

Santa Cruz Neighbors General Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2007
7:00-9:00pm
Community Room, Santa Cruz PD

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Mike Bethke opened meeting and introduced guests speakers Julie Hendee, Graffiti Abatement and Keith Holtaway, Exec Dir of Downtown Association. Officials attending were Lynn Robinson, City Council; Mark Dettle, Public Works; Police Dept—Chief Howard Skerry, Officers Mark Eveleth, Colleen McMahon, Butch Baker, Jim Howes. SC Neighbors—Debbie Elston, Mary Miller, JD Sotelo and approx 40+ attendees.

2. **Presentations:**

- **Julie Hendee**—Gave a presentation on keeping Santa Cruz Graffiti Free. She stated that there are about 200 volunteers in the City and she is always looking for more help. She stated that rapid removal is best deterrent. For gang graffiti response please call SC PD 471-1131. She brought graffiti kits to hand out to new volunteers. She acknowledged Paul Martin as the ‘Volunteer of the Year’ award recipient for the 3rd time in a row! Abatement is accomplished by calls to the 24-hour Hotline for reporting graffiti at 420-5303. For additional info please go to their website at <http://www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us/index.html> , go to [Contact by Department](#) and click on [Graffiti Abatement](#) you can receive a free brochure at this site. She then answered questions from the audience.

- **Keith Holtaway**—Is the Executive Director of the Downtown Association of Santa Cruz. Keith reported on the environment of Pacific Avenue regarding the aggressive panhandling and anti-social/criminal behavior that has been occurring in the area. And the efforts by the DTA to make it viable and inviting to visitors. He gave a background on the DTA and it’s Mission Statement—*“To provide effective leadership in order to create, promote and sustain downtown as a unique and economically viable business, entertainment, social and cultural center.”*

He stated that the DTA being a non-profit 501c6 it may take a stand on issues that affect its Mission but may not endorse political candidates. He outlined the geographical boundary of the DTA. There are 560 businesses that are in the DTA and they belong to an assessment district. UCSC students are used and there is a DTA crew of ‘hosts’. They are not PD Community Service Officers.

Keith asks citizens if they could do just **two** things—

1. Come downtown, be a part of Pacific Avenue and take it back. More people using Pacific Ave will make a difference and create a positive atmosphere and act as a deterrent.
2. He asked that citizens not handout money to the “homeless”. He states that panhandling is a “Commercial Endeavor”, it’s a business! He wants visitors to stop perpetuating that business. If they feel the must give money to help there are plenty of Agencies in Santa Cruz that could use the money in a much more productive manner. For more info please go there excellent web site at www.downtownsantacruz.com . There was an extensive q & a with a good discussion on the ‘Homeless’, youth activity, social services in Santa Cruz, and all those factors that make downtown an excellent candidate for the existing social problems. There were, of course, individual interpretations to the solutions. And more discussion.

3. **Communications:**

- **Neighborhood Reports**—
- **Lower west side** – Had some graffiti issues and questions regarding an increase in gang activity.

- **Beach Hill** – Trees over public sidewalks and tree roots lifting sidewalks. Mark Dettle, City Director of Public Works explained that the responsibility for maintaining the safety of the sidewalks rests with the homeowner. The homeowner needs to make repairs or replace sections of sidewalks that become unsafe. Skateboarders are “railing” along the tops of the new stucco wall at 2nd & Main. Mark Dettle will look into metal “straps” to prevent this.
- **Deborah Elston-City Wide Complaint Form:** In an effort to simplify the process of reporting information and obtaining assistance the new City Wide Complaint Form will be available online.
- **South of Laurel Partnering** – New businesses have opened on Front St in a building called THE MILL. Please read the story in the Sentinel. We hope neighbors will welcome them and let them know you’re glad they are open. There are a long list of businesses at the bottom of the article.

1: [Lively scene at The Mill: Arts, health, community - By JONDI GUMZ - Sentinel staff writer - Februar](http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/archive/2007/February/25/biz/stories/01biz.htm)
 01biz.htm, Search in: 2007 Archives
 File size: 9K, Create Date: Feb-25-2007 07:58
<http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/archive/2007/February/25/biz/stories/01biz.htm>

- PD ride-a-long. Lynn Robinson went on her 3rd PD ride along. She said it is a huge eye opener and that Santa Cruz is a different city at night. She encouraged everyone to sign up for a ride along.
4. **Future Meetings:** Closing comments by Deborah Elston:
- **March 3 Emergency Preparedness Training**
 - **April Santa Cruz Neighbors meeting will feature “Are you Prepared?”**
 - **REMINDER: Mark Your Calendars Now:
National Night Out—Tuesday, August 7, 2007, Harvey West Park**