

Dominican Neighborhood

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Events Management Plan 2002 Update

April 2002 Status Report to San Rafael Planning Commission

Dominican Neighborhood Advisory Committee

At the Planning Commission meeting held on January 25, 2000 to review implementation of Dominican University's Events Management Plan (EMP), the Commission identified seven issues, which they wanted the University and the neighborhood residents to work together on. At that time the Commission also requested a report on the status of the group's progress in addressing these issues, for discussion at a future meeting.

The Dominican University Neighborhood Advisory Committee has met monthly since being constituted following the January 2000 Planning Commission meeting. The Advisory Committee consists of representatives of Dominican University and the Dominican Neighborhood as well as a representative from the San Rafael Community Development Department.

A lengthy status report, addressing each of the issues identified by the Planning Commission, was jointly prepared by Advisory Committee and presented to the Commission in October 2000. The following is an update from the Advisory Committee on the status of the major issues (parking, noise, event management, event counting and neighborhood relations) since our previous report to the Commission 18 months ago.

Parking

Issue: Campus related parking on adjacent residential streets and efforts to encourage use of the new Forest Meadows parking lot by students, staff and event attendees.

Actions: Working with the Advisory Committee, the following measures have been taken by Dominican University to address this issue:

- Dominican uses a campus-parking map identifying the areas where campus related vehicles should not park (indicated as "Resident Parking Only") and encouraging use of the new Forest Meadows parking lot.
- The University includes in the contracts for rental and use of its facilities language which requires event organizers to provide parking staff for their events and to publish, distribute or otherwise inform their participants about appropriate parking areas on campus using the above referenced map.
- Returning students receive a letter from Dominican administration regarding the importance of refraining from parking on specific neighborhood streets. Faculty and staff also receive similar messages.
- As requested jointly by Dominican and neighborhood representatives, the City agreed to permit the installation of permanent signage within the public right-of-way on neighboring residential streets (Olive and Palm Avenues). In



the fall of 2001 Dominican installed, at its own expense and in areas suggested by neighborhood residents, permanent “Resident Area – No Campus Parking” signs on these residential streets. As agreed to with City staff, the signs refer people to Campus Security for violations. While not enforceable by the City, these signs seem to do a generally good job of keeping the parking spaces along Olive and lower Palm available for resident and guest use. However, without constant enforcement, some campus related cars creep into these areas, particularly at the end of Palm near the campus library.

- In the fall of 2001 the University began an intensive program of permit parking for all campus parking areas, including the private portion of Acacia. This program is enforced through warning letters and towing by Campus Security.
- The University worked with the City Public Works Department staff regarding the placement of permanent signage within the public right-of-way to direct and encourage campus users to park in the Forest Meadows parking lot. A permanent sign was installed at the corner of Acacia and Grand to direct people into this parking lot. In addition, for specific special events, the University places additional temporary signs within the public right-of-way for the same purpose.
- The University and neighborhood representatives convinced the City to “look the other way” and allow temporary signs (similar to those first utilized by Bay Marin Church) to be placed during events on barricades located in the middle of Olive at the intersections with Acacia and Palm, which read “Residential Area – No Parking”. When used, these signs appear to be very effective in discouraging campus related parking in the residential area.

Results: The measures implemented to date have generally been successful and have resulted in considerably more vehicles parking in the Forest Meadows lot and increased parking being available for resident and guest use on the residential streets. The completion this fall of the new 100 +/- space parking lot at the opposite end of the campus from the Forest Meadows lot (between the dining hall and the new student housing) should further improve the campus and neighborhood parking situation. It has been obvious that ongoing monitoring and enforcement by Campus Security is essential for these measures to work.

Noise

Issue: Noise impacts from rental events held on campus.

Actions:

- Dominican’s Event Coordinator continues to scrutinize entertainment for its appropriateness. Musicians and performers that do not cooperate with the campus sound policies are not permitted back to perform on the campus in any venue. This sound policy includes collection of a sound deposit prior to the event that is refundable upon complying with the policy.
- Dominican continues to use a checklist of a client’s contracted arrangements with the Events Management Office to see that clients perform as specified in the contract.
- The revised contract and guidelines include provisions for the supervision of children by an adult at all times, and to limit clients’ use of Dominican’s venues to the specific venue identified in the contract to discourage the unauthorized use of other campus areas during the event.

- In response to complaints received regarding sounds outside Angelico Hall generated by guests congregating on the lawn area in front of the Hall near Olive Avenue, the University has taken measures including installing a “no picnicking” sign on the front lawn of Angelico to discourage guests, clients, and the campus community from congregating in the area.

Results: The number of complaints regarding noise from Angelico Hall activities has decreased significantly. At the same time, the amount of noise heard most notably from wedding receptions in the Shield Room at Caleruega Dining Hall is still bothersome, especially to residents on Locust Avenue. Decibel levels of the sound are monitored during the event, as specified in the EMP and, while technically reduced to an acceptable level, as stipulated in the EIR, the “acceptable” level of sound is subject to individual interpretation. It is important to note that there still have been no reported noise complaints from activities in the new Recreation Center or the Forest Meadows amphitheater.

As an example of Dominican’s closer scrutiny of entertainment and events for their appropriateness to the venue, a Scottish bagpipe orchestra, which had previously rented Angelico Hall, assembled outside the entrance to Angelico to practice playing in procession. After discussions with the organizers about their needs as part of their concert performance, it was agreed that the Dominican’s campus was not an appropriate venue for their future performances.

Event Management/Enforcement

Issue: The ability of and procedure for neighbors to contact the University events enforcement personnel.

Actions:

- As a result of a recent University reorganization, the Events Management Office (EMO) is now part of the Campus Facility& Auxiliary Services Department. The staffing for event coverage is as follows:

Compliance Officer: Coordinates sound compliance and measures and monitors amplified sound levels during events and activities. Wears pager and responds to pages and calls from Security to adjust sound levels as necessary if complaints are received. Empowered to stop an event that is out of compliance with the EMP.

Event Manager: Manages, assists and oversees activities of clients and use of University facilities during events (also called Facilities Manager). Wears pager during event and responds to calls from on and off campus related to the event when no compliance is required. Empowered to stop an event that is out of compliance with EMP.

Traffic Control Officer: A professional law enforcement officer hired to direct traffic on public streets during events of 800 or more guests or cumulative event attendance of over 1000 people. Reviews and approves traffic/parking management plans prior to an event and arranges services accordingly with cooperation by EMO.

Parking Captains and Assistants: Directs vehicles to designated parking areas for events or activities with over 200 (voluntarily reduced by the University from 400) people working under direction of the EMO.

Security Officer: Uniformed, full-time Campus Security staff that patrol the campus and some adjacent residential street and respond to emergency or complaint calls 24 hours/day, seven days each week. They carry both a pager and cellular phone. The numbers for both of these are published on the event calendar distributed, on request,

to neighborhood residents.

The process to summons Event Management personnel for an immediate response and to inquire or complain about an event taking place on campus is as follows:

1. Call the Compliance Officer pager published on the calendar.
2. If no immediate response, call Campus Security
 - First, call the Pager Number, and, if no response received
 - Second, call the Cellular Phone Number
3. Call or record a message on the Event Compliance Line for follow up from EMO.
4. All calls to Security are logged. Event Managers also keep a log of any calls and activities that occur during the event.

Results: Publishing the Event Manager's pager number on event calendar distributed to the community is intended to facilitate direct contact for quicker response to calls and complaints during an event. Campus Security acts as a back up communications and intervention resource to the public. While they're occasionally still been some problems, the system appears to work reasonably well.

Event Counting

Issue: The methodology used for counting events.

Actions:

- Neighbors initially expressed concern regarding impacts of public use of the new Recreation Center resulting from an invitation mailed to neighborhood residents offering paid memberships to use the facility. These concerns, as well as uncertainty about the activity's compliance with uses allowed in the EMP, prompted the Neighborhood Advisory Committee to create and agree to a formula to acknowledge membership attendance in the event count in order to monitor and track current and future impacts.
- The listing of events is now more comprehensive. College activities of note and/or of a sizeable attendance are now included in the calendar. A preliminary version of the calendar is previewed monthly with the Neighborhood Advisory Committee. Summer camps and summer conferences were added to the event calendar to provide additional details and information about campus activities.

Results: The Advisory Committee has continued to be an effective forum to discuss issues related to event counting and, when issues have arisen, the Committee has been able to reach consensus on how the issue should be addressed. There have been no reported impacts from neighborhood use of the Recreation Center.

Advisory Committee

Issue: Expanded membership and scope for the original events management committee and inclusion of a City representative in an ex-officio capacity.

Actions:

- The scope of discussion by the Advisory Committee has continued to encompass general issues and concerns (such as campus construction projects and tree cutting) and not solely event management, as had previously been the case.
- Two representatives of the Dominican's Board of Trustees participate on a regular basis on the Committee. Recently a Dominican student representative was also added to the Committee. In addition, other campus officials and members of the community attend to address the Advisory Committee regarding areas of special interest or concern.
- A member of City Community Development Department continues to be a regular attendee of the Advisory Committee and participates in an ex-officio capacity and as a liaison between the Committee and the City of San Rafael.

Results: The Dominican Neighborhood Advisory Committee continues to be an effective forum for joint, proactive discussion of a range of issues and resolution of problems at *the neighborhood level* and has significantly improved University/neighborhood relations and communication.

In addition to the above five Events Management Plan related issues identified at the March 2000 March Planning Commission meeting, another issue was previously raised which the Advisory Committee would like to report on:

Speeding

At previous meetings concern was expressed by neighborhood residents regarding travel speeds on residential streets surrounding the campus. Meetings to discuss the issue were facilitated by the University and City staff. In response to a neighborhood survey circulated by City Public Works Department staff to determine whether speed humps were desired in the Palm Avenue area (where the concerns about speeding had been centered), 71% of those sent the survey responded and, of those, 42 (89%) supported the installation of speed humps and 5 (11%) were opposed. Initially, the City ordered and installed three temporary (rubber mat) speed humps on Palm along the backside of the Campus. This test produced positive results and comments from neighborhood residents and three permanent speed humps have now been installed along Palm in this area.

Results: City staff, and the University worked cooperatively with the neighbors to explore a range of options and then implement the selected measure to effectively address this issue.

Conclusions

All of the University/neighborhood issues have probably not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of all individuals. However, during the 18 months since the last status report, Dominican University, neighborhood residents and City staff, working together through the Dominican Neighborhood Advisory Committee, have continued to make significant progress in addressing them and identifying additional options to be pursued. University/neighborhood relations, communication and cooperation have continued at a high level and an effective, neighborhood level, forum for joint, proactive discussion of issues and resolution of problems has been created. As a result, we trust that this written report will satisfy the review requirements specified in the Master Plan approval and can be included as a "consent item" on an upcoming Planning Commission agenda. We feel that it is unnecessary for the Planning Commission to schedule a noticed public hearing on this matter, at this time.

SUBMITTED BY The Dominican University Neighborhood Advisory Committee:

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