

Meeting Minutes, Westwinds Residents Organization Board of Directors

Saturday, February 6, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Present: Antonio Bastida, Jim Canova, Debbie Clark, Dexter Goody, Patrick Grimes, Jane Libador, Susan Taylor, Jennie Wilstead, and Stacey Winkelmann

Maria Martinez, an organizer for her mobile home park, joined us today. Buena Vista Mobile Home Park in Palo Alto has 96 homes and about 400 mostly Latino residents. Turnover is low because their community is safe and affordable, with good public schools for their children. Maria has lived there about 13 years. Around 2012, they received a scary notice similar to the one we received just over a year ago. In their case, the owner did not want to spend the money needed to maintain the park, and he gave them six months' notice that he was going to sell the land for redevelopment. Residents began meeting regularly and created a formal organization. By using social media and inviting more people, including from the surrounding community, their attendance grew from less than a dozen to 200.

They succeeded in saving their park partly by reaching out to churches and other community organizations. Through volunteers at their homework club, they persuaded Stanford students to help them organize rallies on El Camino where they would be more visible. They gave newspaper and television interviews. They hosted meals and other events to recruit members and raise funds. They printed T-shirts and brought photos of families to city council meetings.

Maria stressed the need to focus on a positive message, avoid criticizing others, and put in the work of making personal contacts to convince people to join your cause. The following five years were frustrating, as the owner did not want to sell the land to them, and government agencies were sympathetic but unable to find a solution. Despite the odds against them, in 2018, politicians used an assortment of funding sources to purchase the park. This is now the third year since the land became owned by the county housing authority. They now feel secure against the threat of redevelopment.

We now have orders for 13 curb ramps, close to half of what we need. Patrick will update the website to add the fact that there is no cost to join WRO.

There is nothing new to report on the lawsuit.

Jim will follow up with Paul and Kim about presenting the "condominium" option.

We discussed how Isaias has not been attending board meetings for a long time. Patrick will let him know that we need to replace him. Dexter will post on Facebook that we are looking for a new board member from Los Encinos, and also one from Hermitage (to replace Vince, who passed away last year).

Our next meeting will be 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 6.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Grimes