

Sleepy Hollow Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting
Thursday, November 14, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Co-President, Carol Brovelli. 35 people were in attendance (31 signed in plus 4 officers)

Carol began by highlighting the projects funded this year by SHNA: the new decomposed granite patio and path across from the bus stop at the corner of Lombardy and SH Lane, the refreshed plantings along Lombardy Lane as well as maintenance and improvement of the holiday lights on Lombardy. The trees are professionally wrapped with lights and illuminated from November through January. They will most likely need to be replaced next year. We are also planning to add solar powered lights to the Oak Tree at the corner of Lombardy and SH Lane.

The Block Captain Initiative is continuing with the goal of covering all of Sleepy Hollow. There are 489 homes in SH—all divided into smaller units. There are 4 areas that are in need of Block Captains and we also need a Block Captain Coordinator. The Block Captains are responsible for welcoming new neighbors, connecting them to the Neighborhood Association and communicating important information—especially related to crime and safety.

Sleepy Hollow is designated as a Firewise Neighborhood. We are in the process of renewing our designation. It is based on the number of houses that participate in the MOFD chipper program, the number of cubic yards of material removed, the dollars invested in clean up and the hours invested in doing the work. This year 18% of the SH houses participated in the program, 1,930 cubic yards of potential fuel was removed, \$294,000 was spent and almost 1700 hours were invested. The residents of Sandhill, Snowberry Lane and Ichabod Lane had over 50% of residents participating in fire fuel reduction.

Rob Schroeder addressed fire safety and the opportunity for grants. Grants are available from the [City of Orinda \(Measure R\)](#) for up to \$1,000. 149 grants were awarded in 2024 and there is still plenty of money available. MOFD also has a [Home Hardening Grant](#) Program for which you can be reimbursed up to \$1000 for ember-resisting vents and Home Safe gutter guards. Fire Safe Moraga-Orinda is a [new Grant Program](#) being rolled out by MOFD which is designed to address fire safety on multiple properties and to help neighbors who need help removing fire fuels and who may have physical or financial hardships. This will require a minimum of 5 neighbors in a group working together for up to \$10,000 in assistance. Applications will be available in early 2025.

Rob also reminded us that there are 4 volunteer neighborhood inspectors ([Fire Adapted Community Ambassadors](#)) that can come tour your property and advise on what can be done to better safeguard your property. This is free of charge and the results will not be reported to MOFD. The SHNA has also posted more Red Flag Warning Signs.

Sara Nelson, Co-President, thanked those that currently volunteer for the SHNA and asked for others to help. There are a number of open slots and we can find a spot for anyone who would like to help. Please contact Sara if you can help. Sara recognized Nancy Dupuis as a long-time neighborhood member and Rich Thompson, Orinda's 2024 Citizen of the Year.

Trupti Haldar let everyone know to reach out to her with changes or updates to contact information. She also is responsible for SHNA social media: Nextdoor and Instagram. If anyone can help her, please let her know.

Laura Moran maintains our sleepyholloworinda.com website and reminded everyone of all the valuable information accessible from the website including minutes of meetings and financial statements. She also serves as Treasurer and reported on the 2023/2024 financials. We ask each household to contribute \$50 annually to fund the association. This year participation was 44% (up from 37% last year). We spent \$9,000 on projects, less than projected, but we are catching up this year. The plan is to spend \$19,000 in 2024/2025 on maintenance and new projects. New projects include: finishing the path across from the bus stop, lighting the oak tree at that corner, placing decorative rocks with signage at the gates, bus stop and across from the bus stop and repairing the holiday lights on the trees as needed. We will again offer reflective vests and order additional metal SHNA signs. You can pay with PayPal or Venmo and there is also an annual recurring payment option. Planning is underway to change the fiscal year end from 8/31 to 12/31 which should make planning easier.

This concluded the business meeting and then Carol introduced MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker. Carol first thanked Chief Winnacker for his seven years of service to our community as the Chief will be retiring at the end of the year. Winnacker then led a very informative discussion and Q&A session on the current state of fire preparedness in Orinda-Moraga, the fire insurance issues for our community and what we can do to help prepare our homes. MOFD will be proposing within the next [week a plan for 5 feet of defensible space around homes](#). This will be discussed at an open meeting next week and over the next 3 months. The Chief asked that we all take time to become educated on the plan and express an opinion by writing a comment on the MOFD site. At this time this is only a proposal and they will follow the overall desires of the community.

Joan Kiekhaefer
Secretary, SHNA