



PARK BEAT

The Pulse of Greater Boulevard Park

Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association # Box 163179, Sacramento 95816 # July 2018

Progress Report, J Street Diet

The City of Sacramento launched the “J Street Safety Project” this summer. As reported in the February 2018 issue of *Park Beat*, the project’s goal is to make several blocks of J Street (between 19th and 30th streets) safer and more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly by calming traffic, reducing travel lanes to shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians, and adding a parking-protected bikeway on the south side of the street (located in the lane between the curb and the lane used for parking).

Construction began on June 25 with a series of rolling street closures on weekdays. Effective Saturday, June 30, complete road closures covering three blocks at a time were introduced on weekends (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.). As of this writing, two weekend road closures are scheduled, the first involving 19th to 22nd Streets (June 30) and 22nd to 25th Streets (July 1), while the second involves 25th to 28th Streets (July 7) and 28th to 30th Streets (July 8). Construction is expected to be complete by August 10 (dates are subject to change). While the project is underway, motorists should watch for signs and detours.

Josh Werner, the City engineer in charge of the project, spoke to a Boulevard Park board member about the potential impacts of the project on nearby residents.

The worst of the construction activities (excavating/grinding/compacting/repaving) will be done on the two weekends mentioned above. Regular steel drum rollers will be used for compaction, and the vibrations are not expected to be too intense, except along J Street itself. Residents and business owners located on J Street may want to use museum putty to secure items that are apt to fall off walls and shelves, or simply remove those items temporarily, until the construction is complete.

For information and updates, visit:

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/Transportation/Programs-and-Services/Vision-Zero/J-Street-Safety-Project>



A Brief Report from the BPNA Board



At their June 6 meeting, the members of the BPNA board welcomed two guests, Vice-Mayor Steve Hansen and his assistant Alexandra Zucco. When asked where he thought Central City Sacramento was headed in terms of building heights for new construction, Steve predicted that mid-rise buildings are much more likely than high-rise for the foreseeable future. For example, the surface parking lot at 601 Capitol Mall, formerly designated for a high-rise building (25 stories), has just been approved by the City for a mid-rise 7-story, mixed-use building. Another question was raised about the situation in the 1000 block of “J” Street, an area of abandoned boarded up buildings. Steve said that the former tenants of these buildings should never have been forced out in preparation for a planned new construction until the new development plans were secure and financed. The next questions concerned the possibility of having some SMUD wiring installed underground in Midtown. In reply, Steve reminded the board members that working directly with SMUD to steer its budget money in our direction is the best way to get improvements for our area. Another board member asked for more neighborhood street lighting.

Steve said that lighting is added as funding sources are found, but lighting installation is expensive and a 2/3 vote of support from property owners is required to establish a separate lighting district project. Owners of rental property are often unwilling to pay for this amenity. After Steve and Alexandra left, the board members discussed the sewer/rain water storage vault planned for McKinley Park which, being located beneath the baseball field, will involve major disruption to the park during the 2 ½ year construction process. However, on completion, the underground cistern will provide some flood protection for this part of East Sacramento. Storm water runoff that has flooded the streets will be temporarily stored in the vault instead. Another public meeting about the project is planned for late Summer or early Fall. Information and updates are posted on the city website (<https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Utilities/Sacramento-Water-Works/Wastewater-Project-Updates/McKinley-Water-Vault/Resources>)

Historic Preservation News, 1: The Mills Act

Not only the historic districts but also historic buildings are in the news lately, when it comes to reviewing policies and programs related to their preservation. The City of Sacramento is moving toward the revival of its Mills Act Program, which provides for voluntary contracts that can significantly lower property taxes for owners of historic homes in return for their agreement to restore and maintain the property. Presently Sacramento is the only major city in California without an active Mills Act Program, described by the state's Office of Historic Preservation as "the single most important economic incentive program in California for the restoration and preservation of qualified historic buildings by private property owners." As of this writing, an ordinance updating and restarting Sacramento's Mills Act Program has been on the agenda of three City committee meetings (Preservation Commission on June 20, Law and Legislation Committee on June 26, and Planning and Design Commission on June 28). If all goes as planned, the same issue will be brought before City Council on Thursday, August 9. For general information about the Mills Act, a California state law enacted in 1972 that allows local governments to enter into agreements with owners of historic properties, go to the Preservation Sacramento website (<http://www.preservationsacramento.org/mills-act/>). For information about the presentation at the June 20 meeting, go to the Preservation Commission website (<https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Meetings/Preservation-Commission>). If you wish to provide personal feedback about this issue, send an email to the City's Preservation Director, Carson Anderson (canderson@cityofsacramento.org).

35th National Night Out: Save the Date (August 7)

This potluck dinner is a wonderful way to see old friends and make new ones in the Boulevard Park and Marshall School/New Era Park neighborhoods.



A few of the beat officers are likely to be present, and city representatives sometimes attend too, as they make the rounds of the different NNO events throughout Sacramento.

Please come to all three courses if you can (join the informal parade as we walk between venues), and please bring a favorite dish to share with your neighbors. Especially during the *hors d'oeuvres* course, participants also may want to bring along some bottled water.

6 p.m.: *Hors d'oeuvres* course

on the 22nd Street median, near C Street

7 p.m.: *Entrée* course

outside the Hull and Allair home, H Street near 25th

8 p.m.: Dessert course

in Marshall Park, near the tot-lot (28th and I Streets)

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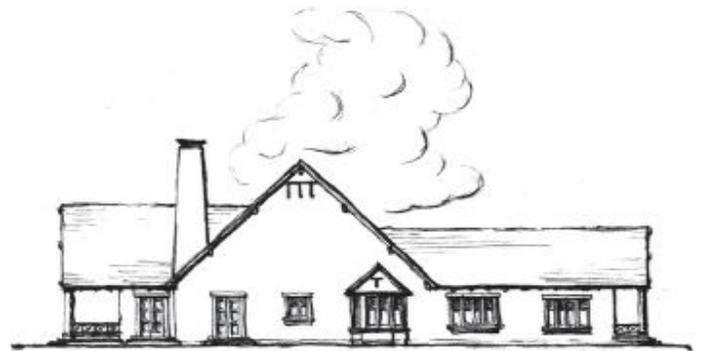
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Boulevard Park Neighborhood Association purpose: The BPNA was created to support, promote, and improve the quality of life for the residents of the greater Boulevard Park neighborhood. By achieving this goal we strive thereby to improve the quality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

Committees

Membership: Ty Dockery and Liz Edmonds
Preservation: Eric Knutson

Park Beat Production Team

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Places to Go, People To See

Every Saturday:

Free Yoga in the Park: 9 a.m., McKinley Park (behind the H Street Rose Garden). For more information, go to:

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

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

Wed., July 4: Independence Day: Celebrations throughout the city!

Fri., July 6: "First Friday Fun Flow": experience free yoga at Sutter's Fort State Park on the first Friday of each month, May through September (6-7 p.m.)

Sun., July 8: Sacramento Antique Faire, held the second Sunday of every month (under the freeway at 21st and X Streets; 6:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.; \$3 admission fee for adults). Website:

<http://www.sacantiquefaire.com>

Tues., July 10: 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.

Fri., July 13: First day of the California State Fair (through July 29). Website: <http://www.castatefair.org>

Sat., July 14: "Bugs of the River Banks": FORB-sponsored event at Sutter's Landing (10 a.m.: article on p. 6)

Sat., July 14: 9th Annual Bastille Day Waiters' Race, Handle District (L Street between 18th and 19th Streets; 4-5:30 p.m., with race starting at 4:30). See article on p. 4, or go to: <http://sacramentobastilleday.com>

Places to Go, People To See (cont.)

Sat., July 14: Second Saturday ArtWalk. Galleries around town will be open to present individual and group shows of artists' work.

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

Sat., July 14: Free Outdoor Movie: *LaLa Land*, projected on the outer wall of Sutter's Fort, west side (starting at about 8 p.m.)

Sun., July 15: "Pay-What-You-Wish" at the Crocker (every third Sunday of the month)

Sun., July 15: "Downtown Drives," California Automobile Museum, 2200 Front St. (every third Sunday of the month; 10 a.m.-3 p.m.): ride around downtown Sacramento in a 1931 Model A (free with museum admission). Website:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1074588216024557/>

... And, looking ahead to the first week of August:

Sat., Aug. 4: "Harvest Day 2018—A Gardener's Dream": presented by UCCE Sacramento County Master Gardeners at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. (8 a.m.-2 p.m.). Website: <http://sacmg.ucanr.edu>

Tues., Aug. 7: National Night Out, with a progressive 3-course dinner co-hosted by the Boulevard Park and Marshall School/New Era Park neighborhood associations.

"Shout-Out" to Thai Basil:

*It's Not Just Their
Curry that is
Green!*



Thai Basil restaurant, 25th and J Streets, now uses paper straws rather than plastic, joining a world-wide movement to ban plastic straws in favor of paper or compostable ones. Multiple cities in the US and Europe have now done so, and American Airlines agreed to stop using them at the request of a Girl Scout (for more information about this and other anti-straw initiatives, go to: <https://www.fastcompany.com/40580132/here-are-the-u-s-cities-that-have-banned-plastic-straws-so-far>).

Why does it matter? At International Coastal Cleanups, volunteers have picked up more than half a million plastic straws and stirrers, making straws one of the top ten items on their annual list. Straws pose a real danger to the marine animals (fish, sea turtles, albatross, etc.) that eat them, causing severe internal damage. According to the Ocean Conservancy, we could prevent five million plastic straws a year from entering the ocean, polluting the water, and harming wildlife, if all restaurants and cafés followed provided their clients with paper straws. You can help by just saying "no thanks" if offered a plastic straw—or, better yet, by bringing your own steel, glass, or bamboo reusable straws (available at the Natural Foods Co-Op and elsewhere).

And, if you eat at Thai Basil, or any other restaurant that is now using paper straws, be sure to tell them "thanks" for taking that small but significant step.

Three BPNA board members recently met with Sean de Courcy, Associate Preservation Planner with Sacramento's Community Development Department. Sean is part of a team charged by the City with the establishment of comprehensive "Historic District Plans" for Sacramento's existing historic districts (those listed on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources, like Boulevard Park). On completion, this project will provide the design standards needed to guide further development so that it is appropriate for Sacramento's unique historic districts.

This sounds like the response from the City that Boulevard Park residents have been hoping for, particularly during the many months of negotiation involving the Central City Specific Plan, recently approved by the Sacramento City Council. Many City officials appear to agree that clear design standards and ordinances must be in place so that developers and property owners know what is (and is not) appropriate when planning infill projects and when remodeling historic homes.

However, not everyone agrees on how infill development should be handled in historic districts. Some people contend that the City already has too many restrictions on what can be built. Sean assured the board members that the goal of this project is to make the planning process easier and more efficient for all while assuring the preservation of the historic areas that make Sacramento unique.

Throughout the summer, project researchers will be in the field working on historic context and property-by-property documentation. Residents are likely to encounter people walking around their neighborhoods and taking notes on tablets. The development of design standards will extend through the rest of this year into Spring of 2019 and will involve a series of stakeholder meetings to assure adequate feedback. The first public workshop about the project will be in November 2018. An administrative draft document incorporating insights from the workshop will be presented at a Preservation Commission meeting in January 2019. The Draft Historic District Plans document resulting from that meeting will be presented at a second public meeting in February 2019. The final draft of the Historic District Plans and Development Standards should be finished by April 2019, but the adoption of the plans may not occur until late in year. All residents are encouraged to attend the public meetings and participate in the discussion. For further information and updates, go to the city website (<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/HDP>). If you have additional questions, Sean de Courcy can be reached at (916) 808-2796 or by email at sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org.

2018 Sacramento Bastille Day Waiters' Race

Eight years ago, at the prompting of an article printed in *Sactown Magazine* ("The Pour de France"), the traditional Bastille Day Foot-Race was introduced in Sacramento. It has been held annually in the Handle District, and often features collateral events celebrating French culture and California cuisine. This year, as in 2017, it will benefit the Alliance Française de Sacramento and the Sacramento Film Festival. Waiters and waitresses from restaurants throughout the city will compete in the race which requires them to balance a bottle of

sparkling water and two half-filled glasses on a tray while speed-walking two laps around the block bordered by Capitol Avenue and 18th, 19th, and L Streets. In 2017, the main event was followed by a children's race.



Above: French postcard showing the *Course des garçons de café*

Details about this year's full program were not yet available as of this writing, but it will be held on July 14 (4-5:30 p.m.). For information and updates, the event website is: <https://sacramentobastilleday.com>

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2018 Historic Home Tours: Not To Be Missed!

Sponsored by Preservation Sacramento, the 43rd Annual Historic Home Tour will showcase the Capitol Mansions Historic District. Noted for its large, stately homes built in the late 1800s and early 1900s, this neighborhood is flourishing with recent residential restoration and renovation. The six homes selected for the tour represent Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, Prairie Bungalow and Classic Four-Square styles of architecture. Five of the six buildings have been returned to single-family homes after serving as commercial ventures (bed-and-breakfast establishments, boarding houses, or commercial offices). Tour participants will be provided with information brochures for a self-guided experience (September 16, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Discounted tickets (\$30 instead of \$35) can be purchased in advance of the tour by going to the website: <http://www.preservationsacramento.org/hometour/>. Full-price tickets will be on sale at Preservation Sacramento's booth on the day of the tour, starting at 9:30 a.m. (go to the street fair in the lot at the northwest corner of 22nd Street and Capitol Avenue). This also is where all tour participants will pick up their wrist-bands (needed for access to the houses) and information brochures. If you are interested in volunteering for a two-hour shift on the day of the tour and have not signed on already as a docent at one of the historic homes, please send an email with "volunteer" in the subject line to: preservation.sacramento@gmail.com.



The 2300 block of M Street (Capitol Avenue), looking west, in about 1911.

Spaghetti Dinner Volunteers

Boulevard Park's Spaghetti Dinner is **September 8**. Every pair of hands is welcome! This annual event would not be possible without the enthusiastic participation of neighborhood residents. Volunteers can choose between several assignments, contact Emily Herbert at **(916) 444-6690** if you want to volunteer and be part of some great neighborhood camaraderie.

Locomotive Junction: Fifth Graders Score with Sacramento Republic Football Club

Every Spring, Washington Elementary celebrates the accomplishments of its students by showcasing school work they have completed during the academic year. This year, an ambitious project undertaken by Mr. James McDaniel's class caught the attention of the Sacramento Republic FC, the local pro soccer team.

Washington Elementary uses Project Based Learning (PBL), where students must solve a problem ("driving question") through group inquiry and effort. The driving question confronted by the class was: "How can we, as fifth grade project-planners of the new Sacramento Republic FC stadium, decide the seating capacity and overall size of the stadium, design it to LEED specifications, and build a model?"



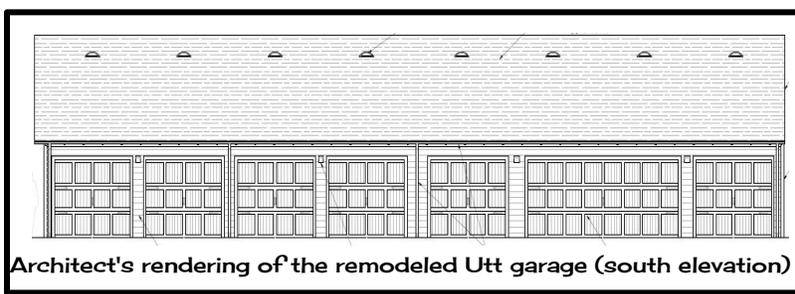
Working as groups and using many materials (including cardboard, toothpicks, and shapes made by the 3-D printer that BPNA donated to the school last year), the students built scale models that they showed to representatives of the Sacramento Republic FC. The students also made a presentation where they described key features of their models, challenges they had faced, and solutions they had found. CEO Ben Gumpert and players Josh Cohen (Goalie) and Christian Eissele (Forward) clearly were impressed by what they saw. In a Facebook post afterwards, the soccer club praised the students for the "thorough research" that had gone into their projects. Later in the week, the students and their families were the club's guests for Equality Night. The class members also got to take photos on the field after the game.

The soccer stadium project was very successful in fulfilling Washington Elementary's mission by involving the students in a real community project that has implications for Boulevard Park and the larger downtown/midtown area. The project also brought the soccer club closer to the community. In this match, however, the students were clearly the winner.

Dr. Utt's Garages on Historic Alley

Boulevard Park architect Eric Knutson is working on an interesting project just outside the historic Boulevard Park neighborhood. In 1932, the City Health Department Inspector, Dr. James G. Utt, bought the house and lot at 811 25th Street, between H and I Streets. The house had been built shortly before June 1904, when its first owner, attorney Benjamin Franklin Driver, moved into the "charming new home" with his wife, Clara Reeves (daughter of the State Treasurer). The second owner, Robert H. Dalzell, managed the Purity Ice Cream Factory. Dr. Utt, the third owner, added the eight-stall garage on the south side of the lot, facing Historic Alley.

This last structure, built in February 1932, either replaced or incorporated the single car garage that, according to the 1915 Sanborn Atlas, originally stood in the southeast corner of the lot. Over the years, a pecan tree planted near the old garage—either by Dr. Utt or by one of his predecessors—grew steadily, and now towers over the yard. When Ann Gerhardt and Jim McElroy, the current owners, expanded the east end of the garage several years ago, they had the builder include a cut-out to accommodate the heritage tree. However, the racket of ricocheting pecans on the garage's metal roof has persuaded them to make a further modification, the installation of a composition roof. The new shingles, in the same color as those on the house, are one of several features that reinforce the connection between the two structures. The house and garage also share similar roof slopes, eaves treatment (with projecting wooden joists or "outriggers" in the gable ends), and wall covering (lapped siding). As a result, the remodeled garage still will contribute to the old-fashioned streetscape of Historic Alley near 25th Street.



Architect's rendering of the remodeled Utt garage (south elevation)

News from Friends of the River Banks



On **Saturday, July 14 at 10 a.m.**, FORB's "Bugs of the River Banks" hike will introduce you to the insects that live in, on, and around the river. Join entomologist Nita Davidson on a bug walk and scavenger hunt of aquatic insects and insects on plants. We will have a few insect nets to share and will demonstrate the proper techniques for catching (and releasing) crawling and flying insects. And because it's Bastille Day, you'll learn a few insect names *en français* (also known as "entomological etymology") and about the remarkable contributions of French naturalist Jean-Henri Fabre (1823-1915). For more information, contact Nita at nadavidson@att.net. We will be meeting at Sutter's Landing Park parking lot at the very end of 28th Street. Try to walk, bike, or carpool if possible.

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