



SANTA MONICA CANYON CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Board Minutes (Revised)

June 13, 2016

Recorded by: George Wolfberg

Attending: Steve Boyers, Melissa Campos, Chris Casady, Deborah Castleman, Carrie Frazier, Nancy Frey, Amy Hopper, Sharon Kilbride, Mark Landay, Emile Levisetti, Henry Lichstein, Isabelle Mizrahi, Cathy Russell, Natalie Schaeffer, Ron Staake, Debbie Warfel, Cynthia Winter, Marilyn Wexler, George Wolfberg

Excused: Julie Silliman, Lori Todd, Wes Hough, Marise Relfe, A.C. Chaudhry

Absent: Lisa Bittan

Guests: Marlow Fisher, Joan Kramer, Sue Pascoe, Mary Beth Thomas, Felix Sahig, Kevin Wallentine

Meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Marilyn Wexler.

Treasurer's Report (through May 31, 2017):

Ron Staake submitted report prior to meeting.

Checking	\$ 11,847.90
Savings	26,629.74
Total	<hr/> \$ 38,477.64 <hr/>
Grove balance	\$ 5,576.49
Aircraft noise	<hr/> \$ 10,799.66 <hr/>
Courtyard	<hr/> \$ 794.03 <hr/>

Total paid/voting membership = 340

Election of Officers: The following officers were elected for the 2017-18 term: President, Marilyn Wexler; Vice-President, Henry Lichstein; Treasurer, Ron Staake; Secretary, Lori Todd; Assistant Secretary, Deborah Castleman

Annual Meeting – Mark Landay and Deborah Castleman recommended that the association should honor association members who had passed away. Mark also recommended that the presiding officer should note the various tables set up around the room during introductory comments.

CD 11 Report. Debbie Dyner-Harris represented Mike Bonin's office, instead of the new Deputy, Lisa Cahill, who was at a Brentwood Homeowners meeting that evening. Debbie explained that work related to implementation of "Great Streets," Vision Zero projects in Mar Vista and Playa del Rey has created a great deal of discussion and work in the Councilman's office. Vista del Mar is a very dangerous street for pedestrians, so changes include moving the parking from the East to the West side of the street. Because of the dangerous situation it is unlikely this will be changed. The other street is Venice Blvd which, until recently was a state highway. Eight blocks were re-stripped with bike lanes replacing traffic lanes to the distress of many commuters.

Debbie was asked to explain Councilman Bonin's position regarding airbnb rentals. There is a proposal working its way through the City Council and Debbie did not know where the Councilman stood on the current iteration.

Park Update — Not in attendance, no report.

BOCA Report – Joan Kramer, BOCA President, reported. Mansionization has become an issue in the BOCA area.

Committee Reports

- **Homelessness Task Force** -- Sharon Kilbride gave a comprehensive report detailing recent efforts of the Task Force. Significant accomplishments include putting "Timmy" on a train to Seattle (he apparently got off in Portland), and housing 16 people. The next Task Force meeting will be July 17 at 7 PM at the Palisades Library. Speaking of Libraries, it was agreed to remove the "furniture" adjacent to the small library in the island at the intersection of Ocean Avenue Extension and Entrada where homeless people have been congregating.
- **Aircraft Noise Update** -- Debbie Warfel reported that the various Southern California lawsuits filed in the Ninth District, including the one filed by SMCCA, have been transferred to and consolidated with other lawsuits that were filed in the Washington DC District Court. The court has stayed the litigation for six months so that the parties can try to reach a settlement through the mediation process. SMCCA is seeking a flightpath expert witness. Debbie attended the recent LAX Aircraft Noise Roundtable and met the new Southern California FAA administrator, Dennis Roberts, who has replaced Glenn Martin (who has been promoted). Mr. Roberts told Debbie that although 50-60% of planes now have the GPS equipment, pilots continue to insist on manually flying the planes. This is taking away the benefit of quieter gliding of the aircraft. Continuing runway construction also is an issue contributing to the noise.

PPCC Report – Cathy Russell gave the report. The Community Council continues to seek a reduction in noise on Sunset from large groups of motorcycle riders, primarily late on Wednesday nights. A Dog Park Working Group has been formed. Board members spoke against having Rustic Canyon the location of an official dog park.

School Report – Mark Landay stated that Canyon School wants to have more than the current one official crossing guard. Debbie Dyner-Harris indicated that the guards are financed by the City Budget and all positions are filled. She will investigate.

George's Report – Report emailed to board prior to meeting. Nancy Frey inquired as to when the Potrero Canyon Park may be completed. George indicated that Caltrans signoff is still needed and the absolute best case would see the contract for the final phase of park development signed in about one year he guessed at least 18 months of the final grading and installation of park features. *(Note: after the meeting, George talked to the City Engineer who stated that the estimated time of construction is 26 months.)*

Old Business

- **Entrada Sidewalk.** Mark Landay remarked that the project is going well and there were no errors in street vs curb level. Debbie Dyner-Harris added that because of the need to adjust the street grading the repaving became a high priority job for the City. Debbie was asked about installing a crosswalk near the bus stop. She stated that the City Engineer thought it was too dangerous because of the sight lines. Nevertheless, she offered to convey the suggestion once again to him. A flashing light would require a special budget for funding. Possibly another four weekends of road work. Will not work on Father's Day. Marilyn Wexler commented that the project is taking a long time but she was not bothered as we will have a nice, newly-paved street. Henry Lichstein commented that the crew is moving up to 500 tons of material on some days, so they should know which lanes will be closed. Improving the methods of keeping people informed should be a priority. Debbie is currently emailing about 15 people, Henry is on Nextdoor, and George sends out SMCCA News emails to over 600 people.
- **101 Foxtail project.** The ridgeline developments that overhang residences on Kingman are a matter of great concern. The 101 house is in Santa Monica and will be very large with decks overhanging the slope and there has been no thought given to the impact on LA residents. Henry observed the house will be huge by any measure under the rules, even if no variances are granted.

New Business

- **Neighborhood Watch in Rustic Canyon.** Cathy Russell noted that there used to be Neighborhood Watch in the area. Works best on a block-by-block basis. Felix Sahig has been camping in the area for 3 ½ years and observed what appear to be gang members from Santa Monica casing the neighborhood including Latimer and Haldeman. Senior Lead Officer Michael Moore and Detective Davis briefed the board. Sometimes gang members try to escape their territory just to relax; they look at the canyon as a "safe" area. Reported crime is mostly car break-ins and home burglaries. He observed that fingerprint unit is backlogged by up to four months even for priority crimes. Motion-detector activated cameras such as "RING" are useful. If you see someone knocking on doors and they walk up someone's driveway that is an immediate

“9-1-1” report. A large area near Overland, North of Pico, was having the greatest number of burglaries in West LA. After creating a robust Neighborhood Watch with prominent signage, the number of break-ins was reduced from 30 to three. Santa Monica PD and Los Angeles Police do not have a regular exchange of information. Graffiti seen is mostly taggers. It is gang graffiti if a gang moniker such as “Sotel” or “XIII” is included. Officer Moore has notified the WLA Gang Unit. Graffiti may be reported on the myla311 app. Call 1.877.ASK.LAPD to report people in the park at night. Deborah Castleman expressed a concern about possible false alarms and asked Mr. Sahig not to report “false issues” around her house.

To start a Neighborhood Watch, a block captain is needed who gets the block verified by LAPD after which Neighborhood Watch signs are installed. Send an email to Officer Moore: 27995@lapdonline.com to get started.

- Who Speaks for the SMCCA? Marilyn Wexler brought up the issue of who may represent the SMCCA in communicating with the press or elected officials. Steve Boyers indicated that PPCC has a policy about such discussions and Marilyn will investigate.

Adjourned at 9:06 pm.

(Three Attachments)

Next meeting August 8, 2017

SMCCA Minutes – Attachments:

PCH TASK FORCE MEETING 05-05-17

Quarterly meeting was held at Palisades Bowl Mobile Home Park in order to dedicate the long-awaited “Hawk” signal to facilitate safe pedestrian crossing to the beach. One of the first such signals in the State of California. Caltrans says more Hawks are on the way.

Meeting chaired by one of the legislative sponsors of the committee., Senator Henry Stern who represents PCH from Coastline Drive to past the Ventura County border. Assemblyman Richard Bloom attended the entire meeting. Mike Bonin was there for the ribbon-cutting than took off for City Council meeting. Sen. Allen was absent.

Caltrans reported that the next safety measure for the McClure tunnel will be replacement of tunnel lights and installation of advance warning devices, pavement improvements and guardrails. A wider highway shoulder from Temescal to Bay Club drive is planned for some time in 2018 along with replacement of the Trancas bridge.

Complaints about all the **campers** parking along the highway between Coastline Dr. and Topanga—county unincorporated property. Coastal permit required to deal with these campers.

Malibu has several projects on the drawing board affecting parking and general highway safety.

Santa Monica will be replacing the bridge to the pier. Look for EIR this summer.

Potrero Canyon Park plans are essentially complete; awaiting sign-off from Caltrans on a critical property easement near the highway. If things continue to move, a contract could be awarded next spring. The engineer from Caltrans who has the file on his desk was given a couple of gentle pokes with a sharp stick as my mother would have said. Surprisingly, before the end of the day he returned the sign-off package to the LA City Engineer. The devil being in the details, we later learned from the City Engineer: *“Caltrans did indeed return a portion of their review comments to us on 5/10/17. However we are still awaiting comments from their Hazardous Waste Review Unit. The comments we have received were forwarded to our design consultant and are being incorporated into the plans. The duration for addressing the comments will be dependent on when we receive the remaining comments and on the extent of the comments. Caltrans has also informed us that they will require a 3rd review once all comments have been addressed.”*

With the able assistance of PPCC Transportation Advisor Patti Post, I gave a briefing on the **issues at Chautauqua/West Channel Rd./PCH and Entrada**—primarily dealing with failure of drivers to utilize the proper lanes for the various turning options onto and off of Chautauqua. Senator Stern asked for a report back at the next Task Force meeting which was a win for our side.

LA CITY OPEN SPACE INITIATIVE – 06-07-17

STATE MANDATE. The state of California mandates certain sections, called “elements,” be included in municipal general plans. Think mobility plan or housing plan. The Open Space plan is a mandate. LA’s is about 50 years out of date and City Planning feels the pressure.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT INITIATIVE. The City Planning department is under the gun to bring various elements of our general plan up to date and to implement a robust periodic

review to keep these elements timely. The department convened a group of known community and governmental stakeholders with a natural interest in open space. This would include Recreation and Parks, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Friends of the LA River, to meet and learn about the issues and options for preparing a revised Open Space plan—about half institutional and half individual representatives. Three meetings were held during business hours at City Hall that featured briefings and “break out” groups to get the process underway. Those left out of the process, including a core group of Measure “S” supporters, found out and raised a great hue and cry. They complained about being left out and of the City holding such meetings in “private” and during normal work hours thereby cutting out the public. The fourth meeting was held Wednesday afternoon, June 7, in City Hall and was open to all who learned of it (meeting was nowhere noticed in the widely available list of City meetings—probably not a Brown Act meeting) and resulted in an overflow crowd in not the most ideal room. Activists from WLA were in the room and actively participated. Also, Illeana Wachtel, Jill Stewart, Donna Vaccarino and Barbara Broide were among the participants.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW. There is a temporary web site, www.ourla2040.org . Look for *open space working group*. The supervising planner is Ken Bernstein; I sat next to him and he promised in an aside that the web site would be fully functional. There should be an extremely detailed PowerPoint from today’s meeting posted, along with surveys.

THE VISION. They started the day with four “chapters,” and added a fifth: (did my best to grab the names of presenting City Planners—you can always ask Ken)

1. **Waterways (Rivers) and Beaches** (Chris Peña). Mentioned local water supply?
2. **Parks and Recreation** (Jason)—a torrid discussion ensued with loud complaints about developers supposedly getting open space credit for private balconies and rooftop spaces—all denied by City Planners. One lady has been trying to get City to create a small park at site of closed Animal Shelter on Bundy to no avail.
3. **Wildlands**. Learned that a canyon group in Hollywood Hills has purchased 17 acres for open space. Issues with developers owning open space land for speculation in far reaches of San Fernando Valley. Much remedial work needed.
4. **Connections** (Fabiola). Wildlife corridors. Big discussion about shade, or rather the lack of it and the City funding sidewalks and clearcutting the tree-cover with no thought to options and allegedly no funding for replanting. Jill Steward criticized the City Attorney’s “deal” on sidewalks.
5. **Public Engagement**. Self-evident need for this.

DISCUSSION.

- No parks within 500 feet of a freeway (so much for grand parks over the Hollywood Freeway)
- Take advantage of County Parks initiative and their needs assessment to avoid re-inventing the wheel.
- Get a better meeting room with microphones and a meeting time outside of normal business hours.
- Ken Bernstein stressed that no decisions have been made.
- Complaints about lack of parks and “locked parks” in WLA.
- This committee is advisory to City Staff—seemed to be about six planners in room.

CONCLUSION.

I came up with a few ideas which I jotted down and will pass on to Ken, including:

- Leftovers from rail eminent domain to make mini-parks
 - Un-hiding public stairs and walkways.
 - Leverage busses to bring under-served people to open-spaces.
 - Someone needs to study City's surplus property.
-

Rendering of proposed house at 101 Foxtail Drive in Santa Monica:

