President’s Porch
By James Reily

Is it just me?...Or have the last several months seemed exceptionally busy and stressful, with times of wonderful joy interspersed with events generating disappointment and profound frustration.

What gives? Well, we had the holidays, always a time of both stress and joy. We had the contentious election with its exceptional acrimony, polarization and “fake news”. And locally, we had the City Council approving a Community Plan for Mission Hills (as part of Uptown) that overturned over seven years of community involved work. We believe the approved plan was ill conceived, poorly researched, and will have irreversible negative impact on our community. Accordingly, we have brought legal action against the city to overturn the approval and work with us to develop a plan that better supports the need for more housing, especially affordable housing, while maintaining the character and charm of our neighborhoods. This is the mission of Mission Hills Heritage. Please read the short article by Barry Hager on the status of our legal action.

We are pleased to host a workshop that will set the record straight on historic districts.

In addition, we have a developer in construction on an 87-foot tall complex, “The Fort”, despite the 50-foot height limit. The development was structured so there was no opportunity for public comment or input. And there were (Continued on next page)
To preserve and protect the character, charm, and historic resources of Mission Hills, assuring that development projects harmonize with the established community and provide for community input into these projects.

Members’ Coffee Recap

By Betty Hauck

We had a beautiful day and a wonderful experience at our membership only coffee on February 4, 2017. Fifty-three of our members enjoyed their experience at this historic Craftsman home built between 1910 and 1912.

For many years this home was obviously void of maintenance until it was purchased and restored to its rightful grandeur. The restoration was a two-year tedious process accomplished by the owner, Brandon Soule with the aid of architect Kim Grant. All who attended were welcomed to a self-guided tour of the 4700 square feet home. Brandon gave a talk to the members about his endeavor and answered questions from Mission Hills Heritage members. Barry Hager and Jim Reily, Chairman and President, respectively of Mission Hills Heritage also gave a brief talk.

Coffee, pastries, and conversation in a historically significant home make these semi-annual membership coffee events most enjoyable. Watch for the location and date of our next membership only coffee.

Walking Tour continued

Present information on the Craftsman features, architects, and builders of the time, construction materials and building methods of the past and present. The resulting information will bring a greater understanding of the endearing charm of the Craftsman home, its popularity in Mission Hills, and California’s contribution to the Arts & Crafts Movement.

One of San Diego’s favorite food trucks will be on site between 9 am and 1:45 pm for purchasing a convenient lunch. Later in the afternoon, complimentary refreshments will feature luscious (almost famous!) homemade cookies.

Tickets, which include all activities, are $15 for MHH members and $20 for non-members. They may be purchased in advance at www.MissionHillsHeritage.org or on the day of the event at Francis Parker Lower School, 4201 Randolph Street. Morning tours will leave at intervals between at 10 and 11 am. Afternoon tours will begin at 1 pm and continue throughout the afternoon.

With this year’s format comprising a walking tour, and lectures and exhibitors, participants will gain a better understanding of Craftsman, then and now.

President’s Porch continued

No parking spaces allotted for the commercial activities. There is some good news in that there are affordable units planned in the complex. We need to make sure they are delivered.

And finally we had our own versions of “fake news” in that commercially backed organizations were spreading false and inflammatory information about the restrictions that historic districts place on homeowners. We are pleased to host a workshop on historic districts on Saturday, March 11 at the Francis Parker School auditorium to set the record straight. Admission is free and the event is open to the public. Please see the announcement with more detail in this newsletter.

Speaking of historic districts, our featured house in this edition is a beautiful, historically designated bungalow.

The owners completed an extensive expansion and by working with the city maintained the historic designation while more than doubling the living space in the house. Please see the article and photos…it’s exceptional.

Our walking tour is scheduled for May 6 starting at Francis Parker School. The theme is Craftsman homes, then and now. In addition, we will have several presentations about Craftsman architecture and construction. Please plan on attending.

And finally, we present our financials for 2016 with a look towards 2017. We are financially healthy and look forward to your continued support. If you want to help with our legal action please consider contributing. Our home page has a link to contribute.
Do you want to know the facts about historic districts and what they mean for you and your neighbors? Then mark your calendars for Saturday, March 11, 2017, when Mission Hills Heritage will host a free public workshop to explain and answer questions about historic districts. The workshop will take place in the auditorium of Francis Parker Lower School, located at 4201 Randolph Street in Mission Hills, from 1 to 3 pm.

Mission Hills is home to two existing historic districts formed ten years ago, which currently encompass over 275 homes. Additionally, the City of San Diego’s Planning Department has surveyed and identified numerous potential historic districts in Mission Hills and throughout Uptown. However, it became apparent during the recent Uptown Community Plan Update that there is a lack of information and much misinformation circulating about historic districts. The goal of this workshop is to provide accurate information, dispel myths, and address concerns about historic districts.

The session will feature two speakers knowledgeable about the formation and operation of historic districts: Diane Kane, Ph.D., is a retired Senior Planner who worked with the City of San Diego’s Historical Resources Board, and Ione R. Stiegler, FAIA, is principal architect with IS Architecture, specializing in projects with historical aspects. Both speakers have handled large-scale historic surveys and the implementation of historic districts. Discussion topics will include how the City treats properties within historic districts, how historic districts benefit and restrict properties, and how historic districts are defined. They will also include the difference between historic districts and individually designated historic sites, the process for surveying and establishing historic districts, and the meaning of terms such as “contributor” and “non-contributor.” A question and answer session will follow.

Light refreshments will also be provided. Please bring your questions and an inquiring mind to this free public workshop. For more information about Mission Hills Heritage and our projects, visit www.MissionHillsHeritage.org.
A California Craftsman Transformation
And Intriguing Second World War History
By Jacque Lynn Foltyn, PhD
Chair, Mission Hills Heritage Oral History Project

“The kitchen had mid-century yellow countertops with ‘atomic swirls’ like in the Jetsons,” remark the owners of the 1916 Craftsman California bungalow featured in this issue of The Inspiration. Looking for a short commute to downtown San Diego and “fighting the tract house aesthetic where all the houses look alike,” the couple bought the house in 2003. “We wanted a home with history and character.” On their first visit, they were charmed by the canyon views and architectural features such as the never-painted white oak “crown molding on steroids,” and recognized that the large lot would allow for a substantial addition. “When we purchased our house, we knew that eventually after remedying the interior mid-century ‘re-muddles’ in the original house, we wanted to augment the back to maximize the wonderful canyon views.”

Among their first projects was restoring the built-in cabinetry in the dining and living rooms, the stained glass of which previous owners had replaced with louvers. They enlarged the kitchen by tearing out a hall closet, ripped out the hideous countertops, and installed Shaker style cabinetry that harmonizes with the original house. Rebuilding the collapsing interior living room fireplace, renovating a 50s bathroom, and demolishing the sleeping porch partition of a bedroom to create one larger room were also priorities.

What started off as a 1070 square foot, two bedroom, and one-and-a-half bath house is now nearly 2300 square feet, with three bedrooms, and three-and-half baths. A large master suite with a balcony and deck overlooking the canyon, and a huge downstairs family room, with a wet bar and a wall of folding wood-framed doors that open onto the patio, maximize the outdoor experience. Rocks from the construction...
excavation were recycled to cover a low cinderblock retaining wall and add vintage character. Landscaped terraces cascade to the canyon below. The old and new parts of the house blend seamlessly, mimicking design elements from the original house such as varied sized and flared siding. Though not obvious, the addition to the house had to be evident, as it is not part of the historical designation. “Accomplishing this was as easy as making the exterior of the addition not flush with the existing house,” the couple note, observing that the added roofline is stepped down and the addition is six inches narrower than the original house. “Exteriorly, we continued the original Craftsman siding pattern and lower flare, but modified the sizing slightly to distinguish it from the original siding.” In the interior, they used “period tiling and fixtures in the new bathrooms, and continued the style of the original white oak wood work—crown molding, flooring, and cabinetry throughout the addition.” A garage extension was also part of the remodeling project. In 2006, the house received historical designation, and in 2009, the Mills Act; the new construction tax rate applies to the addition, while the original house has a tax savings of about 80 percent a year.

Among the most rewarding aspects of visiting a historic house in our Mission Hills neighborhood is learning about its former occupants and the times in which they lived. A former occupant with a Model T Ford who regularly “hit the bottle,” installed a track to guide himself down the narrow driveway into the garage to avoid hitting walls on either side; an outline of the track is etched in the driveway. During the Great Depression, the house was bank-owned and had a high turnover of renters, but then for a period of about fifty years, until 2001, it was owned by one family, a member of whom was a “kickass-league-of-her-own type” who not only played on an early local women’s softball team but worked for the sheriff’s office in the jails. This intriguing character lived in the house until she died in 2001, and the present owners have a photograph of her attired in her police uniform and another with “Doc” Peck (Gregory Peck, Sr., father of the actor), who ran Ferris and Ferris drug store at Fifth and Market Streets, downtown. During that family’s tenure, a marriage took place on the front porch, and because a daughter was quarantined with an illness, the front window was taken out so she could remain in the house but be part of the ceremony. Fascinatingly, during the Second World War, empty lots then adjacent to the residence were occupied by anti-aircraft guns and a small residence for those who manned them. While gardening, the residents occasionally uncover artifacts like military canteens.
As you may already know, Mission Hills Heritage has filed a legal challenge to the City's approval of the Uptown Community Plan Update. Apparently bowing to pressure from development interests, the San Diego City Council adopted a last minute re-write of the Uptown Community Plan that had been in the making for over seven years. Only days before the City Council voted, the Planning Department threw out land use maps that had been developed through years of community input and replaced them with maps based on the old 1988 plan. Similarly, the environmental analysis underpinning the project was hastily recrafted to fit the revised plan without properly analyzing and addressing that plan’s numerous, unmitigated impacts on the community. And in an unprecedented move, the Planning Department ignored extensive recommendations from Uptown Planners, the City’s officially recognized community planning group for Uptown.

Our primary concerns include the overturn of a 50’ height limit for the commercial core of Mission Hills that had been in place for over eight years, the new zoning and density approved for the Mission Hills neighborhood, and the lack of any mitigation of the impacts on potential districts and other historic resources in Mission Hills. Without even going door-to-door through the entire neighborhood, we had recently collected over 880 signatures on a petition supporting a permanent 50’ building height limit in the commercial core area, centered on the intersection of Washington Street and Goldfinch. We had requested the firm 50’ limit to prevent projects with inappropriate scale and height from irreversibly damaging the lower-scale character of Mission Hills. Instead, the city adopted a 100’ height limit for discretionary projects. As MHH president Jim Reily commented: “We were betrayed. Our community worked very hard over the past seven years to achieve a community plan that enabled smart growth while maintaining our community character. The city’s last minute doubling of the height limit to 100 feet will result in irreparable damage to our broad environment, including the community character, livability and the goals of the Climate Action Plan. We need this decision reversed.”

Additionally, unlike the new community plans for North Park and Golden Hill, the plan for Uptown was adopted with no enforceable timetable for implementing the
Below are the unaudited 2016 financial statements of the Mission Hills Heritage organization that have been prepared from our books and records. The board of Mission Hills Heritage takes seriously its responsibility for managing the resources entrusted to it by the membership. We annually plan a level of spending that directly supports the anticipated needs of the programs and ongoing operations, as well as extraordinary needs that may arise from our community’s historical resources, character and charm. We have budgeted a substantial sum for 2017 to defend our community character. We have requested our members and neighbors help to support this action by contributing to our legal action fund. With your help we will continue to be a vital and recognized force in promoting and protecting our heritage for years to some.

### ASSETS

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**TOTAL ASSETS** $ 52,321.40

### LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE

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**TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE** $ 52,321.40

### INCOME

| Membership                        | $ 4,805.00 |
| Program revenue                   | $ 17,520.00 |
| Contributions & other income      | 26.58     |
| **TOTAL INCOME**                  | **$ 22,351.58** |

### EXPENSES

| Advertising                       | $ 1,393.00 |
| Insurance                         | $ 2,805.00 |
| Legal                             | $ 2,781.19 |
| Printing, copying, postage        | $ 4,953.18 |
| Services                          | $ 16,061.25 |
| Storage/mail box                  | $ 1,386.00 |
| Supplies                          | $ 1,883.53 |
| Telephone/email                   | 210.00    |
| Other Expenses                    | 681.44    |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES**                | **$ 32,154.59** |

**NET INCOME/(LOSS)** $ (9,803.01)
2017 MHH Upcoming Events

March 11 • Saturday • Historic Districts Workshop
Details on front page

May 6 • Saturday • Annual Walking Tour & Lecture
Details on front page

September 23 • Saturday • Annual Home Tour

October 14 • Saturday • Annual Membership Meeting

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