

Oral public comments by L Ames on behalf of D6NLG to NSE on N'hds Cmsn, Mar 9, 2023

I'm Larry Ames, Chair of the Dist. 6 N'hd Leaders Group.

I also served on the N'hds Cmsn during its first six years, including as Chair 2014-2016.

We oppose Staff's recommendation on Point "A" to "sunset" the N'hds Cmsn.

The N'hds Cmsn is the community's formal connection to the City on matters not covered by other Cmsns -- such as Parks or Libraries.

The N'hds Cmsn collects and forwards to Council the community's thoughts on the proposed City Budget;

And in the past weighed in on topics such as

- Public Safety,
- Emergency Services,
- Proposed changes to the Planning Dept's outreach Policy 0-4,
- The Urban Tree Canopy,
- Fireworks,
- And even Policies and Operational Procedures for the Police Dept's bomb-disposal drone.

A future topic might be the City's Animal Shelters.

The Cmsn *does* need some help:

It hasn't been able to meet lately due to the lack of a quorum, due to term limits, redistricting, and Covid interference with the caucus process.

We hope Council will appoint interim Cmsnr, so the Cmsn can restart the caucus process to reinvigorate itself.

I also hope the Cmsn can be made more functional by improving its communication and its work-plan update process.

Regarding recommendation "B", moving ICOC to PRNS: no objection.

Regarding recommendation "C" for a N'hd Assoc. Engagement Program:

I sadly note the passing of Ken Podgorsek of United N'hds of Santa Clara County. The UNSCC used to host annual forums w/ training on "How to establish a N'hd Assoc" and "How to contact your representatives."

With UNSCC now fading, perhaps the City can help fill the void w/ its NAE program, not as a substitution for the N'hds Cmsn, but to *augment* it:

the NAE program helping establish N'hd Assoc.s and the N'hds Cmsn representing them to Council.

The City Council established the N'hds Cmsn in 2008 in response to grassroots advocacy from community members who'd served in the SNI-PACs.

Council reaffirmed its support of the N'hds Cmsn in 2012 and 2017.

We hope you will reaffirm your support again today!

Thank you.

[phrases in grey were skipped or cut off by the time limit.]

Jim Carter, current Chair of the N'hds, spoke in person.

After discussion, the NSE Cmte moved to change memo point A from "Sunset the NC" to "suspend the NC", include point B on ICOC and C on studying the setup of N'hd Assoc Engagement Model, added all items in point 2 in Bien Doan's memo, and requested a report back to NSE in the fall.

~Larry Ames,
Chair, D6NLG