

April 2005

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RIVIERA ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING

Sunday Afternoon, May 1st, 2005 5 p.m.
Marymount School Auditorium
2130 Mission Ridge Road

WE ARE PLEASED TO HAVE AS OUR GUEST SPEAKER:

Barbara Lowenthal

Barbara Lowenthal is the President of the Pearl Chase Society. She will talk about the organization's effort to rehabilitate the Franceschi House and answer questions from the audience.

Friends and neighbors are welcome. Refreshments served after the program.

A Letter from the President:

Dear Neighbors:

This year the Riviera Association celebrates its 75th Anniversary. We are planning two events for all Riviera residents. On Sunday June 5th there will be a family barbeque at Skofield Park. To promote fire season awareness, and fun for the kids, the Fire department will be on hand with fire engines and ladder trucks. We even have Smokey the Bear joining us for lunch! Mark you calendars!

Some of you attended our 50th Anniversary party held at the El Encanto on October 19, 1980. We'll, we are going back to the El Encanto for the 75th! The new owners, Orient Express, have promised us an unforgettable evening. We are tentatively planning for September, 2005. More information and an invitation to follow.

On a more serious note, my first term as President hasn't been without controversy. The city proposed narrowing Alvarado Place by 10 feet to provide for a new sidewalk that would border the El Encanto Hotel on Alvarado Place and Lasuen Rd. I haven't spoken with one person that lives on the hill that thinks this is a good idea. Narrowing a major fire retreat corridor just doesn't make any sense. The Riviera Association has appealed the sidewalk project. See the article below and drawings on the back page. We will like need your support on this issue before City Planning and the City Council.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of service.

Sincerely,

Paul Cashman, President

UPDATE ON CURRENT RIVIERA ISSUES

!!!ACTION ALERT!!!!

CITY MOVING TO NARROW ALVARADO PLACE!

At the December 9, 2004 Planning Commission hearing of the El Encanto Hotel Master Plan, the association board expressed support of the project, however, disagreed with two "Conditions of Approval" relating to traffic issues:

1. Request by Transportation staff to narrow Alvarado Place by 10 feet! This is to provide a sidewalk (6 feet) and a planting bed (4 feet) along the property, from the Lasuen bus stop to the Mission Ridge Road intersection.

The association believes narrowing this road to 20 feet would seriously impact the safety of residents in case of an emergency. Even the city fire department disagrees with this proposal.

2. The request by the Commission to extend the existing Lasuen sidewalk to connect with the proposed Alvarado Place sidewalk. This would necessitate redirection of traffic on the Moreno-Lasuen Y-intersection to one-way traffic lanes. There has been no credible engineering evaluation or public discussion regarding this request.

Both requests have been accepted by the Planning Commission and are now part of the "Conditions of Approval" of the project.

Since the filing of the appeal on December 20, 2004 three meetings have been held with city staff to reach a compromise on these issues. On April 21, 2005 the Planning Commission will hear two proposals.

Transportation staff proposal: a 5 to 6 feet wide sidewalk with a 2 inch high curb instead of the original proposal.

Riviera Association proposal: no new sidewalk, extend the existing sidewalk along Riviera Park property and provide a cross walk across Lasuen to the bus stop. In addition, we request a traffic evaluation and engineering study for the Alvarado Place-Lasuen-Moreno intersection, with public discussion and input from neighbors and residents.

The Board of Directors believes that narrowing a road in a designated "High Fire Hazard Area" is not in the best interest of the Riviera neighborhood. In case of an emergency, only four roads (Las Alturas, Arbolado, San Carlos and Alvarado Place) connect to Alameda Padre Serra, allowing residents to exit from the upper Riviera as well as the areas beyond the Mission Ridge.

If our proposal and request are rejected, the appeal will be heard by City Council on May 10, 2005, at 6pm at City Hall.

THE ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOUR HELP! If you are concerned about these issues, please attend the meetings. A council chamber filled to capacity with residents is most effective and so are your letters and email.

On Sunday, April 17, 2005, from 2-4pm, Riviera Association members will be at the Lasuen/ Alvarado Place bus stop to show and explain the appeal and the two proposals scheduled for the April 21, 2005 Planning Commission hearing. Stop by and talk with us!

Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance

The revision of the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and Single Family Design Guidelines has now been in progress for over one year. This process was begun by our city to address current issues and trends in single-family neighborhoods and to make the design review process less arbitrary. Some of the concerns of the community that the Steering Committee has tried to address are “mansionization”, neighborhood compatibility, noticing, views, and privacy. When completed, the revised guidelines will clarify new home construction and remodeling for applicants and their neighbors.

There remains one issue paper and discussion to be completed. The city staff will then make available a first draft to the Steering Committee and the public for comment. This will be followed by a second draft. Once completed, the guidelines will undergo review by the Architectural Board of Review, the Historic Landmarks Commission, the Planning Commission, and ultimately the City Council.

Check the city website for upcoming meeting dates and agendas. All the issue papers and Steering Committee agendas to date are also available at this site.

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Community/Planning/NPO.htm>

I hope you will follow this process and be involved in issues that so directly affect the quality of our neighborhood.

Dianne Channing
Chair, Steering Committee

Franceschi Park and House

At the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee meeting, February 16, 2005, members discussed the effects of the torrential rains. Great concerns were expressed about the many slides on the steeply cut park property along Mission Ridge Road. Not only huge boulders and rocks but also vegetation and mud covered the entire width of the road. In addition, a major slide carved a deep gulch into the hillside west of the parking lot. Starting just below the upper section of Franceschi Road the slide washed down several of the large cut Eucalyptus trunks, depositing them onto the trail to the stone head. According to acting Parks and Recreation Director Nancy Rapp, the city is consulting with a geologist to assess and address these issues.

At the November park workday last year, park staff and volunteers cleared the large area adjacent to the driveway. This area has been designated as a demonstration bed for plants introduced by Dr. Franceschi. The Planting Sub-Committee and city landscape architect Billy Goodnick are working on this plan. Funding is needed for this effort as well as for the maintenance of the planted area. The committee is asking interested members and the general public to help with this first task of Master Plan implementation. Please contact Terri Yamada, Administrative Assistant, at the Parks Department at 564-5484.

Neighbors and residents often ask about the status of the house rehabilitation. Last October, the Advisory Committee heard a report from Barbara Lowenthal, president of the Pearl Chase Society. That society's fund raising committee continues to pursue grants and donors. A project architect and a construction company have been hired. Structural engineering studies and soil analysis will be performed. Discussions with City College are exploring house uses for the college's Adult Education Program. In addition, the Pearl Chase Society is assisting park staff in securing possible state funding for park accessibility requirements. Although much work is going on, it is going on very quietly!

Fire Safety—Wild Land Fires

California law now requires homeowners to clear brush a minimum of 100 feet from our homes. This will greatly improve the chance of your home surviving a fire and provide a defensible space for our firefighters. If you have questions about this new law or need advice on brush clearance, call SB City Fire Wildland Interface Specialist, Ann Marks at 564-5720.

The Mission Canyon Association will be conducting a practice fire evacuation on Saturday April 30, 2005. Roughly 300 homeowners will participate in the evacuation and will be directed from their residence to the Earl Warren Showground. The evacuation will be supported by all of the city and county emergency service personnel, including County Sheriff, County Fire, City Police, City Fire, the Red Cross and others. This could be a critical exercise should we have a wildfire in Mission Canyon.

Road & Traffic Safety

Many Riviera streets suffered damage during the recent heavy rains. Residents can call the Pothole Hotline at 897-2630 to request action to fill in holes. Problems such as visibility at intersections curb issues, speeding and signs can be relayed to 564-5395. There is also a Graffiti Hotline at 897-2513 which responds to information about graffiti on walls and signs. Pages 10 and 11 of the blue edged pages in the new Verizon telephone directory contain a useful list of Police, Public Works, and other City department numbers.

Riviera Association Website

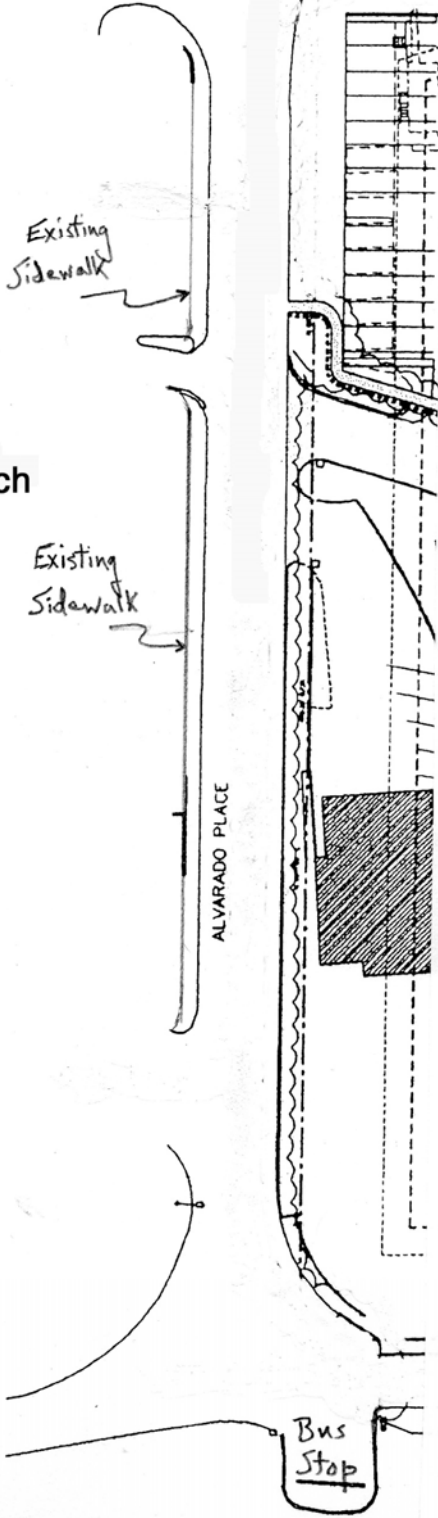
The Riviera Association continues to update its web site to inform members of current issues, history, and to provide links to city services. Visit our site at: www.sb-riviera.org. If you have ideas on how to improve it or issues you would like to see discussed, please contact Riviera Association board member, Helen Couclelis.

Board Members Needed

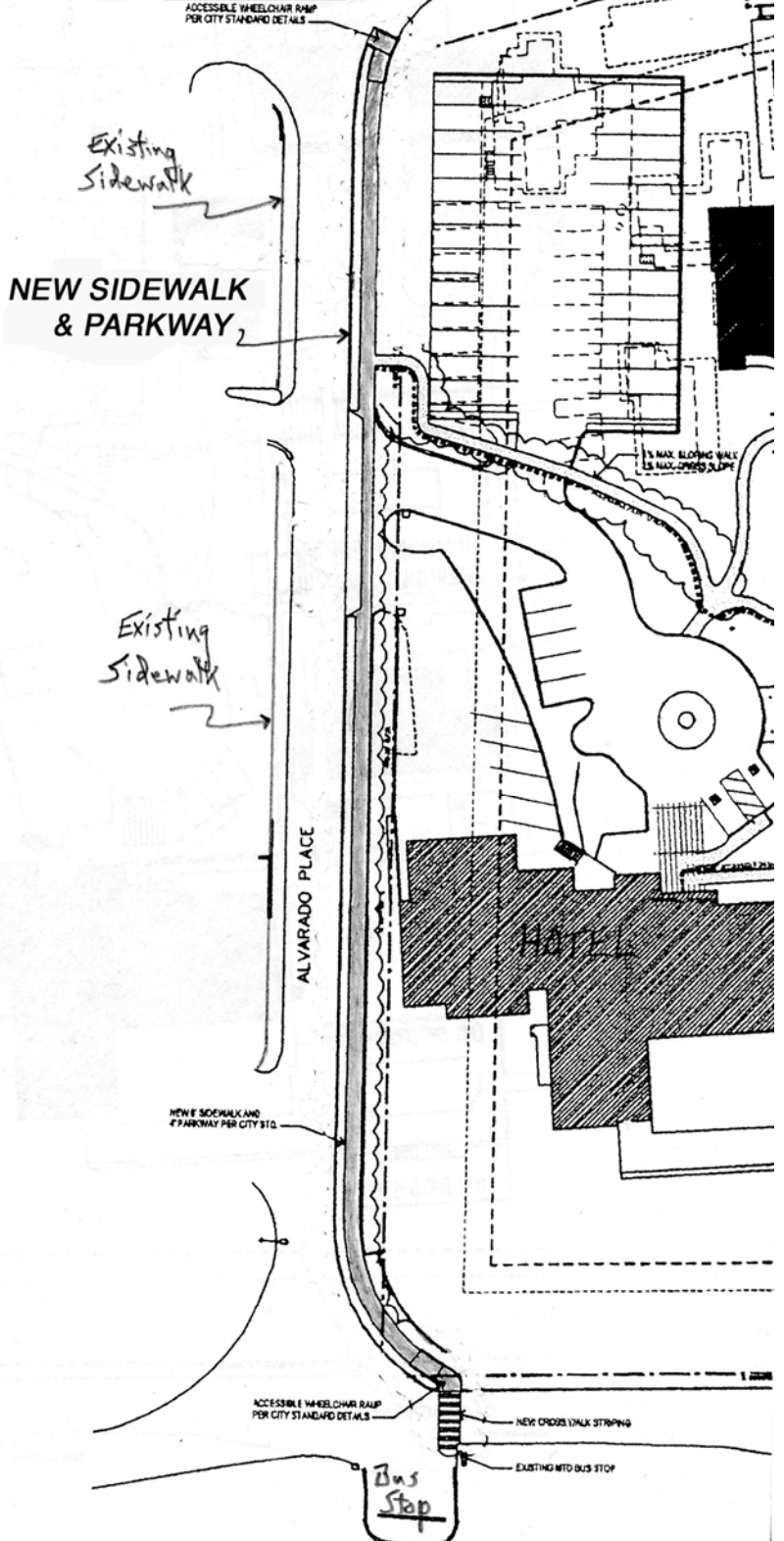
We have two board positions open and are looking for volunteers. Board meetings are held every other month on Monday evenings. If interested, please call Paul Cashman at 687-6666.

PROPOSED NARROWING OF ALVARADO PLACE

CURRENT WIDTH



PROPOSED WIDTH



Riviera
Research
Park

ALVARADO PLACE

ALVARADO PLACE

Bus
Stop

Bus
Stop

NEW SIDEWALK
& PARKWAY

NEW SIDEWALK AND
PARKWAY PER CITY STD.

ACCESSIBLE WHEELCHAIR RAMP
PER CITY STANDARD DETAILS

NEW CROSS WALK STRIP

EXISTING METO BUS STOP

1/2\" MAX. SLOPING WALK
1/8\" MAX. CROSS SLOPE

HOTEL

MISSION RIDGE

MISSION RIDGE