

# Kensington-Talmadge Planning Group



P.O. Box 16391, San Diego, CA 92176

[www.ktpg.org](http://www.ktpg.org)

## Regular Meeting Minutes – Final (Approved 2011 July)

2011-06-08

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**PARLIAMENTARY ITEMS**

**CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**

A regular meeting of the Kensington Talmadge Planning Group (KTPG) was called to order by KTPG chair David Moty on June 8, 2011 at 6:33 in the Franklin Elementary Auditorium (4481 Copeland Ave., San Diego, CA, 92116). The minutes were recorded by KTPG Secretary John M. Garrison.

**Members present at the start of the meeting:** Bob Coffin, Frank Doft, Fred Lindahl, Gail Greer, Guy Hanford, John M. Garrison, Kevin Kelly, Sean Harrison, Sherry Hopwood, Pam Hubbell, Daniele Laman, David Moty, Ann Pease, Keith Roudebush, Elvia Sandoval

**Members absent at the start of the meeting:** None.

**Also present:** Council Member Todd Gloria, Dion Akers (from the office of City Council Member Todd Gloria) and approximately 40 members of the public

**MODIFICATIONS TO AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA (ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA)**

A motion to approve the agenda with no changes was made by John M. Garrison and seconded by Keith Roudebush. The motion was approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETING(S)**

David Moty asked if anyone had any objections to approval of the May, 2011 minutes. Hearing none, he declared that the minutes were approved.

**TREASURER’S REPORT – REPORT FROM PRIOR MONTH**

**Starting Balance:** May 1 , 2011 - \$447.13

**Income**

\$26.00

**Expenditures:**

None



**Ending Balance:** \$473.13

## COMMUNITY FORUM / NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Secretary's note: Mark Daddario. – submitted a speaker slip “47<sup>th</sup> – speed bumps 2 80% of people approving it who live or own on the street between Monroe and El Cajon. “ but community forum was deferred to the end of the meeting and he was not present at that time to speak.

## NON-SUBCOMMITTEE ITEMS

### COMMUNITY FORUM WITH COUNCILMEMBER TODD GLORIA

[Secretary's note: Generally, KTPG requests audience members to fill in a speaker slip in order to be recognized to ask questions or comment on the agenda items. This helps us maintain the orderly flow of the meeting (e.g. everyone gets a chance to be heard) and it also helps us to record who spoke, and what concerns they raise. At this meeting, we did not require speaker slips. The secretary was still able to catch most of the questions, but sometimes the secretary was not able to catch the names of the speakers. As a reminder, our meeting notes are never an exact transcript of what was said; rather they are meant to give a general sense of the points raised and the overall direction of the discussion.]

David Moty - our community plan is 13 years old and would normally come up for review in the 2018 timeframe. But I am hearing that there is no money to support a community plan update possibly for decades. So my question is would Todd Gloria support a community plan amendment for Kensington-Talmadge? In light of the Copley YMCA planning to take over the site of the former Pearson Ford, it seems there could be a need to revisit the plan.

[Secretary's note: Information on this proposed project can be found at: <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/price/index.htm> ]

Todd Gloria – We passed our city's budget on Monday and we passed a balanced budget that maintains most city services. One of the sources we did tap is money for community plan updates. I don't think it will take until 2030 though. I think we are seeing the economy improve and we have made many improvements in city financing. If there is a community plan amendment that is necessary then of course I would support you in working to change what needs to be changed.

Suzanne Grant – Would you like to make a comment on this wall we are getting along Aldine Drive? [Secretary's note: Information on the Aldine Slope Restoration project can be found at: <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/Aldine-slope/Aldine1.htm> ]

Todd Gloria – Yes, it is interesting. It is sort of like what is old is new again. I remember being the rep to this group way back when. I find it useful to be here hearing what it is that you want. I do feel that the project is an urgent need. The houses and the road are both in danger. The sidewalk question I have asked in the past. I am told that the roadway is not wide enough the whole way, so possibly there could be a partial sidewalk but not a full sidewalk. The vegetation we can probably work with you on. Maybe we can save some of the trees; I don't know.



Suzanne Grant – maybe I should have been more specific. This is a neighborhood where the people care about the community. We spent a lot of time analyzing the project and almost none of recommendations were heeded. It is as if we all spent our time and wasted our time. We listen to what The City has to say and we get what The City wants to know.

Todd Gloria – this was an approved project that was unfunded. So, I went out and hustled to find funding. The amount we paid out on Mt. Soledad is enough that we could have funded our libraries for several years. [Secretary’s note: this is a reference to mudslides on Mt. Soledad where the city had to pay for damages to some houses.]

Suzanne Grant – would you ensure that Mr. Moty gets a copy of the report.

Todd Gloria – Yes, we will get that done. The open records act requires it.

John M. Garrison – I believe one of the things that we were very concerned about was that we submitted our list of recommendations and we never heard back. They never sent a notification to Tom Hebrank (our chair at the time) or Tom Adam (the Project Review Subcommittee) at the time. It would be great if they would have come before KTPG and explained to us what they can and can’t do, and exactly why.

Daniele Laman – We need to ensure there are native plants, and we need to ensure they are coving the wall better.

Todd Gloria – It seems like you are talking past yourself a little bit. Is it native plants or is it coverage?

Dainele Laman – It is both.

Todd Gloria – I understand but it is difficult to accomplish much on the eve of the project.

Keith Roudebush – that is what I come back to is that 6 months before, we needed to get a complete plan update.

\_\_\_ - I think we can talk about Aldine until we are blue in the face. My question is what is the role of the planning group. It seems they make recommendations that is ignored. It makes me wonder whether our next recommendation will also be ignored. Can you tell us what is the role of the planning group?

Todd Gloria – I recognize this is important and that people are spending a great amount of valuable time.

\_\_\_ - I live on the Talmadge loop and our contractor got disbarred, and that has been many years.

Todd Gloria – I think that is scheduled now but I will look into it.

John M. Garrison – I have a question on a different topic. I would like to first read you a paragraph from a report and then ask you your opinion on it. This may be a new topic for you so if the answer is that you need to study it and get back to us then of course that is OK. This is from a report by speedmatters.org and they are referencing Federal Communications Commission statements on high-speed internet access. The report is at <http://speedmatters.org/content/internet-speed-report>

**U.S. Economic Growth Depends on High-Speed Internet.** High-speed broadband is the fundamental infrastructure of the 21st century, fueling sustainable economic growth and job creation. It determines whether we will have the 21st century networks we need to create the jobs of the future, develop our economy, and support innovations in telemedicine, education, public safety, energy conservation, and provision of public services to improve our lives and



communities. Most U.S. Internet connections are not fast enough in both directions to permit interactive home-based medical monitoring, multi-media distance learning, or to send and receive data to run a home-based business.

The FCC goal for 2015 is for 80% of US households to have 50mpbs download and 20mpbs upload speeds.  
The FCC goal for 2020 is for 80% of US households to have 100mpbs download and 100mpbs upload speeds.

John M. Garrison – It seems to me that San Diego is a leader in several high-tech fields and it seems reasonable to me that we should expect to near the top with respect to internet performance. My question is, do you agree with this report in terms of the importance of high-speed internet, and would you support efforts to ensure San Diego is near the top of the rankings for US access speeds?

Todd Gloria – Yes, I do think high speed internet access is important and I do support San Diego having good access. It is almost like supporting motherhood and apple pie.

John M. Garrison – Thank you. I think this is important to the discussion of utility undergrounding and so I will bring it up again later tonight when we are on that topic.

Ralph Reibli - On the Talmadge Loop, what is the difference between repaving and re-slurrying?

Todd Gloria – re-slurrying is where they don't dig the street up. It is more of a preventative maintenance topic.

Ralph Riebli – I know there is a prohibition on repaving streets if they are going to be redone in 3 years or less. if you re-slurry, can you repave in three years?

Todd Gloria – That is my understanding, yes.

Priscilla – I am not a lawyer, but I am really concerned that the Aldine Slope project may not be eligible for federal funding and I wonder if it exposes us to litigation. And I also wonder if maybe it means we aren't stuck with the criteria that they say we are stuck with.

Todd Gloria – I can tell you that The City gets federal funds for a lot of projects, and I seriously doubt we could have gotten these funds if we were not eligible.

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

### MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

John M. Garrison – the Membership and Communication subcommittee has been working on several things, including updates and improvements to our website and also revisions to the A-frame signs that we put out on meeting nights. We also put out some special signs along the Memorial Day holiday parade. The signs we put along the parade route were designed to inform people of the existence of KTPG and to direct them to [www.ktpg.org](http://www.ktpg.org) for more information. I would like to thank Pam Hubbell for making those signs and for organizing the volunteers who put the signs out every month on the day of our KTPG meetings.

We have some expenses we are seeking to be approved by KTPG. Our web hosting is still being provided for free by [www.nethere.com](http://www.nethere.com) but we do have to pay for our domain name registration. In about 8 months, we will need to renew our web domain name, so we have some time but there is no reason to leave it to the last minute. It is also possible the domain name provider may run a sale and it would be good to act on that if it comes to pass. Also, we have a need to update the A-frame signs due to our new meeting location. It is cheaper to make a patch rather



than print completely new signs so that is what we plan to do. The subcommittee passed two motions for consideration by the KTPG:

- KTPG shall authorize John M. Garrison to spend up to \$100 on renewing the existing web domain, provided that John submits the receipt to be reimbursed for the actual amount spent.
- KTPG shall authorize Pam Hubbell to spend up to \$100 on printing signage, provided that John submits the receipt to be reimbursed for the actual amount spent.

David Moty asked if there was any discussion of these two items and there was none. David asked if anyone objected to considering both motions on the same vote and no objections were raised. Since the motions were approved by the subcommittee, no second was needed. David called for a vote and the motions were approved unanimously.

## TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Did not meet in May.

## PROJECT REVIEW

Ann Pease – I would like to give an update on Aldine Drive Slope Restoration [Secretary's note: Information on the Aldine Slope Restoration project can be found at: <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/Aldine-slope/Aldine1.htm> ]

Ann Pease presented a picture that she drew to scale showing how many plantings the city planned to make along the wall. According to the drawing, it is a small number of plants that will not cover very much of the wall.

John M. Garrison - The City does not plan to include a sidewalk, despite it being in the community plan to encourage a pedestrian friendly community. I think if we have any chance to change the plans and get a sidewalk instead of a Jersey barrier, we have to push that very soon.

\_\_\_\_\_ - as someone whose house sits about the slope, I don't care about the sidewalk or any other features of the wall. I just want the wall built.

Suzanne Grant - I am concerned that The City would not agree to even do a noise study. Now we are learning that the project is 1/3 longer than shown on the community plans, so the noise and other impacts will be even more.

Joan Fitzsimons – I would like to address why this is a highway wall. It is because federal emergency funds were granted approximately 5 years after there was an emergency. This project does not even seem to qualify for the funds being used to build it. It is not a federal freeway or collector. And there has been no catastrophic failure. The damage is not and has never been an emergency. I am very curious how they managed to justify transferring the money. It is a result of transferring the money that it is being built to freeway standards.

Bob Coffin – I wonder what the lesson to be learned here is. We have spent hundreds of hours on this between the main KTPG meetings and the subcommittee meetings. And never in any of those meetings was there ever a representative from CalTrans. The Project representative who did come was incredibly rude to us. Remember they promised us that the grove of trees would not be removed. Remember they promised us plants at the base of the wall growing up the wall. We worked very hard on this and The City has basically mocked the community.



## UNDERGROUNDING

### INFORMATION ITEM: ESTABLISHMENT OF UNDERGROUNDING TASK FORCE

Bob Coffin gave an explanation of the background on the topic of utility undergrounding. [Secretary's note: Information on the utility undergrounding project can be found at <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/undergrounding/index.htm> ] Bob said that Ralph Riebli really brought this to his attention because of some of the less than ideal things that had happened in Talmadge. Don Taylor examined what was done in Mission Hills and found that the quality was much higher than what was done in Talmadge. [Secretary's note: view a slide show of undergrounding in Talmadge at <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/undergrounding/talmadge/> ]

About 3 weeks ago there was a unanimous vote by the CPC to ask the City Council to promote a city-wide task force to promote the uniform treatment of these boxes.

Bob's update was followed by a slide presentation from subcommittee member Don Taylor (55MB PPT file: <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/undergrounding/docs/underground-presentation-2011-06.ppt> 3MB PDF file: <http://www.ktpg.org/projects/undergrounding/docs/underground-presentation-2011-06.ppt> ).

Nick Felfe – I have been looking into the DuPont underground transformers which have been in use in other geographic areas for 8 years with no problems. We did make a brief presentation to SDG&E asking them to use these type of transformers. The reply we got back was that SDG&E was hesitant to adopt them because (a) they are not in widespread use and (b) they did not have the money to pay for them. Andy Field\_\_\_ is in charge of Maintenance Assessment Districts in The City. He assured us that the community could form a MAD solely for the purpose of paying for these boxes. I put out an internet survey with 5 possible responses ranging from definitely in favor of an assessment district to definitely against an assessment district. I sent out about 390 requests to participate. The results are:

- Definitely in favor – 43%
- Somewhat in favor – 27%
- Neutral and may want more info – 15%
- Somewhat against – 6%
- Definitely against – 9%

Cost would be approximately \$1,500 - \$2,000. It would be a one-time fee and we would need to come up with the money right away.

Ron Anderson\_\_\_ - Project 3HH has been approved in City Council but hasn't gotten all of the needed easements, so nothing has gotten started yet. So, how could my area benefit from this? Do you see it being retroactive?

Todd Gloria – it is very rare that a policy is retroactive. I don't know exactly what the defining time point would be.

David Moty – I think the fact they haven't got those remaining two easements is what is protecting you.

Kevin Kelly – I don't share Bob's optimism about making change. I think the cell phone towers are a prime example. [To Todd Gloria] You are prohibited as a City Council member from mentioning safety as an issue. The



FCC is the sole arbiter of electromagnetic radiation and if you say anything about it you are out of the box. I encourage you and the city attorney to look at this creatively. Looking at the utility boxes, they are graffiti magnets. Maybe that is the angle to claim some jurisdiction around that. Or maybe it is something else.

Fred Lindahl – the other part that people don't often think about is the transformer pads which stick out 6 inches into some sidewalks and one inch above the sidewalk. I have 6 in front of my house. I just happened to catch them when they were installing them. I told them they needed to cut into the sidewalk and get down to sidewalk grade. They didn't quite get there, they got to ¼ inch above the grade, but at least it is better.

Keith Roudebush – What about the issue of ADA access?

Fred Lindahl – it does not apply because they still have the minimum width.

Roger Utt – Did Mission Hills pay the banana republic ransom to get their units put underground?

Roger Utt – I wasn't sure what that \$1,500 - \$2,000 price represented is that per transformer?

Nick Felfe – the incremental cost of the transformer is about \$15,000. It is supposed to support about 8-10 houses, so this is how the math works out.

Roger Utt – We had enough of a hard time getting people in our community to support \$150 for tree trimming.

Nick Felfe – but that is a different purpose. According to the survey people are in favor of raising the money for this purpose.

Ralph Riebli – even with current technology, not counting on the Dupont boxes, some utility companies have put their transformers completely underground for their community. Pacific Gas and Electric, for instance.

Suzanne Grant – The Mission Hills that was done truly underground. Was that done before or after Talmadge, or during?

Don Taylor – it is still being done right now. So, it can't be said that it was an older design. It was a newer design.

Suzanne Grant – the presentation mentioned some types of projects (20Bs and 20Cs) where the homeowners have more input.

Don Taylor – I don't know if those are regularly done in San Diego but I asked why they wouldn't give us the same option. A representative I asked at one point said that he didn't see why it couldn't be done like that so long as they only had to meet with one person, but that they see the City as the customer. I asked him what would happen if the City appointed someone to speak for this and he said that might be possible.

Todd Gloria – there are a couple of ways things can go forward.

Dianne Onstad - while Cox is doing all this, I think it would be important if Cox could upgrade their services.

Bob Coffin – I think that was what John [Garrison] was lobbying for.

\_\_\_ - is it the same subcontractor doing the better design in Mission Hills?

Don Taylor – I think that is another point about the task force is that we want a high standard and not be beholden to the choice of the subcontractor.



\_\_\_ - it seems to me that it is a matter of money. Simply a matter of money. We've got all these things being put in front of our house but if we pay we can get them underground.

Bob Coffin – that's right, but not everyone has money.

\_\_\_ - is the Mission Hills area in a historic area.

Don Taylor – No they are not all in a historic area. And the utilities have not raised that as a reason for the better design.

\_\_\_ - I am a candlestick fan, not a cobra fan. When there is no money and undergrounding goes in, Cobras go in.

Bob Coffin – the subcommittee approved 4 action items for consideration by the KTPG:

1. Action Item: Endorse educational document prepared by Undergrounding Subcommittee and North Park Planning Committee's Utility Box Task Force as an accurate reflection of utility box and undergrounding issues facing Kensington-Talmadge and the City of San Diego.
2. Action Item: Endorse formation of a City wide task force to address the negative aesthetic issues associated with undergrounding and utility box placement, through Council Policy and a City Ordinance. [Endorse the task force working to ensure higher levels of service, such as higher internet access speeds]
3. Action Item: If the above task force is formed, nominate and approve a member of the KTPG for membership.
4. Action Item: Request the Chair of the KTPG to send a letter to Councilmember Todd Gloria asking for his support for the city-wide task force.

David Moty asked if there was an objection to considering the 4 motions together. John M. Garrison said that he would like to have them separated because he planned to offer an amendment to one item. David asked John to state the amendment. John said he would like to amend the second item to say:

2. Action Item: Endorse formation of a City wide task force to address the negative aesthetic issues associated with undergrounding and utility box placement, through Council Policy and a City Ordinance. Endorse the task force working to ensure higher levels of service, such as higher internet access speeds.

John asked Bob if he would like to accept the amendment as a friendly amendment, in which case we would not need to vote separately on the amendment. Bob said he saw no problem with the addition and accepted it as a friendly amendment. John said since the motion has changed since the subcommittee approved it, that the motion may now require a second.

Bob Coffin moved the approval of the 4 action items, as amended. John M. Garrison seconded the motion.

Daniel Laman – I have asked the question about what can be done as are-do at the end of the list. I think we should lobby to fix that at some point.

Keith Roudebush – Somewhere along the way they said that things were going to be brought up to current standard, but I don't know.



Pam Hubbell – I am not sure I understand why the amendment is being attached. It seems that the rest of the amendment is about safety, so why attach an amendment about service levels?

John M. Garrison – When undergrounding first came up, a lot of questions were raised about a lot of different aspects. I myself submitted a document with about 30 questions in early 2010. Some of those questions dealt with aesthetics but they also dealt with other issues ranging from safety (e.g. how do overhead lines and ground-level transformers compare with regard to fire safety) to service levels (e.g. will we get faster internet service as a result of this project). The subcommittee so far has focused mainly on aesthetics and I personally would like to see consideration of this other important issue.

David Moty – asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked the secretary to reread the motion as amended:

1. Endorse educational document prepared by Undergrounding Subcommittee and North Park Planning Committee's Utility Box Task Force as an accurate reflection of utility box and undergrounding issues facing Kensington-Talmadge and the City of San Diego.
2. Endorse formation of a City wide task force to address the negative aesthetic issues associated with undergrounding and utility box placement, through Council Policy and a City Ordinance. Endorse the task force working to ensure higher levels of service, such as higher internet access speeds.
3. If the above task force is formed, nominate and approve a member of the KTPG for membership.
4. Request the Chair of the KTPG to send a letter to Councilmember Todd Gloria asking for his support for the city-wide task force.

In favor: Bob Coffin Frank Doft, Fred Lindahl, Gail Greer, Guy Hanford, John M. Garrison, Kevin Kelly, Sean Harrison, Sherry Hopwood, Pam Hubbell, David Moty, Ann Pease, Keith Roudebush, Elvia Sandoval

Against: None

Abstaining - Daniele Laman said she was abstaining because the motion did not include a mention of eventually doing an improvement to the part of Talmadge that is already done.

## KTPG LIAISON COMMITTEE REPORTS

TMAD – Fred Lindahl – At the last meeting, some of the items brought up included the current lighting project over there. This includes the installation of about 120 lights in the eastern area of Talmadge. This would come to about \$2.2 million. It also includes about \$275,000 for poles in the western area of Talmadge. We are also looking at the specs for a 13 foot pole that mimics the existing ones. It will become a model.

CPC – David Moty – Councilmember Lightner mentioned the utility undergrounding task force as a priority. How much of a priority I don't know because she had a lot of priority items.

City Heights Redevelopment – next meeting Monday. 3 items we are looking at are installation of missing sidewalks in a specific neighborhood, installing 142 missing streetlights at a cost of \$1.8 million dollars, and another section of sidewalk

## AGENDA FOR THE NEXT KTPG MEETING



David Moty asked if there were items for the next meeting and a few items were mentioned:

- 47<sup>th</sup> street speed bumps
- Put Undergrounding back on just in case we need to talk about it.
- The question of when and where the next meeting would be. The KTPG sometimes skips a meeting (“goes dark”) in the summer, and Franklin Elementary is not available to us in the summer.

John M. Garrison – I won’t be able to attend the July meeting, so if we chose to meet in July someone will need to serve as secretary. David, do we know exactly when the school will be closed and not available to us?

David Moty – No I don’t. Sean, do you know?

Sean Harrison – No, I don’t.

Fred Lindahl – I would prefer to be dark in August because if we are breaking ground on Aldine, it might be better to be only 2 weeks into it.

David Moty – in that case Fred we may need you to be Secretary since John will be out in July.

Fred Lindahl – I have done it before so that should not be a problem.

Priscilla – a lot of the planning groups tend to go dark in December. I have often questioned why we need to go dark in the summer.

Dion – also, traditionally, legislative bodies are dark in August. I won’t be here in August.

Ann – why do we need to go dark at all?

David Moty – we don’t have to. But we lose this space for July and August. So, we have to find an alternate meeting space, presumably the Senior Center.

Sean Harrison – I think we should meet in July and will go dark in August

## ADJOURNMENT

John M. Garrison moved to adjourn, and Bob Coffin seconded. Hearing no objections, David Moty adjourned the meeting at 8:48pm.