

**Greater Rockridge
Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (12Y/13X) – Agenda
Thursday, June 10, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
General Public: 7:00-8:30 PM**

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC):

Michael Ubell – Chair
Jon Travis –Vice Chair
Eric Neville - Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer
Angela Moore – Neighborhood Services Coordinator
Officer Meeran Gichki – Community Resource Officer, beat 12Y
Officer Aaron Johnson - Community Resource Officer, beat 13X

Introductions

Mike Ubell opened the meeting at 7:05 PM. Officer Johnson was present, Officer Gichki was late due to another meeting. Angela Moore couldn't attend due to another meeting. Eric Neville and Jon Travis were absent. Eleven people attended.

Since the officer for beat 12 was late, Mike Ubell suggested we open discussion up, and asked if anyone was here from beat 13X. No one responded.

Oakland Police Dept. (OPD) Status Reports, beats 12Y and 13X

Beat 12Y

[Ed. Note: Officer Gichki joined the meeting after the speaker's presentation, about 10 minutes before the end of the meeting. You'll see his information and discussion of area crime toward the end of the minutes.]

Beat 13X

<i>Comparison of the crimes for the past 60 day period to that of the same period last year (2020)</i>		
	04/11/21 – 06/09/21	04/11/20 – 06/09/20
Battery	2	0
Domestic Violence	2	1
Auto Burglary	6	14
Res. & Comm. Burglary	4	5
Assault with Deadly Weapon	firearm: 0	firearm: 0
Robbery – Armed & SA	0	1
Grand Theft	1	3
Petty Theft	1	2
Stolen Vehicle	5	9

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Officer Johnson presented the statistics for beat 13X, covering the last 60 days this year compared to the same period last year. The only major changes in reported crimes between the 2 periods were auto burglaries, down to 6 in 2021 versus 14 in 2020, and stolen vehicles, down to 5 in 2021 versus 9 in 2020. Crime in 13X is down.

Robert Firehock: I have a question for Officer Johnson. Is there any speculation on why crime is down so much?

Officer Johnson: Everyone up in beat 13X is very vigilant, a lot of them have security systems. Crime in the city is way up, but it's not affecting Rockridge much. Districts 1, 3, 4, and 5 have the bulk of the crime, there's not so much in District 2. I'd love to say it's great police work. We're currently chasing a crew that's been arrested several times.

Karen Ivy: I have a theory why crime is so low in 13X. It's hard to get into and out of 13X easily: it has small narrow streets, and few freeway entrances.

Officer Johnson: That's very true. 13Z (Montclair) has noticeably more crime, and it has more freeway entrances.

Oakland Police Q and A

Mike Ubell asked if anyone had any questions for the police and got no response. He asked if Karen Ivy had the statistics for 12Y, and she responded that Officer Gichki hadn't sent them yet. Officer Johnson noted that Officer Gichki had to attend another meeting in person.

Karen Ivy offered to read her May statistics for beat 12Y, as Officer Gichki was unavoidably late. You can see them here: <https://rockridgencpc.com/documents/CrimeTrends/Crime%20Stats%20-%20May%202021.pdf> The summaries for each beat are on the last page after the details by beat.

Officer Johnson did some quick research for beat 12Y and found (for last 30 days) 1 armed robbery, 3 strongarm robberies, 3 burglaries, 4 auto burglaries. Mike Ubell had hoped for the comparison between years but Officer Johnson was doing this on the fly.

Neighborhood issues discussion, including new priorities

No one was present from 13X. Mike asked attendees to introduce themselves. Robert Firehock said he lives at 63rd and Hillgass, Tanu Kumar lives on Birch Court, formerly on College and Chabot. Bayle Emlein lives near Colby Park. Carol Wyatt attended from the CPAB for District 3, invited by Claire Lomax. Karen Ivy introduced herself. No one introduced any new issues.

Mike Ubell decided to pre-introduce our speaker, Creighton Davis. The Community Policing Advisory Board (CPAB) was established many years ago, supporting Community Resource Officers (as they're now called) and

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Neighborhood Service Coordinators. The board has representatives from various local organizations, especially Neighborhood Councils. Creighton Davis has been the CPAB chair for about a year and has some good ideas.

The absence of any issues suggests things here are pretty good. We know there are concerns about the homeless camps in Frog Park. Our Neighborhood Services Coordinator (who couldn't attend tonight) has raised the issue of the Frog Park camp with the city organization; they can't move people out of a public space unless they have a place to put them, and the city focuses on larger camps. Homelessness isn't a policing issue unless someone has committed a crime.

Carol Wyatt: We all have same pain points. OPD has been told not to encroach on homeless camps; we've talked to Joe deVries about this. A lot of the problem people just come here, they don't live here. They get run out, but they come back. Seniors in beat 7X have a petition going, because there's a meth lab in a local park. Problem situations are masked by the unhoused, who are not necessarily drug users, but the creeps hide among them. Law enforcement can't deal with the homeless, and criminals hide behind the homeless. These problems may not have peaked elsewhere but they are there in west Oakland.

In beat 7X we go household to household to talk to people, we can usually narrow a problem to 1-2 households. We've minimized some bad activities by doing this. Code enforcement has been a huge and underutilized effort. We had a house with constant police calls – we found out after years of effort that the owner lived elsewhere and thought the house was empty, it had drug dealers squatting in it. The owner evicted the squatters (after paying a fine), and OPD officers fully supported the effort. We have options if we choose to use them and if the city has the resources.

Officer Johnson: I worked last year in District 1, and we now have the same issue in District 2 on Howe St. The owner doesn't live in the problem house and is refusing to do anything. We've talked to the city attorney and everything, I understand that problem.

Creighton Davis, CPAB chair, on community policing – includes Q and A

Creighton Davis joined the meeting and introduced himself as chair of the Community Policing Advisory Board (CPAB). He grew up in the Bay Area, spent time as a teacher on the east coast, then went to law school and became an attorney. He now practices law in Bay Area. His experience as a teacher and an attorney working on criminal justice reform shapes how he thinks. He will explain his and the CPAB's plans for next few months, including budget recommendations and how he will support neighborhood organizations.

[*Ed. Note:* The detailed presentation which Mr. Davis used at the meeting is available on <http://rockridgencpc.com>, in the blog post dated June 22; there was more detail in it than I may have gotten.]

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Oakland community policing was set up in 1996 (City Council Resolution 79235), based on an active partnership between the community and OPD. The intent was to analyze problems, set priorities, develop strategies, and improve quality of life in local neighborhoods. The structure includes City and OPD staffs, including Neighborhood Service Coordinators, and Community Resource Officers (CROs) like Officer Johnson.

The basis for community policing was a 3-tier structure – grassroots or block level (Neighborhood Watch), reporting to Neighborhood Councils (NCs, also called Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils or NCPCs), reporting up to the CPAB. Neighborhood Councils are organized by police beat; each one has an assigned Community Resource Officer (CRO) and an assigned Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC). Some CROs have been pulled from beats due to recent budget cuts. The CPAB is meant to bring the block and neighborhood groups together to speak for community policing. He shared an [organization chart for the CPAB](#), put together by Berkeley law interns. Many issues don't require a badge and a gun, but a more nuanced approach. The CPAB monitors and oversees community policing, sets up processes for the effective organization and functioning of Neighborhood Councils, and reports regularly to the Mayor, the City Council, and the Chief of Police.

The CPAB is a nexus between the community and the city – a platform for community voices to be heard and represented. We're meant to support our neighborhoods. The CPAB has developed budget recommendations that came out of discussions with NCs. The CPAB can advocate and bring attention to neighborhood issues. To connect and serve more effectively requires building community trust with OPD.

NCs have been based on community policing in the past. That phrase has many meanings to many people, some positive, some negative; it can be a divisive term that can prevent engagement. How do we create relationships, and increase engagement? How do we broaden the scope beyond policing? We want to create block and neighborhood empowerment, community fellowship, and community led support and safety.

What is community policing vs. community-oriented policing – the latter is more narrowly focused on officers walking the beat, building relationships between officers and residents, and working in collaboration with the community. Community policing may also encompass neighbor to neighbor relationships. How do we increase neighbor engagement? Is community policing the right basis for our plans? We should take a much broader view and create a big tent to increase connections. The Adams Point neighborhood group recently had a “coffee on the corner” meeting, to introduce neighbors and encourage connections.

What philosophy should guide NCs? Neighborhoods have similar issues. We need to create a philosophy that allows collective action across neighborhood councils, to empower and increase engagement in neighborhoods.

All that is context for why we created the budget recommendations we're presenting to the Mayor and City Council.

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We voted on 5 recommendations, and 2 of them were adopted in the most recent budget. One was an increase in funding for community training and NC chair training, especially in high need areas that may lack institutional background. This was adopted and we hope it will remain in the budget. We also asked for an increase in NSC staffing, which Joe deVries has also asked for – the current budget has unfrozen 2 positions and added 1 supervisor. There are only 7-8 NSCs across 45 NCs, they each cover 6-7 councils.

Karen Ivy: That’s exactly why our NSC, Angela Moore, isn’t here tonight.

Creighton Davis: I’ve asked city council members – why aren’t we investing in the structure we have, or create a replacement of some kind, for neighborhood organizing and collaboration? We asked for an increase in funding for CPAB sponsored NCs. Greater Rockridge NCPC doesn’t spend all the money it gets now – maybe some new people will find ways to spend the money. Some NCs have asked for this. We aren’t sure we’ll get increased funding but it should be considered.

We’ve also asked for:

- Neighborhood stewards or ambassadors. Carol Wyatt is an example. She’s an influencer – people know her, she can tell people whom to call, she is a trusted neighbor. Someone asked her about a group of kids on a corner, and she was able to identify them as local, and prevent an unneeded call.
- Funding for block-level groups, for work on block-specific projects

We have 2 major goals – increase community engagement and empower neighborhoods. We encourage people to know their neighbors and work with them. Does anyone have any questions?

I’ll add one thing - conditions in Oakland neighborhoods are very very different. When people are out connecting with each other, working together on projects, there are clear safety benefits that result. Studies in Flint, MI show that connecting neighbors improves safety and improves mental health. De-escalating disputes between neighbors can also have an impact on gun violence.

Paula Hawthorn: Our issue was, we have money but it’s very hard to spend it. The city has a list of where we can spend, and it never included anywhere we wanted to spend. Has that list been reviewed?

Creighton Davis: This came up at the last CPAB meeting, there’s no latitude for neighborhoods on where they can spend. I’ve talked to Felicia Verdin about it, they are willing to reconsider the funding restrictions. I advocate for empowerment, the neighborhoods should lead.

Karen Ivy: I’ve been doing NCPC work since about 2008, and we used to be able to submit receipts for reimbursements. Can we go back to being reimbursed? I have to pay for items in my name (as NCPC Secretary) on the city’s credit card.

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Creighton Davis: I'm glad you said that, I'll take notes on this and bring it up. We want NCs to be able to invest easily. More restrictions make it harder.

Robert Firehock: I appreciate Carol Wyatt's experience with another area. How can we link neighborhoods together? How about the Adams Point group meeting tonight – how about a joint meeting with Adams Point? I know my block, not everyone does.

Creighton Davis: Bringing folks together means sharing ideas and solutions as well as fellowship. We've begun having neighborhood town halls. This is why I began with philosophy; we need a guiding principle to bring groups together. We need a broader approach that is not alienating and can get people on the same page. The CPAB is uniquely positioned – it has a bird's eye view of Oakland and all the NCs and can bring people together.

Carol Wyatt: I was talking to Jennie Zilliac at beat 22X today, we can cross the city to connect. We've found that some sensitive issues are best discussed with someone outside the neighborhood, to try to find common ground, especially with violent crime. Our area is being harassed by people who don't even live here.

Creighton Davis: I have to drop off and go back to the Adams Point meeting, but I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you today.

Mike Ubell: I heard someone suggest NC buddies, could we set up partnerships between beats? We could share projects and get to know people. Crime is low here, we could join with other councils?

Creighton Davis: The Sister Beats and Streets idea was set up by Jennie Zilliac.

Karen Ivy: Can Officer Gichki present his crime statistics for beat 12Y? He's here now.

	03/12/19 – 06/10/19	03/12/20 – 06/10/20	03/12/21 – 06/10/21
Battery	11	10	05
Homicide	00	00	00
Auto Burglary	127	30	18
Res. & Comm. Burglary	13	18	16
Assault with Deadly Weapon	01	02	03
Robbery – Armed & SA	08	05	05
Grand Theft	18	18	05
Petty Theft	29	26	12
Stolen Vehicle	16	27	20
Shootings with evid 246	01	00	00
Carjackings	00	00	00

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Officer Gichki: I've compiled the stats for the last 90 days and also for 2020 and 2019 for the same time period, because last year was so unusual. [Ed. Note: the 2021 numbers are on the right.] Property crime is increased but is still low, violent crime has increased. The numbers in this area are down.

I want to talk about spiking crime. Assault with deadly weapons is up: we've had 3 incidents in the past 90 days, versus 2 in 2020, and only 1 in 2019. There were no homicides in 12Y in this period in the last 3 years. Auto burglary is surprisingly far down. In 2019 they all happened on College; maybe the drop is because people aren't around as much. Stolen vehicles are up.

Rockridge doesn't exist in a vacuum, we're in District 2, and the CROs get pulled into things happening in District 2. In the past 90 days there were 2 homicides in district 2, versus zero last year. There were 31 shootings in the past 90 days, including shooting at persons, vehicles, or houses; there were 13 in the same period last year. We had 9 carjackings in the last 90 days, all involving firearms; in 2020 only 2, in 2019 only 3. OPD has put out a flag on carjackings. Be aware of surroundings, don't stay too long in the car when parking. The crooks will follow you, hit your car, and attack when you stop to exchange info. OPD has some groups in custody and is still working on others. If you have any questions, you have my email, let me know. [Ed. Note: the email is MGichki@oaklandca.gov.)]

Karen Ivy: Do we want to keep the homeless camp at 63rd and College as a priority?

Officer Gichki: The group using homeless@oaklandca.gov is now working on clearing up camps, and what they work on depends on how many complaints they get. Email them if you want to see an encampment cleared up.

Mike Ubell: Let's drop the priority for now. We haven't seen Melvin for some time, he's in housing due to COVID. Keep an eye out, he may be back when the money runs out. Thanks for coming, the next meeting is in August. Carol?

Carol Wyatt: I wanted to share a link for folks to listen to, at your leisure. One of our neighbors found it, a person who fully supports equitable funding for OPD and also supports more community engaged policing so that our officers don't get called to *everything*. There's a link on YouTube called "24 Hours in Oakland." Listen for an hour and see what really goes on in Oakland for the police. This is essentially OPD radio calls over a 24-hour period condensed to 1 hour, and it identifies locations where things happen. This will let folks know what OPD faces over a 24-hour period and gives more perspective on how much they really have to do. It's eye-opening. Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/RVNCi2DLuLQ> Watch this to see what OPD is doing, it will take an hour on YouTube.

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Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priorities for June 2021

Beat 12Y:

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* No current priority.

Beat 13X:

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* No current priority.

*Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council meetings
are normally the SECOND Thursday of even-numbered months.
Next meeting is a Joint Town Hall with RCPC, **Thursday, August 19, 2021** at 7:00 PM
Location TBA pending the course of the pandemic*

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