

Greater Rockridge NCPC Meeting Agenda (12Y/13X)
Thursday, October 14, 2010
Rockridge Library Community Room, College and Manila, Oakland
General Public: 7:00-8:30PM

NCPC:

Frank Castro – Chair
Barbara Minton – Vice Chair
Denise Jorgensen – Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

OPD Officers: Officer Lee, beat 12Y, and Officer Tith, beat 13

Frank Castro opened the meeting at 7:11 PM and began introductions. The NCPC had 2 items of business:

First, we need to fill vacancy in the Vice-Chair position, Barbara Minton has been acting as Vice-Chair. Frank nominated Barbara Minton for Vice-Chair, Jean Raines seconded the nomination. A show of hands was unanimous in favor.

Second, at the next monthly meeting, attendees (if we get a quorum) will vote on 3 changes to the NCPC bylaws: we want to allow the board to appoint volunteers as acting officers for vacancies, pending a meeting with a quorum; and we want to lower the number of people in a quorum from 20 to 15, and lower the quorum for Steering Committee from 5 to 4. We will call for a vote on this at the November 4 meeting.

Crime Stats Report

Frank Castro is now presenting the crime statistics, with help from Steering Committee member Suzanne Sargentini. He uses screen shots of the [CrimeWatch maps](#) (from the Oakland police web site) to show patterns of criminal activity. Note that the CrimeWatch maps are public information, anyone can look at them.

Crimes against the person: In the first 3 weeks of September, beat 12Y had 1 assault and 9 robberies in a 3 block area, around Clifton & Cavour. The maps also show a collection of crimes right across from the DMV on lower Claremont Avenue. There are a lot of vehicle thefts on and around MacAuley Street; a lot of crime happens on and around Shafter. Frank pointed out that crimes tend to happen near main streets where it's easy to come and go: Claremont and Shafter are both “main drags.”

Of crimes in beat 12Y in September, 28 were property, 11 were personal, 1 was a parole violation (considered a quality of life crime).

Officer Lee reported on a couple of recent robberies in beat 12, there's a group of known suspects – watch for 3 male blacks, 1 with a shotgun, driving an older model Black Mercedes 4-door sedan. They target pedestrians alone in the dark in isolated areas.

Beat 13X had no crimes till the second week of September, then had one property crime. A resident reported a burglary in that area at that time, which is not on the map *although police were called*. Karen Ivy guessed that if the residents didn't file an online report, the incident might not have gotten into the database. Another resident remarked that she forgot to report a vehicle burglary for three weeks. Frank Castro emphasized that if you don't report a crime, it never happened.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

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Officer Tith commented that this is changing, the chief is reconsidering, and OPD may now do more report taking of burglaries and vehicle burglaries. However, this hasn't been formally announced yet.

Officer Tith also noted that OPD has a man in custody as of today for a series of residential burglaries in 13X. He's known to have been involved in other burglaries.

Officer Lee added that until today, for any incident without a *suspect on scene*, the citizen has to do the online report on CopLogic. The Chief has been reconsidering the policy for burglaries (house & vehicle) because citizens don't know the necessary elements to report. For vandalism, theft, other crimes with no suspect present, citizens still have to do the online report. A resident asked, how do you report a crime? If you see a crime committed, and the suspect is present: call 911. If you find you've been burglarized, the suspect isn't there, do an online report, *but that may be changing*. The NCPC will ask the new Area One commander for clarification.

All the crimes in 13X in September are property crimes, and they're all near major streets. A resident noted that there were a lot of break-ins around Florence Estates. Officer Lee said that when they catch burglars, the men say they look for easy houses: open or unlocked doors and windows, etc.

Question: When OPD takes a report, does the citizen get the report number right away?

Officer Lee: yes, the same day; but getting a copy of the report may take a couple of weeks. You need the report number to add supplemental information on the crime. If you do the report online, it's a different form of number, but to update it with new information, you have to use the *online* report number. To add supplemental information to a report that OPD took, you need that report number.

Changes in OPD and NSC assignments

We've lost Capt. Toribio to the Inspector General's office. The new Area One commander is Capt. Allison, we'll invite him to our November meeting, which will be the *first* Thursday, November 4, at The College Preparatory School.

The Neighborhood Services Div. has just been gutted; Claudia Albano explained at a recent PSA meeting Monday that we now have 8 Neighborhood Service Coordinators for all of Oakland (now 35 beats). The NSC now assigned to 12Y and 13X has a conflicting NCPC meeting on the same meeting date. Neighborhood Services suggests that NCPCs should band together to hold joint meetings, to increase the likelihood that an NSC could attend meetings. The department may be eliminated entirely. The NCPC officers will discuss merging with neighboring NCPCs.

Neighborhood Issues

5129 Manila – the pot house: There is still a lot of coming and going by people with backpacks, and out of town vehicles. The neighbors think it's a way station for pot from the north. The odor is very strong – they're growing a lot of pot in the back yard. About a month ago, someone left the house with a backpack, and was detained and handcuffed by OPD. The people in the house packed the car, drove away, and then returned. OPD came and looked the place over, talked to the residents, went in the house, then shook hands and walked away. The neighbors want to know what the police report says. Officer Lee says there isn't a police report if they didn't find a crime. If a crime was reported,

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only the officer who reported it can look at it. The residents obviously have some kind of documentation that got them off the hook. Beat 12Y's NSC, Karen Harris, has reported to us that this is a legal grow house.

The neighbor who attended asked if we can see the documentation that says this is a legal grow house. The neighbors think they're using the "grow house" as a cover for trafficking large amounts of pot through the house; they've seen people loading pot into a van with Oregon plates. If they're growing pot in excess of the legal amount, is there any recourse?? The house has *bushels* of pot growing in the yard. Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen checked the ordinance. Indoors they can have up to 72 plants with up to a 32 sq. ft. canopy (whatever that means). Outdoors they can have 20 plants at any stage, and 3# (3 pounds?) of dried buds. The California Supreme Court ruled that the state can't impose legal limits on the amount of pot medical pot users can grow or possess. But if this is a business, and the pot is not for personal use, what can we do? Can the City Attorney help? Our City Council member? The IRS? The DEA?

A resident asked what evidence is there that this is more than just a personal pot farm? The neighbors have been taking license numbers.

Frank Castro suggested that at this point we should regard this as a nuisance, and the neighbors should probably file suit. It affects quality of life in the neighborhood. The police aren't really involved here, neither is the city attorney. Go for the property owner. Go for fire code violations, zoning issues (this appears to be a business in a residential neighborhood). The residents will consider drafting a "nuisance" letter to the landlord. The NCPC is unwilling to use the letter we've jointly drafted on the subject without more clarity on the legal status.

Karen Ivy will ask Capt. Allison for a report of what happened when police went to the house, which was apparently in late August or early September. Frank doesn't want any letter to go out under the NCPC name until we know that.

Frank Castro reminded the attendees: the NCPC is your group, not ours. What would you like us to discuss? Is there a speaker you'd like to hear from? Also, if there is a neighborhood watch in your area, can the captain attend the NCPC? Neighborhood Watch is the basic level of resident self-protection. Can a block captain come in and say how he organized it?

Frank went on to say that he's concerned about recycling thieves, what can we do given that Waste Management won't prosecute them? Identity theft is an issue. Can someone volunteer to research buying lockable recycling cans? (No one spoke up at the meeting.) The owner has a way to get them open, and they open when the truck turns them upside down, but recyclers can't get into them.

A resident complained that he can't get a Neighborhood Watch started, how do you get the neighbors involved?

Another resident asked about neighborhood video surveillance. They have it in Montclair, on some individual streets. The Montclair NCPC is organizing blocks to hire Bay Alarm to do more patrolling.

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Priorities

If your issue becomes a priority, please attend the next meeting to give an update and to advise if it should remain a priority. Please note that the NCPC can no longer provide priorities to the Oakland Police Department; these are our priorities only.

A member of the group complaining about Nude Sushi attended the meeting but didn't raise any issues. Since a resident tried to attend the cancelled September meeting to complain about it, we'll leave it there for now.

Beat 12Y

1. Grow house at 5129 Manila
2. Employees of "Nude Sushi" (6228 Telegraph) making noise in parking lot behind restaurant between midnight and 3 AM.

Beat 13X

1. No priorities this month.

In 2010 all meetings will be the SECOND Thursday of the month except November.

*Next meeting will be **Thursday, November 4, 2010** at 7:00 PM at The College Preparatory School, 6100 Broadway, room P1. See you there and stay safe!*

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