
St. John/Coronado Hills Combined Neighborhood Plan
Wednesday, August 5, 2009 – J.J. Pickle Elementary School Cafeteria
Crime Prevention and Public Safety

Overview: Dee Dee Quinnelly, Senior Planner, began with brief introductions and an explanation of the evening's topic (Crime Prevention and Public Safety) and workshop activities. Additionally, Dee Dee introduced the two Austin Police Department guest speakers, Officer Diaz (Senior Police Officer) and Mario Renteria (Community Liaison).

Officer Diaz's presentation to the SJ/CH participants provided information on the structure of APD, the organization of the District Representatives (DRs), the difference between APD and Code Compliance, the crime trends in SJ/CH and finally, the role of the community in crime prevention.

After Officer Diaz completed his presentation, he opened the floor for questions and comments.

1. Neighborhood: What is the process for the community to give APD data on non-emergency crimes?

a. Call APD for crimes that are "in process" or visibly taking place. Call 311 for those non-emergency crimes or crimes that you suspect, but cannot prove to be taking place in that moment. By making these calls, an incident is logged into the system. APD then processes the incident by looking at the address and then investigating the situation. You should call APD every time it happens as this begins to indicate "frequency."

2. Neighborhood: If you know a house around is selling/dealing drugs do you call each time? What happens when you report narcotics? How do you know if the problem was solved?

a. Yes, call each time you suspect a transaction is being made. This may create a "buzz" due to the frequency of the issue. By making these calls, an incident is logged into the system. APD then processes the incident by looking at the address and then investigating the situation. It can take a matter of weeks for APD to solve the issue, so always get a case number and follow-up with APD to see the status of the case. Again, call 911 if the incident is "visible" and 311 if the incident is "suspect."

3. Neighborhood: What types of information or details are helpful?

a. Vehicle license plates are very important and extremely helpful. Any information in terms gender (male/female), vehicle description and any other details of the person

4. Neighborhood: Is it best to call-in or email information?

- a. Do both; this will allow APD to cross-reference. If the crime is happening right then and there, then 1) Call 911; 2) Get a case #; and 3) Follow-up

5. Neighborhood Comments: Neighbors should document or log all activity to create a record. This information can also be shared with APD. Documentation should include the case number assigned. Neighbors should remember to ask for the assigned case number. Follow up – call back and check up on what has happened with the case.

6. Neighborhood: How to handle mis-treatment by APD officer?

Next, Mario Renteria, Community Liaison with APD, gave his presentation based on Crime prevention and public safety. After Mario's presentation the Question/Answer/Comment period began.

1. Neighborhood: For Operation ID, how do we get APD to mark appliances?
Neighbors can use an engraver to mark their personal belongings.

2. Neighborhood: Can the neighborhood set up an Auto ID Day?
Neighborhood can coordinate w/APD Auto Theft division.

3. Comment made from neighborhood stakeholder: Creekside Duplexes will not have sex offenders in them. Background checks will be conducted by property managing company. Neighborhood has concerns about customers, negative associations and section 8 housing.

The second part of the Community Life – Crime Prevention and Public Safety workshop focused on a group exercise consisting of the following:

- 1) Identify areas in the SJ/CH community where you feel safe and explain.
- 2) Identify areas in SJ/CH that you feel unsafe and explain.
- 3) Matching solutions to the issues
- 4) Sign-up to volunteer for interest in developing the SJ/CH code resource guide.

Neighborhood planning staff divided the participants into two large working groups for the mapping and discussion exercise. The participants were encouraged to brainstorm and participate in discussing safe and unsafe conditions in their community. The outcome of the discussion was two maps showing areas considered "safe" and "unsafe" by the SJ/CH participants. This

information will inform the crime prevention and public safety section of the SJ/CH neighborhood plan and will also be shared with APD.

The following notes capture the thoughts and comments expressed by SJCH participants when asked to explain areas where they feel “safe” and areas where they feel “unsafe.” The [crime workshop map](#) further illustrates specific details related to community safety.

Characteristics of “safe” areas:

- Well maintained properties
- Home ownership

Characteristics of “unsafe” areas:

- Negative visuals (prostitutes & homeless people)
- Poorly maintained apartments/rental properties
- People drinking outside
- Drug related activity
- Gambling related activity
- Robberies
- High speed traffic

What are some ideas/suggestions to address the identified issues on the map?

- Citizens on patrol would help – get APD to bring this training back (neighbors to be in charge of blocks)
- We need a visible presence at night to curb the issues. This needs to be APD as citizens are not going to patrol at night.
- Increase awareness of commercial property owners
- Neighborhood Watch program would help
- Better communication between neighbors (let neighbors know your whereabouts)
- More APD patrols
- Provide neighbors w/APD officer info (phone # & email address)
- Neighbors to share info w/Spanish speaking neighbors (challenge – learning Spanish)