



January 29, 2010

An open letter from the President Mont Marin Homeowners Association

General Meeting
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm - Thursday, February 4th

Keynote Speaker – Newly elected *Councilman Marc Levine*

This Thursday the neighbors who reside in Mont Marin, Montevideo Terrace and San Rafael Park will meet to vote upon consolidating the “homeowner” associations into one “neighborhood” association.

To help understand the differences I have provided the definitions that are offered by Wikipedia:

A **homeowners association (HOA)** is an organization created by a [real estate developer](#) for the purpose of developing, managing and selling a development of homes. It allows the developer to exit financial and legal responsibility of the community, typically by transferring ownership of the association to the homeowners after selling off a predetermined number of lots.

A **neighborhood association (NA)** is a group of residents or property owners who advocate for or organize activities within a [neighborhood](#). An association may have elected leaders and voluntary dues.

Neighborhood associations are more likely to be formed in older, established neighborhoods, whereas HOAs are generally established at the time a residential neighborhood is built and sold. In some cases, neighborhood associations exist simultaneously with HOAs, and each may not encompass identical boundaries. In one example, newer [infill](#) neighborhoods built decades after the original, surrounding HOA-less neighborhood may have its own HOA but also be within the boundaries of a NA.

At the meeting , the residents of Mont Marin, Montevideo Terrace and San Rafael Park will be called upon to vote on the bylaws that will create the Mont Marin/San Rafael Park Neighborhood Association.

The Mont Marin Homeowners Association (MMHA) Board, having worked closely with numerous residents of San Rafael Park over the past several years, decided at their October 2009 meeting to invite the San Rafael Park residents to join the MMHA Board. Today there are three MMHA Board members who reside within San Rafael Park. By including San Rafael Park our responsibilities have expanded to include the needs of both neighborhoods.

With the Montevideo Terrace neighborhood encompassing eighteen homes and residing within the boundaries of San Rafael Park their HOA felt it was advantageous to be included in the new neighborhood association.

The name “Mont Marin/San Rafael Park Neighborhood Association” was selected to enable the new Neighborhood Association to build upon the many long standing “community action” achievements and neighborhood activities that have established city wide recognition of the “Mont Marin and San Rafael Park” name.

Some examples of the achievements and activities of our residents are:

- Establishment of the Jerry Russom Open Space Park
- Establishing the Santiago and Montevideo Open Space
- Locating the YMCA in our neighborhood
- The Ice Cream Social, Community Garage Sale, Neighborhood Watch Program, New Neighbor Welcome Wagon and Contractors Reference list
- The Safe Passage along Lucas Valley Road Campaign. With over 200 of our neighbors volunteering to support the project we were successful in improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety along the Las Gallinas to Los Gamos corridor by:
 - surveying the city/county border to establish lines of responsibility
 - installing street lighting
 - removing shrubbery to create an off-road path for pedestrians.

There are many challenges that need to be undertaken. Some of the concerns that need to be addressed are:

- Increased police patrols to minimize the current rash of vandalism and burglary
- Traffic control along Las Gallinas Avenue and Lucas Valley Road
- Maintenance of the open spaces and median strips in our neighborhood
- Safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists along Canyon Oak Drive

With the combined support of over 500 homes we will be able to more effectively influence the decisions made at both the county and city levels of government.

Your attendance is voluntary but your thoughts are necessary for the success of our neighborhood consolidation. Please mark your calendar and join me for our own town hall meeting.

Lucas Valley Community Church
2000 Las Gallinas Avenue at the intersection with Lucas Valley Road
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm - Thursday, February 4, 2010

Ray Lorber
President - Mont Marin Homeowners Association
Co-Chair - Safe Passage along Lucas Valley Road Campaign