



NEWS

University Heights Community Association
Dec. 2021/Jan. 2022



Birney School Cleanup | Page 4



Lights in the Heights 2021 | Page 4

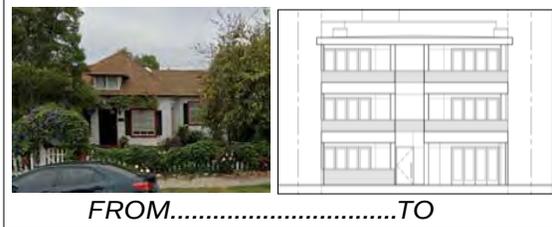


Park Blvd. Development | Page 10

Is This the Future of University Heights?

This charming Victorian home at 4350 Cleveland is 2,000 square feet with 3 bedrooms and 2 baths and built in 1905, according to the 2015 Uptown Historic Resources Survey Report. According to Zillow, the sale of the property is pending as of 10/2/21 at \$1,695,000.

As part of the sale, the previous owner obtained permits to build a 12 micro-unit complex with three stories, a roof top common area, and NO PARKING! There will be two 410-square-foot studio units, six 598-square-foot 1 bedroom units, and four 800-square-foot 2 bedroom units. Just one of the units will be designated affordable.



FROM.....TO

This infill project is part of the City's effort to increase the supply of housing stock, thereby theoretically reducing the cost of housing. This market-based approach has yet to reduce the cost of housing in other rapidly growing areas such as North Park, Downtown, and Hillcrest.

The project at 4350 Cleveland Avenue was approved in an area of Cleveland Avenue zoned for half the number of units because it is a micro unit project and is located within a "Transit Priority Area" or TPA. A TPA is defined as any area located within one half mile of a major transit stop, which includes almost all of Uptown as well as University Heights. Developers may apply to build micro unit projects in a Transit Priority Area with a 100% Density Bonus and no parking.

Since 4350 Cleveland is within one half mile of a major transit stop, and the 12 units average about 600 square feet each, the original owner applied for a permit to build a structure with twice the number of units as would have normally been possible. The owner then put the property up for sale along with the permits.

Projects like this can be built almost anywhere in University Heights except for those areas zoned for single family homes. If the project meets zoning and other municipal code requirements, it is approved by City staff, without public review. Such projects are considered "ministerial" and are therefore not subject to review by Uptown Planners or North Park Planning Committee.

However, if the project is over 45 years old and considered potentially historic, the project is subject to further review and requirements. Unfortunately, the property at 4350 Cleveland Avenue had been modified by previous owners to the point it was no longer considered historic.

The best way to protect our community against more unattractive, unaffordable infill projects is to monitor and weigh in on building permits for potentially historic properties. For more information, please see Kristin Harm's article on being a Preservation Steward on page 4, and the detailed instructions at www.uhhs-uhcdc.org/blog/be-a-preservation-steward

- Bill Ellig; Former member of Uptown Planners; Member of CCUH

Property Owners Along Canyon Seek Answers

On November 8, 29 UH residents attended a grassroots-organized meeting with San Diego Police Western Division Community Relations Officer David Surwilo, Council District 3 Community Representative Marcela Miranda-Caballero, and Assistant City Attorney John Hemmerling.

Local residents Erika Hiramatsu and Michael Cheswick organized the meeting, which was hosted at Grains Cafe on Adams Avenue, to bring up issues relating to the recent fire in the canyon behind Old Trolley Barn Park and crimes being committed by area homeless persons. The recent discussion at the UHCA November 2 meeting about police procedures addressing homeless persons also sparked additional questions.

The recent fire was started by a homeless camp, according to Hemmerling, and according to Officer Surwilo, "the investigation showed that it was not arson, but an accident. Unfortunately,

with how dry and overgrown the vegetation is there, it didn't take much for the fire to take hold and spread quickly."



Start of the Sept. 4 canyon fire from Panorama Drive - Photograph by SDFD via Twitter

Officer Surwilo explained how the police have dealt previously with reported encampments in the canyon areas. When an encampment was reported, officers attempted to make contact, offer services, and inform trespassers that the camp was illegal and would be removed in 72 hours. "Even if we didn't make contact but posted the 72 hour notice, if they moved even 50 feet away, that started the process over again," Surwilo informed the group.

CANYON continued on page 3

PROGRESS UPDATE: UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS PRIORITIES

As reported in the June issue of the UHCA News, the Community Coalition of University Heights submitted over a dozen University Heights priorities to San Diego City Council President Pro Tem Stephen Whitburn for inclusion in the FY 21-22 District 3 budget.

The good news is that a few high-priority items were included in the FY 21-22 budget, including homelessness and housing, community-oriented policing, street maintenance, and code compliance.

However, most of the items requested by the CCUH were either not included in the FY 21-22 budget or we are still waiting for a response from Mr. Whitburn's office. These include, among other issues, improvement and expansion of the UH Branch Library, traffic calming measures, parking improvements, sidewalk repairs, improvements at Trolley Barn Park and Birney Joint Use Field, preventive maintenance of Canary Island Palms, and maintenance of the Vermont Street Bridge.

A complete summary of our initial request for each priority, which items were addressed in the FY 21-22 District 3 budget, and which are still outstanding is available on the CCUH blog page: www.cc-uh.org/blog/update-on-progress-with-uh-priorities.

Council President Pro Tem Whitburn will be asked to address these outstanding items at the December UHCA meeting.

BUDGET PRIORITIES continued on page 14

Redistricting City Council - Almost Done

This year's redistricting process has been very active, with community groups and individual citizens weighing in on various ways to divide the city into nine roughly equal council districts.

Most of the controversy and action has been happening along the coast and in northern San Diego County, where communities that were split in previous redistricting activities were seeking to correct past mistakes, while residents of other districts were vying to prevent the same fate from happening to their communities. The Commission has also been considering the need to not only keep "communities of interest" together and respect natural boundaries, but also to look at the racial and ethnic demographics to ensure that the entire process was fair.

Early on, University Heights groups banded together under the Community Coalition of University Heights to make sure our community was represented in a single Council District. CCUH was successful in that effort, and as of publication,

"University Heights will be entirely within Council District 3."

However, that district will be expanded to include not only Downtown, but Mission Valley, as well as the historic neighborhoods Old Town, Mission Hills, REDISTRICTING continued on page 7

NEXT UHCA MEETING

DEC. 2
6:45 PM



STATE ASSEMBLY REP CHRIS WARD
CITY COUNCIL REP STEPHEN WHITBURN
UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING

LOOKING AHEAD

FEB. 3
6:45 PM

IN PERSON AT BIRNEY AUDITORIUM*

*CHECK OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA IF ANY CHANGES ARE MADE

FEATURED SPEAKER: STEPHEN RUSSELL
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE SAN DIEGO HOUSING FEDERATION
UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING

Birney GIVING TREE



UHCA is continuing our tradition of sponsoring the Birney Giving Tree to help support families in need this upcoming holiday season.

Collection boxes have been placed around UH businesses where you can drop off gift cards by **December 2:**

- Blonde & Co, 2125 Adams Ave
Tu-F 10-8, Sa 10-5; by appointment
- Meraki Cafe, 1735 Adams Ave
M-F 7-5, Sa-Su 7:30-5
- Cecilia's Fine Jewelry, 4669 Park Blvd
M-F 10-5, Sa 10-3
- Eden University Heights, 4636 Park Blvd
Th-M 11-5
- Fibre the Venue and Salon, 4521 Park Blvd
Tu-Su 10-5
- Clos Wine Shop, 4521 Park Blvd
M 1-7, Tu-Sa 12-8, Su 12-6
- Mystic Mocha, 2105 Mission Ave
Daily 7-2
- University Heights Library, 4193 Park Blvd
M-Tu 11:30-8, W-Sa 9:30-6
- bfd, 4075 Park Blvd #101
Daily 10-6

After December 3, Birney staff will distribute the gift cards to student families based on need.

Get your cards ready, and enjoy the special warm feeling of helping our neighbors! A special thank you to the volunteers & business partners for their help this year.

