

Greater Rockridge NCPC Minutes (12Y/13X)
Thursday, June 26, 2008
Rockridge Library 5366 College Avenue
General Public: 7:00-8:00PM

21 people attended the meeting including 2 OPD officers. OPD attendees included Sgt. B. Ortiz, the new PSO sergeant, and Officer P. Gerrans, the PSO for beat 12X. Officer Nick Miller, the PSO for beat 12Y, was unable to attend due to an injury received while making an arrest.

Crime Statistics

Vivek Bhatia gave a brief presentation on recent crime statistics he has analyzed, and asked that people sign up for www.Rockridgeresidents.org and post questions on the community forum there, as he has been inundated with individual emails all asking similar questions. He discussed data through 6/15/08, and explained that he's now distinguishing 3 types of crime and graphing 2:

- Violent crime (crimes against the person)
- Property crime (burglary, auto theft, etc.)
- Minor crime (shoplifting, drugs, etc. – not graphed)

A representative from the RDA expressed an interest in graphs of shoplifting statistics; Vivek will talk with the RDA about their requirements.

Crime numbers have improved strongly (*less crime!*) - since 5/1 reported crimes have been at or below the running median. Comparing 2008 over 2007, Oakland's crime is up more than area 1's; area 1's crime is up more than Rockridge's. A resident noted that violent crime is up and property crime down. Vivek agreed that violent crime is up but less in Rockridge than Oakland wide. Chris Jackson noted that crime in Oakland overall is down *slightly*, except for the murder rate. Property crime is being pushed into Rockridge.

The improvement concurs with a change in tactics by the OPD; the new tactics appear to be working. One citizen asked if we could get details about Capt. Toribio's tactics and when they changed, so we can judge the results; this led to a discussion about how much the police's tactics should be publicized.

Neighborhood Issues

Neighborhood issues were discussed before the OPD report, as the OPD officers who attended were late. (*Secretary note:* They had incorrect information about the meeting time. I've emailed them the correct time.)

Chris Jackson reported:

- The problem family at 59th and Canning has put their house up for sale after 40 years and are moving back to Dallas. This will really help the crime situation because the family grandmother is living in the nearby OHA facility, and there was traffic back and forth.
- The woman Officer Miller was arresting when injured turned out to be carrying crack cocaine and linked to a known drug house.
- Officer Miller has been doing an excellent job, he's ticketing traffic violations, arresting people, and really performing well for the beat. He's letting known problem persons know that he's on the job. Beat 12Y wants to keep him.

A resident asked if "all this" was because of multiple people buying houses, and too many people in the same house?? Karen Ivy said that there's no way of getting records on that, all we have are records of what crimes were committed, not where the perps live. The resident also said she had heard that poppy heroin is on sale in Oakland; another citizen replied that *everything* is on sale in Oakland and if anyone wants heroin he can show them the house.

A resident of 58th street asked how he can complain that the 911 call he made last Sat. night was never answered? Neighbor was trying to slug his girlfriend with a piece of sidewalk; the young man

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calmed down when approached by neighbors. But no one answered the phone at 911 at all. Anna Chang Lai handed out a *new* citizen complaint form. Anna said she's observed that a number of street lights were out (wires were cut) – citizens need to call that in to Public Works for repair.

A resident of Boyd Street said that there was a house on Boyd that was a problem, a generational house; the neighbors were told it would be impossible to catch them doing anything, and we need pictures, better evidence. Sgt. Ortiz thinks this may have been a transient spot, not in use all the time, that's much harder to find evidence on. They have to do undercover operations; you may never see the cops until they do the bust. The drug-seller probably doesn't live there; they want to find out where he does live, search there (maybe not even in Oakland). Chris Jackson asked if the house on Boyd is still an issue? Susan Montauk said she hasn't heard anything for awhile.

OPD Report

Sgt. Ortiz introduced himself as the new PSO sergeant for Area 1; Officer Gerrans was introduced at the May meeting. Sgt. Ortiz' background is in Narcotics, he's worked a lot in East Oakland; he likes the feeling that he can make a difference in Rockridge. He commented that some of his officers are very young and need experience, but are very enthusiastic.

He disagreed about the good effects of the sale of the house on Canning; the Canning house is a generational drug-dealing nexus; the "bad apple" hasn't gone to Texas, and his girlfriend lives in the OHA site. It's still a problem. Citizens should keep calling the drug hotline. Keep an eye on what's going on, tell the IA investigators the truth about police actions, since the drug people are complaining to Internal Affairs.

Sgt. Ortiz said that he wants to educate people on what to look for in drug dealing; he offered to bring in videos of what you will actually see, how to tell where they hide dope. Karen Ivy suggested we schedule that presentation for a future NCPC meeting.

Officer Gerrans reported that he had a part-time PSO doing security checks around Broadway Terrace, Broadway, and Thomas Ave., at odd hours (1 – 1:30 AM), also the patrol units were doing extra patrols in that area.

Sgt. Ortiz said, in answer to a question on auto theft, that he's only caught 4 car thieves in his whole career. The neighbors catch them and call it in; the police never catch them. Same with burglars. He recommended people watch recyclers – they're key to this, they are casing the neighborhood. Chris Jackson complained that we've been told, recyclers are a low priority. Sgt. Ortiz recommended that if you see someone scanning garbage cans, moving slowly, taking notes, call in and say someone is "casing the neighborhood". Sometimes they move the garbage cans to see if anyone notices. Tell dispatch "he's looking into people's windows." Chris Jackson noted that it's really hard to convince Rockridge people that recyclers are a problem.

Denise Boisvert asked about door-to-door solicitors, who come around in summer. They're supposed to have permits; we don't know what kind of permits. Sgt. Ortiz recommended calling solicitors in. Don't say "they're bothering me" - say you have an unknown person acting aggressive at your door. Sgt. Ortiz doesn't know the rules about door-to-door permits either, he doesn't think he could write a ticket for it. If you see people checking the side of the house, call 911. If possible let them see you dial the phone, and tell the dispatcher if they run away. Aggressive people at the door are a 911 call. Make sure valuable items (laptops, plasma TVs) are NOT visible from the street.

A citizen asked if there is a way to find out what dispatch reports were made? A resident remarked that Crime Analysis used to pull those numbers when she was the NSC, we could send in a request; but that dept. has been shrinking.

In response to a question about gangs in Oakland, Sgt. Ortiz commented that the Oakland underground is run by prison gangs, they are very well organized, they are also serious businessmen.

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We don't have Crips and Bloods, but there IS a gang presence in North Oakland. Most of the dealers live in North Oakland (beat 13), not where they do business; their neighbors don't know what they do. Shots in North Oakland often mean that drug rivals followed them home and shot at them.

Chris Jackson reported on the Alameda PD's approach to graffiti. They put up large "graffiti-free zone" signs (he displayed a sample), across the street from \$5,000 cameras; as soon as the sign is approached, the camera starts clicking off shots and dials the police within 6 seconds. Sgt. Ortiz noted that OPD could do that, but don't cry when they arrest 10-year-olds; if you're going to have that level of enforcement, you'll get some collateral damage of that sort.

A visitor from Berkeley asked for a few minutes to introduce the WriterCoach Connection, a volunteer program to coach school children in writing skills, to make them more employable and thus less likely to fall into crime. The program began in Berkeley and is now expanding into Oakland, in the Media Academy in Fruitvale. She handed out flyers and asked potential volunteers to contact them.

Merchants' Issues

A representative of Zachary's – showed a copy of the "helpful phone numbers" list; NCPC has the most often used numbers on the web site. Chris Jackson commented that the list was published several years ago and has never been updated.

The merchants are very happy that school is out; they had the first meeting for the proposed Kid Task Force. Officer Chimpky is involved; RDA is also working with local nonprofits, getting merchants involved in day-to-day activities, and getting the kids familiar with the merchants. She recommends the best initial response to kids in the store: Look the kid in the eye and say hello; this stops all sorts of behavior. The merchants have set up a phone tree for suspicious activity, which is giving them much quicker information.

A Claremont Middle School teacher is starting a parent patrol program, get kids where they're supposed to be after school. College Ave. is pretty good right now but we need to maintain it.

Zachary's 25th anniversary in 2008 is also National Night Out's 25th anniversary – Zachary's wants to have a big party, they're talking to neighbors about closing part of Oak Grove. They want to include other merchants as well, watch for future announcements.

Chris Jackson reported on the recent Neighborhood Watch summit – Oakland has a horrible problem with underage teen prostitution, including women acting as pimps.

Priority Review and Setting New Priorities

Chris Jackson reported that we now only get 3 priorities; we no longer get a separate traffic priority.

Vivek asked about safety around BART - BART took out all the bushes on one side, which made Vivek's family feel safer walking on Keith. Stay alert when walking home.

Christine Acker asked about homeless encampments on Golden Gate under the overpass. Chris Jackson said that CalTrans is working on something. There's some thought that the guy who recently kicked a door in and stole a laptop was homeless. Nila Kim of Jane Brunner's office didn't attend the meeting; Karen Ivy noted that, at a previous NCPC meeting, Nila had said she was going to report a homeless encampment to Operation Dignity. You have to call in homeless encampments, to direct the city's attention.

FOR NEXT MEETING: get a report from Jane Brunner's office on how many homeless encampments there are in the area and what is being done about them. Ask Nila Kim.

Beat 12Y

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1. 5700-5900 Telegraph – 5900 Block Canning
Monitor area for suspicious people/vehicles and juveniles loitering in relation to the adult bookstore and the Washhouse. Drug Activity reported as returning to 59th & Canning area (possibly same subjects who loiter on the 5900 block of Telegraph).

There has been at least one more murder in this area and a robber shot by an armed homeowner. The bookstore not only makes itself a target (it has been robbed a few times now) but due to the element of people it attracts to the area, it also endangers many folks who walk from Rockridge BART to Shattuck via Forest to Ayala then 57th & over.
2. Bicycle traffic throughout 12Y
Bicyclists and jaywalking pedestrians on College Ave. and area generally are getting really out of hand.

Beat 13X

1. Enforcement on homeless encampments, recyclers, and beggars/peddlers/solicitors. Potentially related to burglaries, auto break-ins and car thefts reported from general area around Lake Temescal and College.

Traffic Priority

Bicyclists running lights, riding on sidewalks, threatening pedestrians.

Next Meeting Thursday, July 24th, Rockridge Library will be the joint RCPC-NCPC Town Hall featuring special guest Area One Commander, Captain Anthony Toribio. The OPD Neighborhood Service Division's Personal Safety presentation will be followed by the RCPC Meeting.

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