



The OHHA Echo

Your Neighborhood OHHA Newsletter

Vol. 33, No 1, March 2008

A message from OHHA

**Streets Meeting
Wed., April 2, 7:00 PM**

Please gather with your neighbors for a meeting regarding the OHHA streets at the California State University. The meeting will be held in room MI 2032, Meiklejohn Hall, located at the Harder Road and the West Loop intersection on the CSUEB campus. After much work a final proposal will be presented by Bob Carlson and city representatives. This is a genuine and real opportunity to replace our streets with new ones that retain the character of our neighborhood. So, please do not forget:

Wed., April 2, 7:00 PM.

Map of the campus is enclosed

You can park in lots D or K

2007 Board Members:

- Bob Carlson, President,
- Jahmes Chapman,
- Jerry Kruse,
- Laura Swan,
- Valerie Caveglia,
- Pat Mayon,
- Rob Simpson

Website:

<http://www.oldhighlands.org/>

Echo Editors: Bill Quirk and Bijan Mashaw

The articles in this news letter reflect the views of the OHHA Board.

Streets Negotiations

*By Board President
Bob Carlson*

One of the goals for the OHHA Board this year was to reopen discussions with the City of Hayward about our streets. Obviously each OHHA member is affected differently by this issue and this is part of the difficulty in reaching a unified proposal on what to do about the streets in our community. For example, a significant number of properties (approximately 140) have deferred street improvement agreements recorded against them requiring certain street improvements to be constructed by the owner. The fact is that our streets are in extremely poor condition. The standard rating system used by most public agencies to assess the condition of the streets is called the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). The PCI rating for most of our streets is 20 or less. Perfect streets are rated 100 and those needing to be rebuilt are at 50 or less. A review two years ago by an independent engineering firm reached a similar conclusion and recommended extensive street repairs.

The OHHA Board fully understands that many in our community regard the streets as solely a City problem and are reluctant to take any initiative as a community. The Board and I both fundamentally agree with this position, but the reality is that the City does not have sufficient street maintenance or

capital improvement funding to support the renovation and reconstruction of the streets in OHHA.

In recent years the City has been able to budget less than \$900,000 annually to reconstruct streets citywide (not repair – reconstruct). A very general estimate from City Staff indicates an approximate cost for the necessary street renovation and reconstruction in OHHA at \$11 million. You can see that the current City budget available for this purpose would be unable to accomplish the needed work, even over the long term. Unless OHHA participates in the rebuilding of the streets, the City will not have the resources available from their own funds to get the job done.

Therefore any rebuilding of the streets in OHHA will require participation by the community. An avenue that is being explored for this participation is the establishment of an assessment district. Before any such district is established the community would have to vote and approve the district. The OHHA Board would not, on its own, be able to commit the community to the street improvement project. What the Board has focused on is working with the City to maximize their participation and to arrive at a proposal for consideration by the City and the community.

We now have that proposal. *It is up to the neighborhood, what we do next.*

**Cost of fixing Streets
About
\$1,800/home/year**

The OHHA board heard from City staff that the cost of bringing the OHHA streets up to City standards would be about \$11 million. If the cost were split equally between each lot, this would come out to about \$1,800/lot each year for 30 years.

It is up to the neighborhood whether it wants to go ahead with this. The City is content at this time to leave the situation as it.

The City only spends about \$0.9 million per year on rebuilding all the streets in Hayward, so the City does not have the funds to upgrade OHHA streets.

The City Staff gave their estimates with the caveat that an engineering study costing perhaps \$1 million would have to be done to get exact numbers. The numbers they shared with the board are rough estimates, but they take into account work that was done previously and the recent rise in construction costs.

The estimate also includes increases due to inflation during the two years that would elapse before the project started. President Bob Carlson pointed out that construction costs had gone down rather than up, recently, due to the recession and increases in capacity for concrete and steel.

The cost to redo the streets would be roughly \$11 million. If the cost were split equally among the approximately 350 residential lots combined in north and south OHHA, the City's estimate of cost per lot, including interest on a bond, would be about \$1800 per lot per year for 30 years.

City staff has not done a precise estimate of the cost of undergrounding utilities. Judging from other projects, city staff thought that the cost would be in the

neighborhood of another \$400 per year for a total of roughly \$2,200/year. Given how much this would increase property values, staff suggested that the neighborhood give this careful consideration.

City staff stated that the WHOLE neighborhood needs to be done at the same time in order to make the project cost effective and to find financing.

In order for the project to be long lasting, it was the City's staff opinion that the roadbeds in the neighborhood need to be reconstructed. Rolled curbs would be added for drainage control. The estimate for the project included \$10 million for construction and a bond reserve of \$1 million for a total of \$11 million as a conservative estimate. The roads would be maintained as City streets forever after the improvements were made. Maintenance would include street cleaning and occasional slurry seal.

The City staff is basing its per lot estimate on a City contribution of 2 million dollars to the project. However, this money is only budgeted only for this current budget year, and the City Council would have to approve the expenditure. It is not clear if the money could be budgeted in the next fiscal year that starts June 31, 2008, so time is of the essence.

At what point can the project get a vote to go ahead? It will be the Board's mission to go get a straw vote from the neighborhood. If the Board finds that most residents want to go forward with street improvements, the City will get the actual costs with an engineering study, and then an assessment vote will take place. There would be one vote per lot, and approval to go ahead would take a 50% plus 1 majority. The projected start date would be in 2010.

**Happiness is Healthy,
Be happy**



By Bijan and Dela Mashaw

It is a blessing to live in the Highland Area. We have tons of fresh air, valued homes, and miles of trails in our backyard. A short walk or jugging on these beautiful trails can change your mood, frame of mind and make you happy. Study has shown that happiness is healthy. A new British study has found that the more upbeat your mood, the lower the levels of unhealthy stress hormone. In the study, saliva tests showed that study participants, who were happy had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol than those who were unhappy. Cortisol contributes to high blood pressure, abdominal obesity and less than optimal immune function.

We all know that stress affects our physical and our emotional well-being. It can create positive or negative feeling for us such as excitement, anger, and depression. These feelings can lead us to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Here are some good tips:

- ◆ don't dwell on the negative,
- ◆ use relaxation techniques, to can reduce muscle tension, heart rate, and blood pressure.
- ◆ get exercise, a short walk, swimming, cycling or jogging.
- ◆ develop mutually supportive friendships, and
- ◆ be kind and gentle with yourself and of course to others.



What Is OHHA?

The Old Highlands is the original, historic Hayward Hills residential area. Generally, people choose to buy a house here because they are attracted to living in a wooded, natural looking environment in the midst of the large metropolitan area -- at the heart of the Bay Area. **The Old Highlands Homeowner's Association** is a voluntary, non-profit organization consisting of homeowners on the following streets: Call, Chronicle, Cotati, Grandview, Hillcrest, Home, New Dobbel, Parkside, and Tribune.

As a resident homeowner, you're a member of this Association.

Why pay dues?

Association dues (\$20 per year) are voluntary and are used for costs associated with improving the quality of our neighborhood. Although many services and supplies are donated by members, the association must pay for some items like stamps, photocopying, rental fees for meeting halls, and supplies for neighborhood events. Occasionally, when dealing with City Hall, we may incur costs for presentation materials and, legal services. Your dues are a small investment toward protecting and enhancing your neighborhood.

Without your dues and active participation we cannot achieve our goals.

Many thanks, to those who have already paid their 2007 dues to support our common goal of maintaining a strong, active neighborhood association.

Those who have paid dues so far are: Carolyn Boursse, Fred Brechtel, Valerie Caveglia, Jah'mas Chapman, Charles Dodge, Charlotte Eutsey, Rodney & Cheryl Glass, Adolf & Gisela Gressel, Mike Hoady, Joanne Ilkin, Jerry Kruse, Herman Lewis & Lisa Parry, Louis Maiwald, Don & Mary Matoza, Patricia, Mayon, Becky Ridgeway, Bruce Barrett & Joy Rowan, Dwight & Charlotte Staten, Lee & Olga Valdez, Laura Swan & Ron Lewis, Bill & Laurel Quirk.

2008 OHHA Dues

Please make your check payable to OHHA, fill out this Page, and mail to
OHHA
2659 Home Ave,
Hayward, CA 94542

Thank you!

- Yes! I support the efforts to preserve and enhance my neighborhood . Enclosed is my membership contribution, payable to OHHA for \$20

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Sun Gallery Plea for Community Donations **By Valerie Caveglia and Bill Quirk**

The Sun Gallery is an art institution that has been serving Hayward and surrounding East Bay communities for the last 40 years. The Sun Gallery is a non-profit institution, and unlike many traditional art galleries that are by nature self-serving, the Sun Gallery truly reaches out and serves the larger community very well. It crosses racial, gender and age barriers, and is there to teach, serve, and inspire many.

The gallery is an organization that supports local and national art, with a focus on art education for children. This is done with hands-on programs for children and their families, field trips for schools, art projects at a local women's shelter, summer art programs, and art classes for children that are home schooled. Therapy by Association is a planned program for teens where up to 100 teens get together at the Sun Gallery for art workshops, poetry reading and music once a month. The Gallery is especially well known for its Day of the Dead celebration.

There are some large grants available to nonprofits from various foundations. These grants would be of major benefit to the gallery's operations; *however*, to be eligible, the yearly operating budget has to be at least \$100,000. Based on the amount of money in the Sun's annual budget, **it does not qualify for any of these!! The Gallery is caught in an endless cycle of struggling to meet its financial obligations, and yes, even to exist.** The smaller grants that The Gallery depends on have been cut this year, and there is no more money coming in to cover expenses.

Sun Gallery is now totally dependent on the community's support to save this very unique art institution. ***The Gallery needs your help NOW through large or small donations! We do not have the resources to remain open until our next funding cycle, which starts July 1, 2008. If the Gallery does not raise at least \$10, 000 by the end of March, we must close our doors.***

The Board of Directors has voted to take drastic measures to save the Gallery, but it can't be done without the help of the community. The Board has recently voted to close the Gallery on Saturdays, so unfortunately, it remains open only 2 days a week. The talented Director, Veronica Dondero, must be laid off at the end of March, because there is no money to pay her salary, and she is currently working on a promise to pay. Office staffing has been reduced to one day a week. We are committed to keeping the Gallery open for the school tours of the current exhibits of children's art from Sakura of America and the Children's Book Illustrator show until April 25. However, we have bills to pay and an empty checking account.

Your donations, large or small, are desperately needed and fully tax deductible. The Gallery needs business sponsors. Recognition will be given on future mailings and the Gallery's website. Please mail your contribution directly to the Gallery: 1015 E St., Hayward, 94541