

FROM THE BOARD

In this issue of our Spring newsletter we highlight several issues with potential to impact The Park. A clear trend is emerging to limit (to end?) the controls California cities have over local zoning — shifting housing and cell tower decision making to Sacramento and away from our local leaders. Potential threats that will permanently change the character of The Park are two key issues we explore herein. We hope that you will take this information, explore these issues, form your own opinion and speak up! See page 4 to learn more.

It's time for some hard truths. For several years we have tried to recruit new Board members for the neighborhood association. With a couple of promising exceptions, the response from our friends and neighbors has been... well, "muted". So here are some facts you need to be aware of:

(continued on page 3)

PARK NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT: JERRY HILL

The Honorable Jerry Hill was President of the San Mateo Park Association, then served on City Council and as Mayor for City of San Mateo. He later became State Assembly, then State Senator (Sunnyvale to Brisbane) for two terms, retiring in 2020. Below are excerpts of a recent interview Margaret Miley and Dave Pearson had with Jerry:

Jerry, your first involvement with politics started with San Mateo Park in the mid 80's, right?

I became neighborhood association President because, frankly, no one else wanted to. These were times of great community building activities: work parties to plant trees, maintain islands, neighborhood gatherings, getting people involved.

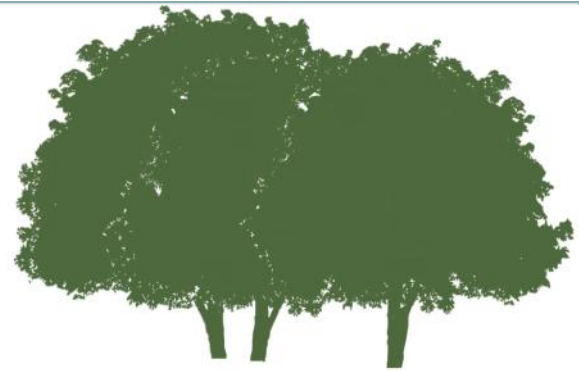
San Mateo Park was being threatened by some City zoning changes regarding flag lots that could dramatically change the character of the Park. We worked with the City, explored alternatives, and truly galvanized our neighborhood to speak with one voice.

We helped council recognize that sometimes in trying to be fair, having everything exactly the same actually harms the city. And listening, to understand motivations and goals, was key to our success.

How did you make the step to City Council and other elected positions?

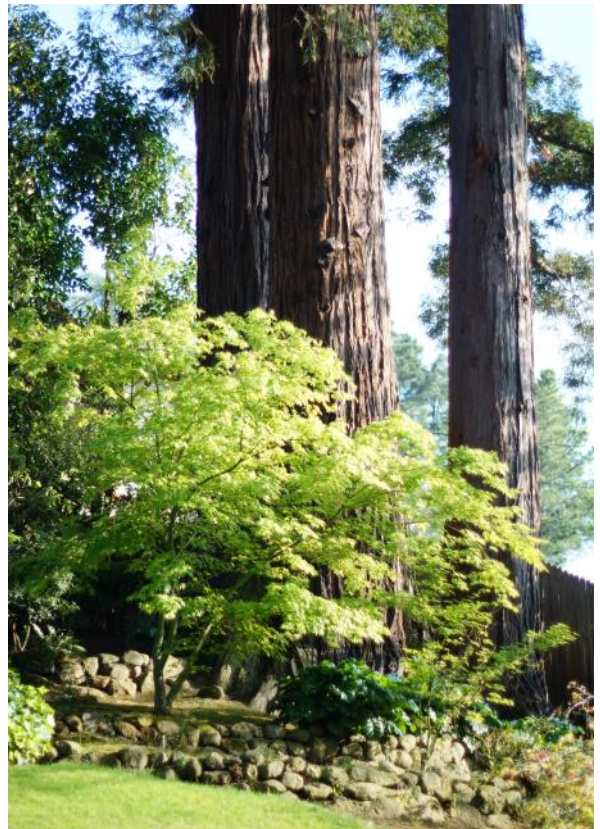
My interactions with the city on issues facing San Mateo Park made me realize that I could be effective in dealing with other political organizations.

(continued on page 3)



» Circa 1901 «

San Mateo Park Neighborhood Assn.



Stately Redwoods along Edgewood Road

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<i>President:</i>	Virginia McIsaac
<i>Secretary:</i>	Margaret Miley
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Dave Pearson
<i>Trees & Islands:</i>	Linda Bogue
<i>Web & Newsletter:</i>	David Long

STATE OF THE ISLANDS

With your annual donations, we again can fund an ongoing commitment to provide extra maintenance for our island's grounds and supplemental water during the dry season for young island trees. (Reminder: watering street trees is the homeowner's responsibility. This has been another disappointing rainy season, so do give those trees a drink, along with your own.) With our dedicated Tree Fund, we can pursue island tree maintenance and improvement projects that don't qualify for City funding.

This year, deadwood has been pruned from trees on 6 more islands. The 'big island' at Edgewood and Warren will have dozens of trees similarly pruned in July. This work carries a big tab, which is why the City no longer does any aesthetic pruning on its trees, and one reason why Tree Fund donations are important for the state of our islands.

We continue to advocate and fund island improvements. The island at Warren, Crescent, and Greenwood has been replanted and the grounds cleaned up. All

that remains is delivery of fresh chips. The City split the cost of this replant with us. (For detail about the reason for this overhaul and info. about the replant species, visit our website, www.sanmateopark.org, click on "Blog" and scroll to the entry "Island Update.")

Eight island trees that were blighting their islands but not eligible for City-funded removal, were taken out, as were some ugly, overgrown, volunteer shrubs. Nineteen new trees were planted on our islands and sixteen new street trees added.

What's on the drawing boards? We're looking, with the City, at sprucing up the island on Occidental, just before W. Poplar. It's early days and near neighbors of course will have opportunity for input before anything is done. And we plan to explore funding structural pruning for young island trees – key, along with water, to their health and proper form – with the City's Managing Arborist. Stay tuned...

THE PARK'S HERITAGE TREES

Those magnificent, stately trees that drew many of us to this neighborhood? Most of them are on private property here. We get to look out our windows and see not an empty sky but one punctuated by the silhouettes of neighbors' trees, near and far, that were growing here before our houses were built.

The sight of trees bolsters human emotional and physical well-being. Large trees dotted throughout our neighborhood provide the greatest environmental benefit, while also boosting all our property values.

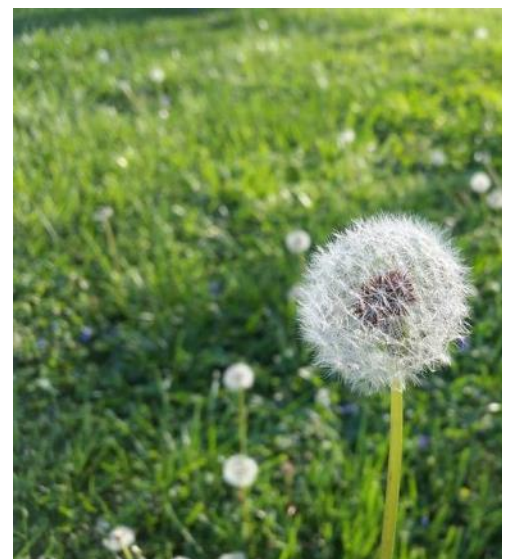
The SMPNA seeks to preserve this unique landscape of large trees, but overhead wires make replacing lost street and island trees difficult. Per our master plan, the City plants these areas with trees that will mature to significant size and presence wherever they can. But at the end of the day, preserving The Park as we love it requires each of us caring for the heritage trees on our own properties. And when we lose one, replanting a tree that will mature to heritage scale ensures The Park's future. Let's keep a YIMBY attitude toward our large trees.

COMBATING ISLAND WEEDS — WITHOUT ROUNDUP®

Spring has sprung, delightfully but also meaning weedy islands. We fund extra grounds maintenance (6x per year; the City covers 4x per year) but it's still hard to keep up just now.

FYI, the City no longer applies glyphosate – the active ingredient in Roundup – for weed control. Pre-emergent herbicides continue to be used and the City is experimenting with various organic post-emergent herbicides

In setting these parameters for weed control, the City Council explicitly recognized that eliminating glyphosate would mean weedier public spaces. So, as always, if you find pulling weeds to be therapeutic or at least pleasing in result, feel free to get out on 'your' island and lend a hand!



Child's delight, gardener's fright

JERRY HILL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

My remaining years in public service followed similar patterns. Key was having a relationship to community.

I like to say that understanding a community and effectively communicating its needs while also understanding the political forces was key to my entire career. I've said: All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten from San Mateo Park Association. Listening to people, focusing on solutions, not laws, understanding underlying motivations, building momentum, getting buy-in. My career in politics was based on the fundamental lessons I learned representing San Mateo Park. Always stay close to your community.

Isn't San Mateo Park too unique to thrive in a higher density, growing population in the state?

San Mateo Park is indeed a unique special place. The trees, the islands, the walkability, the crazy street layout. Great for walking, bike riding, meeting neighbors. The Park is also economically unique: our homes are more expensive than any other areas of San Mateo.

I was against Senate Bill SB50 last year since it forced changes in how local communities would be governed as if "one size fits all". Any exclusivity we have is due to the cost of our homes. One size does not fit all. We are a gem that should be maintained.

Years ago, we fought against some city planning guidelines because our neighborhood is one where you look out your windows and see trees and gardens, not stucco.

We need to preserve that while not acting as if we are entitled. San Mateo Park is so unique, it should be available for future generations. Once you give it up, it's gone. Clearly, there is need for more housing throughout our region, and there will be pressures to have every part of every city "do their share". But some places are so special they should be preserved for that very specialness, for current residents and future generations.

Cities can provide additional housing without destroying the uniqueness of individual neighborhoods.

What can be done on these



Park resident, former Mayor and former State Senator Jerry Hill

issues? What should our neighborhood do?

There are many issues in politics where coming to a workable solution is thwarted by the desire to turn those approaches into legislation. Legislation often forces "equal sharing" when in fact, a desirable outcome could be achieved by fully understanding what different localities need and want and creating momentum toward achieving that, with or without legislation.

Neighbors should talk to their neighbors on the issues on the table and see how their views line up.

And get involved with the San Mateo Park Neighborhood Association. You might be pleasantly surprised with where it leads you. I can speak to that...

Last Question: now that you are out of public office, have you found other passions?

I still have some continuing projects and involvements that can help our communities that I'll stick with.

But mostly, while we plan to continue to live in San Mateo park, we now can spend more time with our granddaughters in the East Bay. That's now our highest priority as well as the most fun!

Jerry—we are so grateful for your many years of service to The Park, to the City, to the Peninsula and to the State. Thank you!

Community connectedness is not just about warm fuzzy tales of civic triumph. In measurable and well-documented ways, social capital makes an enormous difference in our lives... Social capital makes us smarter, healthier, safer, richer, and better able to govern a just and stable democracy.

Robert D. Putnam

Political Scientist, Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University

WANT TEN APARTMENT UNITS NEXT DOOR IN THE PARK?

Several bills currently moving through the legislature in Sacramento aim to address our housing shortage. They do so with one-size-fits-all, top-down mandates that severely curtail local governments' and citizens' opportunities to fashion their own development plans.

What's not readily apparent is that none of these bills is geared toward expanding the supply of middle to low-income affordable housing. In high price areas, affordable housing requires subsidies. These bills neither provide subsidies directly nor offer help to cities to do so. They focus instead on expanding the supply of 'market rate' housing.

The brief summaries below give you overviews on legislation currently in the pipeline. Click the provided links if you want more in-depth information.

Two State Senate bills now in committee which are getting the most press are SB9 and SB10. Both bills effectively eliminate single-family residential zoning restrictions statewide.

SB9 Author: Sen. Toni Atkins, President Pro Tempore

- * SB9 lets developers choose among 3 options facilitating housing density, without public hearing or public review.
- * Allows lot splits into 2 equal parcels.
- * Allows 3 livable units on one lot by combination of house, accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU); or Duplex and ADU. To envision this, look next door and imagine 4 housing units and potentially 6 families. Setbacks are reduced to 4 feet at back and sides.
- * No off-street parking need be provided within ½ mile from a bus stop. From our Sam Trans ECR stop, ½ mile encompasses *almost half* of The Park.
- * Beyond the ½ mile radius from transit, no garage needs to be provided; developers need only have one parking space per lot.
- * Infrastructure: impacts on sewers, water, electricity, and street repairs are not taken into consideration nor funded. The high costs of upgrading aging infrastructure to support this type of density falls to the City and ultimately its taxpayers.

Some researchers think this state-ordered 'up-zoning' will drive up land costs and, in turn, make housing costs higher. This bill does not require nor subsidize any affordable housing for low to moderate income families.

SB10 Author: Sen. Scott Weiner

- * SB 10 lets a simple majority on a city council override CEQA – The California Environmental Quality Act. CEQA generally requires state and local government agencies to inform decision makers and the public about potential environmental impacts of proposed projects, and to reduce those impacts to the extent feasible.
- * Allows 10-unit apartment building on any residential property in a job or transit rich area (like San Mateo)
- * SB10 requires no infrastructure improvements: those costs will fall to cities and ultimately its taxpayers.
- * Minimal parking is required.
- * Allows City Council to override voter-approved land-protection initiatives incl. urban boundaries and open space, revoking a citizen right established 108 years ago.
- * No affordable units required.

Related bills moving in the state legislature include:

AB1322 Sponsor: Rivas

- * It is the intent of the legislature that this act only be applicable to local measures related to land use that constitute an obstacle to city council adoption or implementation of housing. Ex: Measure Y height limit.

SB 6 Sponsors: Sens. Caballero, Atkins, Weiner

- * Empowers developers to override cities. Targets commercial buildings that have vacancy problems for 3 years to build dense market rate housing

SB478 Sponsor: Sen. Weiner

- * Overrides city zoning to allow developers to purchase and destroy older multiple unit housing to build ultra-dense market rate housing

For more info (clickable links on our website):

<https://www.livablecalifornia.org>

<https://www.calelecteds.org>

<https://betterwayca.org>

<https://peninsulaforeveryone.org/>

Here's how you can reach our local representatives:

State Senator Josh Becker <https://sd13.senate.ca.gov/>
1526 South El Camino Real, Suite 303, San Mateo, CA 94402; (650) 212-3313

Assemblyman Kevin Mullin <https://a22.asmdc.org/>
1528 South El Camino Real, Suite 302, San Mateo, CA 94402; (650) 349-2200

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Your San Mateo Park Neighborhood Association is in good financial shape to continue our focus on improving the trees on our islands and streets.

During 2020, we received \$53,000 in total donations, with \$25,000 for operations and 28,000 for our restricted Tree Fund. See the list of your generous neighbors towards the end of this newsletter.

During 2020, our spending was somewhat limited by the pandemic restrictions. We spent \$10,000 on island maintenance and watering and almost \$30,000 on deadwood removal from island trees (half of that was from the Tree Fund). We've spent \$11,000 more on deadwood removal and island maintenance thus far in 2021.

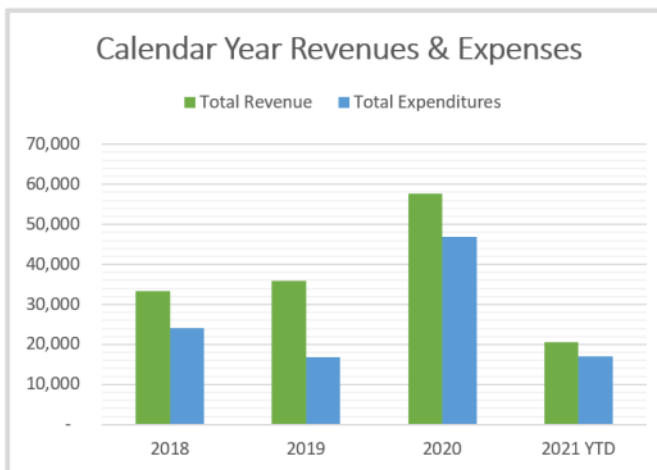
With the successful introduction of the tree fund, we are able to improve our neighborhood significantly as quickly as we can arrange City coordination of vendors, rather

than slowly accumulating funds from annual general fund donations only. The pandemic slowed down some of the work, but we will be able to implement more projects soon.

As of May 1, 2021, we have significant resources to accomplish more improvements during the years ahead. We have \$70,000 in total resources, including \$20,000 in our Tree Fund. The funds we spend on deadwood re-

moval and tree maintenance comes from both Tree Fund and general fund. But having a restricted Tree Fund allows us to plan further into the future for projects. This is so much better than planning only one year in advance. Your financial support has been outstanding. We need help on administrative, marketing and bookkeeping support for the association — ideally an additional 3-5

Board members who can serve in a variety of functions, big picture or task focused. Please let us know if you can help. Thank you!



SMALL CELL TOWERS UPDATE

Cliff Robbins, Barroilhet Ave.

Commissioner, Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee

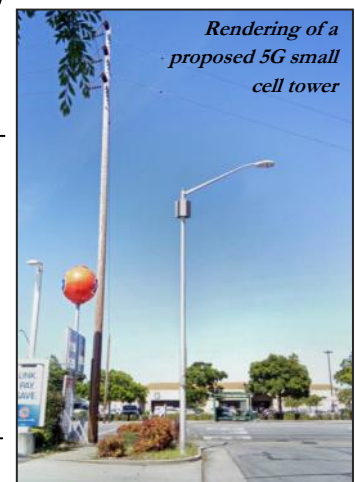
The City of San Mateo recently proposed revamping its wireless telecommunications facilities (small cell) ordinance and regulations first implemented in 2018. These changes are principally to reflect the City's experience with applications and actual technology over the last many months and the need to comply with federal law allowing limited regulation and requiring very tight response and implementation time frames.

The state of the art small cell 5G technology is indeed smaller than originally anticipated and not practicably able to be as hidden/sheathed. In addition, some of the provisions of the original code are being moved from the ordinance itself to the underlying regulations (design standards and application requirements) allowing City staff more flexibility going forward in timely responding to applications for these sites and the input of City residents.

Notice of application for a wireless telecommunications

installation is required to be given to all neighbors within 500 feet of the proposed project site. But neighborhood meetings will no longer be required, though they will be encouraged. (City staff says few have been requested or well attended so far under the current rules.) The proposed changes were recently approved by the City's Sustainability and Infrastructure Commission by a 4 to 1 vote. (Your correspondent was the lone dissenter primarily because I believe the neighborhood meetings should continue to be mandatory so that there is fair opportunity for those residents who wish to provide input).

Now the proposed changes go to the City Council for consideration!



Rendering of a proposed 5G small cell tower

McLaren Park Patrons

Theresa & Peter Aiello
Rakhi & Ganesh Bell
Anne & Ian Benham
Virginia Blahut
Bruce Blumberg & Carol Murphy
David & Kimberly Bottoms
Marilee Brooks & Greg Beall
Laura Bryant
Jim & Tish Busselle
Steve & Patty Carlson
Paul & Janet Chapman
Chih Wen & Sheryl Li
Michael & Carol Cohen
Zuling Deng & Ye Li
Alexander & Heather Doll
Greg Dorn & Ken Wanzer
Andrea & Stephen Dover
Barbara Engler
Jeffie W. Feakins
Robert & Patricia Frates
Glendon & Gayle French
John and Linda Gemello
Bob & Barbara Gilmartin
Martha & Mark Greenough
Sergei & Marina Gryaznov
Jeff & Caron Heimbuck
Jerry & Sky Hill
Bruce & Pat Hrabá
Isaacs-Mailliard Family
Suzanne Juptner & Mark Frappier
Bill & Susan Kenney
Todd Kim & Tracy Chiao
Roger & Sally Krakow
Flo & Don Kristofferson
Alice Kubler & Joerg Michelfelder
Clifford & Penny Kupperberg
Lynnie & Larry Laks
Kathryn Last
David Long & Rue Richey
Mark & Caroline Lowpensky
Macy Family
Joe Matt & Hillary Chen
Steve & Patty Mayer
Al & Miek McCubbin
Peter & Virginia Mclsaac
Stuart & Meg McLaughlin
Scott & Lee Manus-McNutt
John & Amalia Mendez
Julie Montanari & Dave Pearson
Stephen & Catherine Nessier
Saswati Paul and Nathan Krishnan
Kathleen Paver
Pizzi Family
Steve & Patty Porter
Dave Pritchard
James & Anita Reimann
Stephanie & D'Arcy Roche
Maria Romano
Joseph & Susan Ryan
Dan & Zoe Scheinman

John Schulz & Barbara Eisenhauer
Douglas & Lee Shult
Cynthia Smith
Doug & Judy Sobolik
Allen Soong
Robert & Kristi Spence
Cathy & Jack Stanghellini
Catherine Stannard-Stockton
Ron & Faye Star
Michael & Regina Steele
Nancy & Gary Steele
Daniel & Julie Switky
David & Nicole Tateosian
Melchior & Nell Lee Thompson
Brad & Lynn Tuthill
Bob Whitehill
Laura Winfrey & Doug Grigsby
William & Elaine Yang
Eleanor & Steven Yuen

McLaren Members

Horst & Mary Adam
Thomas Ames
Modell Marlow Anderson
Don & Louise Arata
Bob & Alison Baumann
Judy & Roland Bianchi
Ron & Elaina Bland
Patricia & Robert Blee
Robert & Patricia
Don & Linda Bogue
Alden & Marianne Briscoe
Paul & Anne Carella
Tom & Brenda Carlson
Anna Cronin
Lois Crotty
McLaren Members
Bruce & Carla Dannels
Roxana Del Carlo
Ron & Joyce Eicher
Diane Elcan
John & Mary Folsom
Nancy Frank
Michael Gehrke
H. Koeppen & Alexandra Gillen
Sally Puccini & Rick Gostyla
Linda & Leo Gotelli
Debbie & Michael Harrison
Meg & Mike Horrigan
Ken & Patty Howarth
Luis & Kathi Iglesias
Lester Liu & Jane Kang
Peter Karp & Ida Sims
Charles & Elladene Katz
Judith & Richard Kell
Tammy & Tom Kiely
Aleks and Heather Krumins
Amy Laughlin
Nancy Martin
Fred McDaniel & Liz Rieke

Andrea & Tim O'riordan
Kerry Persen
Michael & Lidia Petersen
Rodney & Vicky Prezeau
Joanne Quan & Mark Jaremko
Frank & Christine Regan
Ray & Cindy Reinertson
Angela & Donna Romano
Cassie & Harry Sharp
Al & Irene Stock
David & Isabel Villongco
John & Mary Anne Ward
Paul & Eugenia Watermulder
Howard & Margaret Weiland
Sheryl Li and Chihpo Wen
William & Barbara Whitx'e
Megan & Joseph Winters

Park Supporters

Nancy Baleix
Betty Bernstein
Karen Catlan
Ron & Marilyn Chiappari
Ken & Karen Ditty
Pierre Dupont
Susan Ebert
Enrique & Amy Figueroa
Robert Fucilla & Patricia Georges
Darren Gold
Terrence & Lisa Stern-hazelwood
Thomas Heaton
Jacqueline James
Craig & Jennifer Jory
Marilyn Kimura
Joe & Donna Lanam
Connie Larios & James Lynch
Linda & Alan Merrifield
Mark & Joanna Penner
Linda & Michael Podolsky
Cliff Robbins & Margie Shafer
Ruth Larsen Scammon
Robert & Lisa Stanton
Tom & Joanne Stodgel
Henry & Jeanette Stumpf
Martin & Susan Partlan
Ann and Philip Vogel
Helen Wagner

Tree Fund donors:

Park Conservators

\$1000+

Dan Scheinman
William Yang
Joe Matt & Hilary Chen
Porter Family Fdn. (Steve & Patty)
Bill & Susan Kenney
Steve & Patty Carlson
Rakhi & Ganesh Bell
Stuart & Meg McLaughlin
James Reinman

Friends of the Tree Fund

\$500 - \$999

Nancy & Gary Steele
Anne & Ian Benham

Friends of the Tree Fund

<\$500

Cassie & Harry Sharp
Al & Miek McCubbin
Scott & Lee Manus-McNutt
Robert & Kristi Spence
Virginia Blahut
Melchior & Nell Lee Thompson
Daniel & Julie Switky
Glendon & Gayle French
Alice Kubler & Joerg Michelfelder
Ken & Patty Howarth
Cathy & Jack Stanghellini
Todd Kim & Tracy Chiao
Roger & Sally Krakow
Virginia & Peter Mclsaac
Susan Ebert
Cheryl Zuffi
Frances Newman
Steve & Patty Mayer
Joseph & Susan Ryan
Michael Steele
Barbara Toy
Bruce & Carla Daniels
Tom & Joanne Stodgel
Joe & Donna Lanam
Laura Winfrey & Doug Grigsby
Maria Romano
Diane Eclan
John & Amalia Mendez
David & Kimberly Bottoms
John & Barbara Schulz
Eleanor Yuen

Thank you to all!



- Several of our Board members have served for over 20 years, most are retired and no longer have children living at home.
- A few of us are considering leaving the Board. With those departures we may be forced to use your donations to pay for bookkeeping and data management; something we have been loathe to do in the past. We run a tight ship around here.
- It would be ideal to have some new members with fresh ideas and who share our love

for and have a willingness to serve The Park. It takes just a couple of hours each month to sort through the issues and press to keep our neighborhood safe and beautiful.

Each of your current Board members has found this neighborhood work to be rewarding and meaningful. So for now, things will stay as they are. The future, however, is uncertain.

Hope you'll join us to steer The Park for its next 120 years. Who knows? You could find yourself becoming our next Mayor and/or our State Senator. It wouldn't be the first time.

Sincerely,

Your Volunteer SMPNA Board



**Dave Pearson, David Long, Linda Bogue,
Virginia McIssacs, Margaret Miley**

SAN MATEO PARK 2021 DUES & CONTRIBUTIONS

Click the direct link at: www.sanmateopark.org/contribute for PayPal. Prefer a check? Please fill out the form below and mail check payable to SMPNA to: **San Mateo Park Neighborhood Assn., P.O Box 1271, San Mateo, CA 94401**

☐ **My name and address on address label (reverse) are correct.** Or, please indicate any changes below:

Name (s): _____

Street Address: _____ Phone: _____

Email (s): _____

First, please send us **annual membership dues**. Able to help more this year? Consider our **Tree Fund**.



ANNUAL DONATION LEVEL (check one)

☐ **\$200 McLaren Patron** ☐ **\$100 McLaren** ☐ **\$50 Supporter**



TREE FUND (check one)

☐ **\$5,000** ☐ **\$2,500** ☐ **\$1,000** ☐ **Other**

All dues are voluntary and are not a condition of membership. Contributions, dues and Tree Fund, are tax deductible (Fed EIN 56-2631949) and are credited for recognition in the calendar year received. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Comments/Suggestions - email us at board@sanmateopark.org or mail in your comments below:

If your address label on reverse of this page is incorrect, please mail or email us a correction

PAEAN TO THE PARK

Covid stay-at-home restrictions gave each of us a deeper appreciation for living in The Park. Though we are urban dwellers, we had the good fortune to get out in nature throughout our confinement.

Research increasingly validates that close encounters with nature improve human mental and physical wellbeing. And we can parse that: birdsong is proven to lift our mood and general wellbeing; hospital patients who can look out a window at a tree recover faster, and so on.

Large trees -- which are The Park's foundational element as well as its defining characteristic -- anchor nature's benefits for humans and the environment. They provide habitat for those avian songsters and other creatures, cooling shade, buffer against pollutants, etc.



The City of San Mateo is not one-size-fits-all but a woven tapestry of varied neighborhoods. As Jerry Hill remarks in these pages, The Park is truly special: its festive founding -- via auction of lots here -- is entwined in the storied history of the City. It houses an architectural legacy (Sears catalogue, Maybeck, and Julia Morgan homes, among others) and a notably green heritage courtesy of Northern California's most famous landscaper, John McLaren.

As San Mateo looks for the means and the places to increase housing density, surely there is reason to cherish backyards (and front ones) that preserve space for trees, birds and all that nature contributes to human wellbeing. These magic spaces are built over at great cost and, once gone, are irretrievable.

Thank you to our generous residents who support the efforts of the SMPNA!

Creative local 1st grader, Jonny Cester's hatch hideout on Occidental Ave.



San Mateo Park
Neighborhood Assn.
PO Box 1271
San Mateo, CA 94402

« Circa 1901 »

