

Santa Cruz Neighbors
Guest: Chancellor Blumenthal
April 16, 2008
7pm – 9pm
Police Community Room
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz

Welcome: Deborah Elston opened meeting. About 39 people attended.

Santa Cruz Neighbors, Inc. is now a registered Non-Profit Corporation. Your donations are greatly appreciated. We will have our tax ID number soon for your tax write-off. Please make donations at the meetings via our donation basket or by mail: Santa Cruz Neighbors, Inc., 849 Almar Ave., Suite C-452, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

New Website: www.santacruzneighbors.com The website has been updated and is now online thanks to all the hard work by Deborah Elston. Please take a few minutes to explore all the information provided there for your use. We invite your comments and suggestions to help make the site user friendly.

Introduction: Chancellor George Blumenthal has a long history with UC Santa Cruz and a strong connection with the Santa Cruz Community. He joined UCSC in 1972 as a professor of astronomy and astrophysics. He has been a distinguished scholar and academic leader both at UCSC and within the University of California system.

One of the Chancellor's first meetings after being named acting chancellor was with the Westside Neighbors. He took immediate action after that first meeting, which I'm sure he can explain. He has been open to conversation and ideas ever since. We're happy to have him as permanent Chancellor officially named September 19, 2007.

He has stepped into this position at a challenging and transitional time. His willingness to work hard and continue conversations says a lot about his integrity to strengthen the town / gown relationships and in continuing our Santa Cruz Neighbors / Chancellor conversations. Please welcome Chancellor Blumenthal.

Chancellor: Good Neighbor Initiative has been very successful. Representatives from Santa Cruz neighbors, SCPD and Student Health Outreach and our Interns are here tonight. Issues:

1. Recent meeting with the Santa Cruz Neighbors Steering committee has prompted me to form the Chancellors Task Force to deal with Town Gown issues. The goal will be to improve quality of life between UCSC and the community.
2. Car trips: # of single occupant car trips are the same today as in 2000, in spite of our increased enrollment. Our new shuttle program from Ocean to campus, Longs to campus, van pools as far as Monterey and Palo Alto, and our Zip Car program have all helped to reduce single occupant car trips. The zip car program – a car sharing program – is on campus, off campus, faculty, community members, and students all may use. Decreases the need for personal cars on campus and in Santa Cruz.
3. Partnering with community: Some examples:

Ticket office in the city and on campus for UCSC events
Arts and Letters events
MLK Symposium
Pilot desal plant

Seymour Discovery Center – 40,000 students visit each year.
Economic Development/Redevelopment initiative
Climate contract with Mayor pledging to decrease our carbon footprint
Bring green industry to Santa Cruz

The location of UCSC shapes our programs such as Marine Science

We want to make Santa Cruz proud and I am very proud of this city.

McHenry library is open to all. It is a state of the art 21st century library. Google is presently scanning all the books in the library – UCSC will be the 1st facility where all the books are available on the web.

Our Earth Sciences department is not in the top 20 programs in the nation. Other programs at UCSC are also ranked very high.

77,000 students have graduated from UCSC, 8000 live here. 600 current students are local hs graduates.

50 alum are in the peace corps

This year our freshman applications are up 14%.

Long range development plan: current mediation is ongoing and progress is being made.

Upcoming Events:
See UCSC Web

Q & A

Q: After the meeting with the Westside neighbors the pledge for money was given and made. Will that continue?

A: It's ongoing and will continue as long as it beneficial.

Q: Statement has been made that the UCSC students are not offered enough diversity. What are your thoughts on that?

A: I'd say that's not true. Our goal is to broaden their thought. We need to give them the tools not the thoughts. There is broad diversity, a diverse range of viewpoints and the tools that foster that diversity are what we offer.

Q: How easy is it to visit UCSC? Community sense is that it's not possible.

A: I'd encourage you to take the bus to the campus – they are green and free. Parking is an issue – metered parking is available and you can be directed to those lots by the parking kiosk. You must buy a parking ticket from the machine and place it on your dashboard.

Events and all event parking will have attendants who will direct you to parking.

Q: Is the shuttle open to the public?

A: Yes – 7am to midnight.

Q: Have you considered seaside parking, shuttling from Surf Bowl or West Cliff?

A: Yes – we tried it and we only got 12 or 14 riders. We've also talked to the City about Depot Park and we may go ahead with that. With the increase in gas prices, students are biking, using shuttles, the Zip car program much, much more. Our students are extremely conscious of the environment.

Q: What kind of development is going on in Moffit Field?

A: Campus for UCSC research. Work with business in Silicon Valley to bring them to Santa Cruz. So many students and faculty interested in spinning off their ideas into companies. Economic Development is very important to us.

Q: Library – what access does the public have – what restrictions are there online?

A: Anyone can have access to the index and journals. Alumni have access. You need to have a UCSC affiliation – such as Friends of the Library to have access offsite. I believe that is \$35 annually. Onsite access is unlimited and you don't need an affiliation.

Q: Ideas regarding traffic?

A: Many ideas: Bus rapid transit, decrease single passenger car trips, these programs have been very successful. New programs are key. Metro – ½ total ridership is student, faculty and employees of UCSC. We have paid for additional buses when they are needed. Bike shuttle has been very successful. Van pools 240 people from Watsonville daily.

Q: Efforts of transportation USCS has made are a model but it seems to run counter to housing students on campus. Can we enlist your support to house 80% students and 20% staff on campus?

A: I cannot answer that question because we are in negotiations with the city. I agree with the premise. I would like to house more faculty on campus due to the very expensive housing here – as you are all aware. We are building Ranchview Terrace which takes 12 years to complete because of many issues. We cannot build housing that we cannot fill. I think we need more on campus housing but I cannot be specific.

Q: What are the requirements for students? Can they be required to live on campus?

A: No one has to live on campus. Ninety percent of Freshmen live on campus. Fifty percent of sophomores. More juniors and seniors currently want to live on campus than we can accommodate.

Q: Thank you for coming – the problem is campus housing is too expensive, about \$1000 per month to share a dorm room versus much less off campus. But if you could provide on campus housing that is cheaper than living off campus it should cause a shift.

A: Our occupancy rate is 100% and has been for several years. You are right it costs more to build on campus but it is about the same as other UCs, so the problem is not unique to us and exists across the board. Borrow the money, rules, union labor, type of construction more rigorous – we are no different than the other campuses. I agree with you it is a problem. There is a huge difference between living on campus and off.

Q: Private developer in town is interested in working with UCSC to provide student/faculty housing.

A: We would love to work with 3rd party developers and Ranchview Terrace is that.

Q: Bus service is great one way, great going up to campus, but horrendous going downtown.

A: Larry Pegler, Director of Transportation and Parking Services: I collect info on where the students live, after analysis we can shift services to areas of need. We are working on that issue.

Q: The Zip car program has only been around for 7 months – currently has 440 members, 40% all hours, 70-80% weekends. UCSC is having the most success in this program.

Q: Cost of housing on campus range? Where are we?

A: We are 3-4 in the range. Jean Weise: Housing is offered in a broad range. Students can pay for a single room, ocean view which is more than a double room with no ocean view. 1/3 of our students are low income. Right now our student fees are less of an expense than housing and meals.

Q: Can you say anything about these lawsuits? Its perplexing for us as taxpayers to be paying for both sides.

A: Yes – you are paying for both sides. we have a statewide mandate to provide higher education to as many students as possible so there is a conflict.

Q: The lawsuits have a structural basis where the local city has no say so – who has the say on the long range plan?

A: There are a lot of legitimate reasons why the City might have to sue. I don't have the power to make that decision. The Board of Regents, the City of Santa Cruz, and UCSC are married. The City wanted and competed to have a UC here. We need to find a solution.

Q: Many of the campuses are in the most expensive areas – why don't they build in less expensive areas?

A: In fact the University did open a new campus in Merced and it's is having a lot of trouble filling their classrooms. It takes 10 years to open a campus. Local political pull got that campus in Merced.

Q: What is the University's impact on our local water?

A: The University only uses 5% and we pay water rates just like everyone else. The Desal Plant is on our land at Long Marine Lab. We are committed to a solution.

Q: As far as I know UCSC has very limited access – 2 streets; 2 lanes.

A: Our long range development plan proposed a 3rd access on the West on Empire Grade. An Eastern access can be brought up by the Neighbors.

Q: How can we keep the University from taking property off our tax rolls i.e. the University Inn?

A: This is one of the ongoing conversations. We don't have any long term plans to purchase land. The University Inn is a long term lease: 10 years. We do pay the occupancy tax and the property tax is paid by the Landlord.

End of Q&A:

That wraps things up tonight. Thank you for coming:

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Please email us with questions, comments and suggestions:

email@santacruzneighbors.com