



PARK BEAT

The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association ■ Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 ■ June 2019

HISTORIC DISTRICT PLANS: STILL TIME TO RESPOND!

(Deadline for public responses: June 14)

This Spring, several public and city meetings were held to discuss the Historic District Plan (HDP) Design Guidelines, with the draft document now approaching its final phase. Two Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings on April 24 and May 2 were followed by two City commission meetings on May 15 and 23, and lastly a public workshop on May 30.

Our neighborhood was represented by a BPNA board member at each of the two TAC meetings. Hosted by the Community Development Department, these focused workshops were intended to identify and clarify key issues and opportunities in the HDP Design Guidelines draft document. They also provided stakeholders (i.e., individuals with technical knowledge or a familiarity with the historic districts) with the opportunity to provide the additional input needed to help refine the guidelines. These guidelines are intended to help people who plan or review proposals for new construction in Sacramento's historic districts to better understand what kind of building designs are compatible with the existing architecture in these areas.

One difference of opinion that emerged during the TAC meetings involved the degree to which the HDP Design Guidelines should shape future development in City neighborhoods. Several participants argued that if new development design principles are merely suggestions, instead of firmly worded statements, they will be considered optional and will provide little protection for historic districts. Others in attendance said that excessive restrictions and a cumbersome review process should be avoided to encourage growth and to prevent long delays in building construction.

Other topics discussed at these and other meetings included how to select the best design precedent structures within each of the Central City's eclectic urban districts, and what to recommend for the relative heights of old and new buildings as well as the distances between them. For example, in the case of infill structures, should new buildings be allowed to dominate the site or tower over an adjacent historic property, as could happen if the weakened guidelines in the draft HDP document are implemented?

Throughout the review process (Summer 2018- Spring 2019), residents of several neighborhoods, including Boulevard Park, have voiced their opinions about the draft document (summaries and statements are attached to the agenda for the May 15 Preservation Commission meeting, on the City's website:

http://sacramento.granicus.com/viewpublisher.php?view_id=30).

Many respondents have expressed concern about a lack of clarity in the design guidelines. To be effective and enforceable, the guidelines need to provide standards and criteria that are objective, understandable, and verifiable. Overly broad or vague wording that is open to a wide range of interpretation must be avoided.

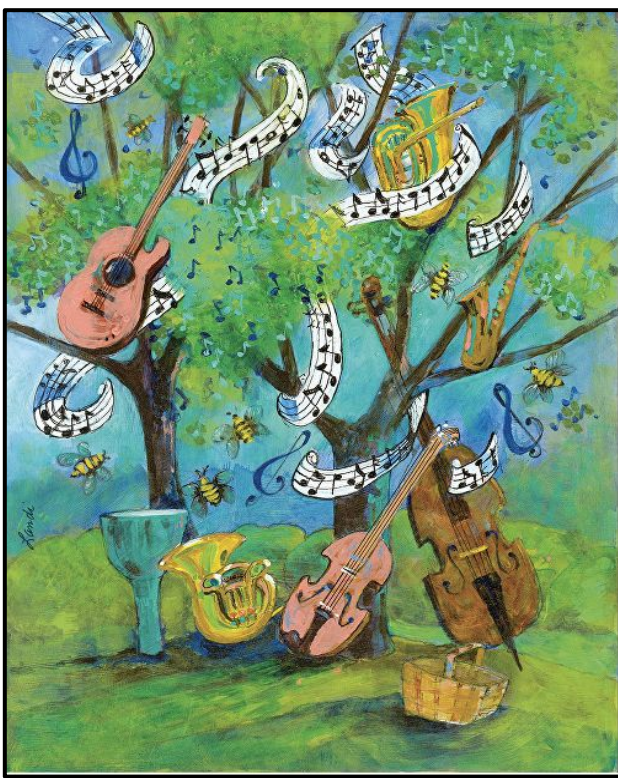
In their current form, the HDP design guidelines will not provide the protections for our historic districts that were intended when this process was begun, and which many City residents regard as a high priority. They also do not encourage the construction of affordable infill housing.

As of this writing, the deadline for public comment on the Historic District Plans draft document is **June 14**, two weeks after the last public workshop (**May 30**, 6 p.m. AIACV Gallery, 1400 S Street). Boulevard Park residents who have not yet participated in the conversation are strongly encouraged to read the document (see especially the section titled "Design Guidelines"), ask questions, and voice opinions (<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/hdp>). Once finalized, the document must be adopted by the City Council before it can be implemented.

Spaghetti Dinner: First Call for Volunteers!

Boulevard Park's Spaghetti Dinner is not until **Saturday, September 7** but it is never too early to think about volunteering. Every pair of hands is welcome! This annual event would not be possible without the enthusiastic participation of neighborhood residents.

Volunteers choose between several assignments: **(1)** the set-up squad, on Saturday morning (starting around 9 a.m.; one hour); **(2)** the kitchen squad (tasks include stirring sauces, monitoring pasta, tossing salads, replenishing bread baskets, and lowering refilled bowls of food down to the servers outside: 45-minute shifts); **(3)** the food and beverage service squad (also for 45-minute shifts); and **(4)** the clean-up squad (Sunday morning, starting around 9 a.m.; about one hour). Contact **Emily Herbert at (916) 444-6690** if you would like to volunteer and be part of some great neighborhood camaraderie.



Art by Susan Landi

Pops in the Park: June 2019 Concert Series

The tree-shaded parks of East Sacramento will be alive with the sound of music again in June, thanks to the sponsorship of Council Member Jeff Harris. Funds raised by the sponsorships and refreshments sales of this annual event, now celebrating its 28th year, have been used to enhance neighborhood parks, bring improvements to neighborhoods, and provide youth athletic scholarships. All concerts will be held on Saturday evenings, and all four of the East Sacramento concerts start at 6 p.m. (go to: <http://eastsacpopsinthepark.com/home/4531998702>).

The dates, venues, and performers are:

June 1 (East Portal Park, 1120 Rodeo Way):

Joe Craven & The Sometimers

June 8 (Bertha Henschel Park, 45th St. and Brand Way):

Dana Moret & Zen Voodoo

June 15 (East Portal Park): **Idea Team**

June 22 (Glenn Hall Park, Sandburg and Carlson):

The Count

Bring blankets or lawn chairs for seating, but please leave umbrellas or canopies at home, because they can block the views of other people at the concert (sunscreen is recommended, however). Food and beverage will be on sale. There also will be a beer and wine garden where alcohol can be purchased and consumed (*please do not bring alcohol from outside the park*). Free valet bicycle parking will be provided by Sacramento Area Bike Advocates (SABA).

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Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association's purpose: The BPNA was created to support, promote, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood. By achieving this goal we strive to improve the quality of life for others who work and live in and around Boulevard Park, and therefore in Sacramento as a whole.

Committees

Membership: Ellen Hunt
Preservation: Eric Knutson

Park Beat Production Team

Newsletter Designer: Open - Contact Ty Dockery to volunteer
Newsletter Editor: Catherine Turrill Lupi
Webmasters: Ty Dockery and Steve Sander
Block Captain Coordinator: Joe Cress, (916) 698-7938
cressj@saccounty.net

Places to Go, People To See

Every Saturday: Yoga in the Park, McKinley Park (9 a.m.; by the Rose Garden). **Website:**

<http://yogamovesus.org/calendar-items/yoga-in-the-park-mckinley-park-indoors/>

Every Saturday: Midtown Farmers' Market: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 20th Street between J and L Streets

Sat., June 1: 2019 Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Home Tour: 60 Years of Streng Bros. Homes (10 a.m.-4 p.m.; admission charged). See article on **page 5**.

Sat., June 1: Fire Department Open House, Station 4, 3145 Granada Way (2-4 p.m.). For more information, go to: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Fire/About/Station-Information>

Sat., June 1: Pops In The Park: Joe Craven & The Sometimers, East Portal Park, 1120 Rodeo Way (6 p.m.): first of four June concerts in East Sacramento (others are on June 8, 15, and 22). See article on **page 2**.

Sun., June 2: "St. John's Resounds: Home on Earth," organ concert at St. John's Lutheran Church, 1701 L St. (3-5 p.m.; admission charged).

Website: <https://www.stjohnslc.org/stjohnsresounds>

Tues., June 4: BPNA Board Meeting, open to BPNA members and other interested neighbors (**6:30-8 p.m.**). Contact Eric Knutson for location or to suggest agenda items.

Thurs., June 6: R Street Pop-Up Series: Artists and entertainers will be providing pop-up shows along the R Street corridor between about 9th and 17th Street from 5-9 p.m.

Places to Go, People To See (cont.)

June 8 & 9: SacPride 2019, A Legacy of Stonewall: two-day, family-friendly festival on Capitol Mall featuring art, entertainment, refreshments, and more (11 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days; admission charged for the festival; the Pride March on Sunday is free). **Website:** <https://sacramentopride.org>

Sat., June 8: Friends of the River Bank host "Plants of Sutter's Landing," with a nature walk led by Brian Collett (starting at 10 a.m.). See article on **page 6**.

Sat., June 8: "World-Wide Knit in Public Day," Crocker Art Museum, 216 O Street (10 a.m.). **Website:** <https://www.crockerart.org>

Sat., June 8: 2nd Saturday Arts and Crafts: "School's Out," Downtown Commons (DOCO), 660 J St. (10-noon): Free art activities for families, designed by Verge Center for the Arts. **Website:** <https://www.godowntownsac.com/event/2nd-saturday-arts-and-crafts-schools-out/>

Sat., June 8: Second Saturday ArtWalk. Galleries around town will be open to present individual and group shows of artists' work.

Website: <http://www.2ndsaturdaysacramento.com>

June 15 & 16: 48th Annual Show and Sale, Sacramento Bromeliad & Carnivorous Plant Society, Shepard Garden & Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. (10 am.-4 p.m., both days).

Sat., June 22: Free E-Waste Collection and Recycling, Howe Park, 2201 Cottage Way (9 a.m.-1 p.m.). For more information, go to: <https://www.fecrpd.com/special-events/e-waste-collection-recycling/>

Sun., June 23: "All Aboard": Free Community Festival, Crocker Art Museum, 216 O Street (10 a.m.). See article on **page 5**.

Thur., June 27: Gold Spike Lecture: "The Transcontinental Railroad as a Business Venture," California State Railroad Museum, 125 I St. (7 p.m.; admission charged). See article on **page 5**.

... *And, looking ahead to early July:*

Tues., July 16: BPNA Board Meeting, open to BPNA members and other interested neighbors (**6:30-8 p.m.**). Contact Eric Knutson for location or to suggest agenda items.

Block Captain Needed to Distribute Copies of *Park Beat*

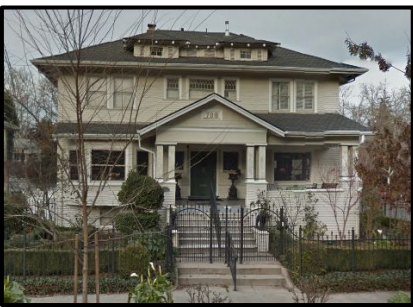
We are in need of a Block Captain to cover the area near **24th and E Streets**. If you can spare 15 minutes a month and like to walk and talk with your neighbors, please contact our Block Captain Coordinator, Joe Cress, at 916-698-7938 (cressj@saccounty.net).

May 22 was the last day for artists to register for the **2019 Sac Open Studios** event, held on the third and fourth weekends of September (**September 14-15 and 21-22**).

If you are a Boulevard Park artist, are going to be part of Sac Open Studios this year, and would like to have your studio address and open hours listed in the September issue of *Park Beat*, please send an email to the newsletter editor (turrillc@csus.edu). We would be delighted to help promote your participation to the neighborhood!



Before Airbnb



Boulevard Park's Two Bed & Breakfast Inns

Long before there were “air” bed-and-breakfasts (of which our neighborhood now has about eight registered with the City), there were bed and breakfast inns. Two highly-regarded B&Bs were once located around the corner from each other in Boulevard Park: the **Hartley House** at 700 22nd Street (left photo), and **Aunt Abigail's** at 2120 G Street. Located on adjacent properties, the two spacious Colonial Revival residences were built as single-family homes by James Warrack (700 22nd, in 1909) and his niece, Lydia Wallace Drescher (2120 G, in 1911). Warrack was the district agent for the Union Pacific Railroad; Lydia's husband, Henry Bernard Drescher, was in the wholesale grocery business (Mebius & Drescher Co., K and Front Streets).

The Warracks moved to Oakland in 1920; the Dreschers relocated to Sacramento's suburbs in 1930. After their departures, each of the two Boulevard Park houses went through a short phase of single-family occupancy before being converted to a boarding house, a trend that was replicated in many larger homes throughout Sacramento between the 1930s and 1950s. The Warrack house became a “guest house for men” called Alpine Rooms in the fifties (it was also known as Mrs. Murphy's, after the landlady). By contrast, after serving as a combined residence and dance studio in the thirties, the Drescher house was operated as a “friendly guest home for young business girls” (1947-1961). It also had a brief existence as Banyan House in the mid-1960s, when it offered “cooperative living for responsible college-age men and women concerned with personal growth and human values.” Both homes were converted to bed and breakfast inns in the early 1980s.

The Warrack B&B was operated for several years as Morning Glory before being purchased by Randy Hartley and renamed Hartley House; the Drescher B&B also went through two sets of owners (most recently, Ken and Susanne Ventura) but under a single name, Aunt Abigail's. After the new century arrived, the inns were closed and the two homes regained the single-family status that they enjoy today.

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Calling All Green Thumbs: **Midtown Garden Tour, July 27**

Are you a seasoned gardener or a newbie who is passionate about trying urban gardening? Are you a container-growing ninja or a master of soil? Would you enjoy being part of a growing and supportive community? The people of Garden the Grid are looking for Midtown urban gardeners to join their growing community and be part of the second annual Garden the Grid Tour, starting at 8 a.m. on **Saturday, July 27**. This garden tour is a celebration and sharing of best urban gardening practices that are accessible to anyone, more of a “you can do this too,” than a “look at what we did.”

For further information and to become part of this collaborative collective of urban farmers please go to the website before **July 6**: gardenthegrid.com.
It's time to get dirty!

Transcontinental Railroad: More Celebratory Events!



Two more events connected to the celebration of the Transcontinental Railroad's sesquicentennial are scheduled in June. On **Sunday, June 23**, the Crocker Art Museum will be hosting a **free** community festival, "All Aboard!" Held in conjunction with the opening of a new traveling exhibition, "**The Race to Promontory: The Transcontinental Railroad and the American West**," this family-friendly celebration will include live music and dance performances, storytelling, and hands-on activities (starting at 10 a.m.; exhibition website: <https://www.crockerart.org/exhibitions/the-race-to-promontory>).

On **Thursday, June 27**, there will be another Gold Spike Lecture at the California State Railroad Museum ("The Transcontinental Railroad as a Business Venture and How It Shaped the American West"; 7 p.m.; admission charged). The speaker, Professor Richard White (Stanford University), is the author of *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (2012).

For more information, go to:

<http://sachistorymuseum.org/programs-events/gold-spike-lecture-series/>



SacMod (Sacramento Modern) Home Tour (June 1, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

In honor of the 60th anniversary of Strengh Brothers Homes, SacMod has organized a self-guided tour of homes designed by brothers Bill and Jim Strengh, who worked in Sacramento, Yolo, and Placer Counties from 1959 through the 1980s. Like the better-known Eichler homes of the mid-20th century, Strengh homes tend to have open floor plans, low-pitched roofs, walls of windows, and simple exteriors (the Strenghs also worked with architect Carter Sparks, who had worked with Eichler previously). The homes selected for this driving tour are located along an 18-mile route running through the neighborhoods of Eastridge (Citrus Heights), Overbrook and Evergreen Commons (Sacramento), and Homewood (Carmichael). A rare 1959 custom modern home designed by architect Carter Sparks in Fair Oaks also will be featured on the tour. Detailed information about the tour route (including the home addresses) will be sent to ticket-holders via email before the tour day. Tickets must be purchased in advance (no later than noon, May 31). For more information and a sneak preview (photos of a home on tour, also covered in the May issue of *Inside Sacramento*), go to: <https://www.facebook.com/SacMod/>

A Brief Report from the BPNA Board

The monthly meeting on May 7 began with a presentation by a guest from the Midtown Association, Jameson Parker. He told the board members about Midtown Parks (MP), a non-profit arm of the Midtown Association which supports the community by creating centrally-located public spaces with opportunities for recreation, leisure, and relationship building with neighbors. MP will oversee five of the parks in Sacramento's Midtown: Marshall Park, Truitt Bark Park, Winn Park, Fremont Park, and Sutter's Fort State Park (for more information, go to: <http://exploremidtown.org/midtownparks/>). Five committees representing the residential, business, and public authority interests adjacent to each park will be responsible for raising funds, resolving conflicts, and for promoting MP's mission. The following three services will be offered by MP: capital improvements, place making and event services (creating a schedule of events and activities for each park), and communication services (creating a unique brand and identity for each park). These exciting plans are modeled in many ways on other highly successful city parks around the country, such as Bryant Park in New York City, a community meeting place filled with tables, food vendors, lawn games, and holiday celebrations.

The Midtown Parks presentation was followed by a report about the results of the recent on-line survey in which BPNA members were asked for their opinions about various aspects of the parking-protected bicycle lane inaugurated on J Street last year. The overall response to the survey was good. About 80% of those who responded were happy with the slower pace of automobile traffic that resulted from the reduction of car lanes from 3 to 2 lanes (although one respondent noted that a double-parked delivery vehicle could reduce J Street to a single lane). Few of the survey participants expressed an opinion about the success of the bike lane itself, suggesting that most of them were not using it as cyclists on a regular basis.

Fauna, Flora, and Friends of the River Banks

FORB's second Saturday gatherings in April and May brought residents up close and personal with hawks and bats, as discussed below, and in June it will be the plants' turn to take center stage ("Plants of Sutter's Landing," nature walk led by Brian Collett; **June 8**, starting at 10 a.m.).

As reported by **Lyvonne Sewell**, 30 folks gathered to welcome the Swainson's hawks, "raptors of the riverbanks," on **April 13**. The 70-mile area around Sacramento is one of two regions in Northern California where these birds still return each year (much of their breeding territory has been lost to agriculture). Participants in April's event were delighted to see three adult hawks circling and vocalizing overhead. Chances are they already have begun to nest and will have their chicks in June or July. Also present at the gathering were three representatives from the Davis Raptor Center. They brought two un-releasable hawks with them for participants to admire and study (a photo of one of the hawks, Grasshopper, appeared in the April issue of *Park Beat*).

Nita Davidson was one of a group of regulars and newcomers who attended JoEllen Arnold's annual presentation about Northern California bats on **May 11**. Among other things, participants learned how important these flying mammals are for our ecosystem, thanks to their voracious appetite for insects (one bat can eat more than a thousand mosquitoes in one hour) and their involvement in the pollination of a wide range of plants. With the help of two echolocation devices, participants were able to hear the bats they could not see as dusk fell along the river banks. They also had a chance to meet JoEllen's "Bat Ambassadors," three wild bats from three different species who could not survive in the wild due to some injury or birth defect. JoEllen is a volunteer with NorCalBats, which provides bat rescue services as well as educating the public about wild bats (for more information, go to: www.norcalbats.org). Readers also are encouraged to take advantage of one of the evening tours held throughout the summer below the Yolo Bypass, the home of over 250,000 Mexican free-tailed bats. Each night, thousands of bats emerge in long, swirling ribbons as they head out from beneath the Bypass to hunt for insects. For more information and to register in advance for one of these popular three-hour tours, go to the website of the Yolo Basin Foundation (<http://yolobasin.org/battalkandwalks/>).

The dates and themes of FORB's last two Saturday hikes of the summer are:

- **Sat., July 13** (10 a.m.): **Insects of the Riverbanks**. Two entomologists, Nita Davidson and Marc Epstein, will review fun facts about insects and will lead the group on an interactive bug tour.
- **Sat., August 10** (10 a.m.): **Effects of Climate Change Along the River**. Participants will learn about the impact humans have had on the American River over the last 200 years, and what may be in store for us in the future as the area becomes warmer.

Unless otherwise stated, all Saturday tours start outside the skateboard park at the north end of 28th Street. Please bring water, sunblock, and (if accompanied by small children) a change of clothes for little ones; please leave dogs at home. For calendar updates and for reports about recent and past FORB events (illustrated with photos), go to the website: www.friendsoftheriverbanks.org

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