Hoover Center for our meetings 6 times a year, this allows a more central space and has the room for larger attendance. While these meetings are listed as board meetings excepting November, they are meetings also for our members. In fact if I have my way (board needs to vote on it) we will have guest speakers at least 3 times per year. However if no one comes then there will be no need for such speakers. I hope you all have a save and wonderful Holiday season.



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## Staying Safe in a Thunderstorm

If you're caught outside during a thunderstorm, follow these tips to stay safe:



- Go into a large enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring, such as an office, house or school. Plumbing and wiring conduct the electricity if the building is struck. If no building is available, you can go into an enclosed metal vehicle such as a car or school bus. Buildings with exposed openings, such as beach shacks, bus sheds, baseball dugouts and porches, aren't safe. Neither are convertibles (even with the top up), and open-cab vehicles such as golf carts.
- If no shelter is nearby, crouch down on the balls of your feet and cover your ears. This will minimize – but not eliminate – your chances of being struck. Don't lie flat on the ground – if lightning strikes the earth, it can send ground currents that can be fatal even if you're 100 feet away. Crouching as described above minimizes your height and your body contact with the earth.

If you're inside:

- Stay away from plumbing fixtures and electrical appliances. Cordless phones and cellular phones are safe to use, but avoid corded phones and computers. Don't take a shower, bath or use a hot tub.
- If you're in a vehicle, roll the windows up and don't touch anything that could conduct electricity from outside the vehicle, such as the radio or ignition.

[www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream//lightning/lightning\\_safety.htm](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream//lightning/lightning_safety.htm)

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## Happenings and Events

### Second Harvest Food Bank

Rosicrucian Park is sponsoring a Second Harvest Food Bank.

They offer complimentary museum membership (includes museum admission, a 20% discount in the museum store through the holidays, and other benefits) for anyone who brings in one bag of groceries or more for Second Harvest Food Bank. For details, please see: <http://rosicruciane.gyptianmuseum.org/FoodDrive>

The Museum has already filled 10 barrels of food! And has decided to try for 20 barrels, by December 21. Any help you can offer will go a long way to help "feed the need" this holiday.

### Sign Code Update

City Council consideration of staff recommendations for the Sign Code Update has been recommended for deferral from December 1, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. to January 12, 2010.

With this deferral, the City Council would hold a public hearing to consider staff recommendations for the Sign Code Update on January 12, 2010 in the City Council Chambers at 200 East Santa Clara Street, San Jose, 95113. Additional information regarding the time of the public hearing will be provided as soon as available.

A color copy of the staff report and associated photographs is available at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/zoning/sign.asp>

Please address comments or questions to Carol Hamilton at [carol.hamilton@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:carol.hamilton@sanjoseca.gov) or contact me by phone at (408) 535-7837.

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### Call for newsletter content:

The RGN is published with volunteer effort and we need your help! The RGN accepts articles and general information specific to our neighborhood and our neighbors.

We publish quarterly and are always looking for content. If you would like to submit content to be considered for publication, let us know by sending email to [president@rgnpa.org](mailto:president@rgnpa.org).