



Northridge East Neighborhood Council

Wednesday, February 20, 2008 7:00pm to 8:30pm
Andasol Elementary School Auditorium 10126 Encino Ave.

Call to Order: 7:13pm

Judith Nutter called the roll and Kelly Lord led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance: Kelly Lord, Peter McCarty, Sarah Adelman, Barry Greenberg, Steve Patel, Lucille Meehan, Judith Nutter, Ray Calnan, and Caroline Moore.

Absent: Yeprem Davoodian, Thomas Baker, Don Dwiggins, Harold Ellison, and Alice McCain were excused. Travis Daniels was also absent.

Minutes: Judith Nutter moved to approve the January minutes. Ray Calnan seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Kelly asked the public speakers to keep their comments to 3 to 5 minutes so everyone can have the chance to speak.

Senior Lead Officer **Kathy Bennett** from the Devonshire division wanted to make a brief crime update. Burglary and motor vehicles were discussed – be sure to lock your cars. A homicide occurred on the 118 Freeway a long time ago – the victim is as yet unidentified. They are looking for an attack suspect. He is brazen; attacked a woman near Zelzah & Devonshire. He is a transient male black with missing or bad teeth. Many people fit that description, and one innocent man has unfortunately been stopped too many times (that will be remedied so he is no longer bothered). The flyers I brought tonight concern the lost SWAT member, and the fraudulent charity people asking for donations about that cause. E-policing – crime updates sent out concerning your neighborhood; crime maps. I also do shopping cart roundup – email the location to me and I will forward it to the appropriate company for pickup.

Kelly thanked Officer Bennett for the excellent work.

John Bwarie from Council Member Greig Smith's office:

The Green update: the new LA plan was passed, out of 12 motions. The city would give preference in purchasing asphalt to paper clips to green companies using recycled products. We can lead by example, do it as the city – even if it costs more.

This Saturday the Chatsworth Nature Preserve will have a hike, 9am at the reservoir.

www.Cd12.org – you can sign up and get updates, RSVP there.

Earthquake documents were released this week with new info. You can begin to prepare as soon as tonight, because earthquakes are unpredictable.

This is midyear of the budget, July to June is our budget period. We are beginning review now. How we will face deficit issues, etc.

Peter McCarty asked John to comment about the email Tom Baker sent. John did not have an email about legislation, but can refer us by email to Nicole Bernson who can answer those questions. Peter said to the stakeholders assembled that this is about explaining the Green program. Tom was very involved with this.

Speaker cards:

Dorothy Boberg got up to speak. She passed around pamphlets for Eric Garcetti & the city council: Special materials have been prepared for education about public financing in city, to educate stakeholders about options so that people have information ahead of time. Don Dwiggins is chairperson of the board on this subject, but he is ill tonight. We propose that the stakeholders already contacted would hold a meeting on March 3rd and present the discussion to the board. If the board agrees that we should have this meeting, it will be held at the music room at the park. I took the training as a volunteer to present on this subject. We recommend 2 meetings, to the board and to the stakeholders.

Kelly said that the board would support whatever this committee deems necessary.

Dorit Jacoby:

Support for Andasol Elementary: The PTA exec board has been rejuvenated, but most effort has been constrained to physical education and budget constraints. We want support not just for phys. ed. I've worked with Peter McCarty about outreach and fundraising. The PTA wants to reach out to the council to be mutually beneficial. I am here to introduce myself and will present something more formal next time. We want to have more reading activity events. We have a fully-equipped computer lab with no one to run it, so we want to start a program supporting that. Tomorrow we have a fundraiser at Chuck E Cheese and will let you know about the rest.

Peter agreed to help Doreet work on this, and will have more to discuss during his report.

AGENDA:

1. Mark R. Edwards, Afriat Consulting Group, Inc. -- Opposition to Las Lomas Development

Mark Edwards, Director of Governing Relations, representing the city of Santa Clarita in relation to the county of LA. Last month I understand that the Las Lomas development was presented and discussed. Quick summary – 550 acres, the location is between the 5 and the 14 freeways, an unincorporated area, abutting the city of Santa Clarita. The developer is proposing to develop 5500 units, offices, metro station, residential areas, a working train tunnel to mitigate the traffic situation. [He spoke in a little more detail but a bit too fast to catch.] The existing zoning is 250 units. The developers are proposing 5500, which exceeds what exists. Our firm represents Santa Clarita, who has been battling this project for years. I know that Councilman Smith opposes this project. It's not even in the city of LA, so why would the city need to annex this project? This project makes no sense.

Kelly asked for clarification on the present zoning.

Mark said that it's 250 units on 550 acres – they're proposing 5500 town units.

Kelly noted that we had a similar proposal on White Oak that we lobbied against.

Ray Calnan asked why people are against this, other than the density.

Mark replied that gridlock will dramatically increase, and that's already a problem.

Unless you widen the 5, it'll have no benefit. This project goes into the Santa Ana Corridor, a natural area.

Peter McCarty asked John Bwarie if the Councilman took a position on the project. John answered that the Councilman is against it. Mark said that he has a copy of the motion.

Barry Greenberg has been reading some articles concerning fraudulent ownership of the properties. Is that true? Mark affirmed that yes, this is being investigated at the county level.

Steve Patel asked why Santa Clarita would not want this project annexed to Los Angeles.

Mark replied that Santa Clarita wants it to remain an open space, to preserve the ecological area and wildlife.

Steve has a hard time understanding why the developer wants to move forward when everyone seems to be against it.

Mark said that there is no support from labor, but allegedly there would be financial benefit. Property rights carry a lot of weight in such matters, historically. We can't necessarily stop them. Ventura County is battling developers, and so far they have been able to hold the line.

John Bwarie clarified that the city's role in this is largely that of annexation. Do we want to do a re-zoning? The LA County LAFCO, the local agency, must decide if this becomes an unincorporated area or becomes a part of Los Angeles. The county can still say no.

Mark summed up by saying that the decision lies in whether or not you believe the city of Los Angeles has enough problems already.

Barry asked if there is any chance that the project is economically feasible.

Mark answered essentially "not really" – the project will ultimately be asking the city for more money.

Kelly suggested to the board that we make a motion about this at our next meeting.

Mark thanked the room for their time.

2. Colin Donahue, A.V.P. Facilities Development & Operations Update on Envision 2035 Projects

Colin Donahue, Associate Vice President from Cal State Northridge, gave a rundown on the progress made since he attended the board meeting last fall:

We started a science building on Lindley in July and have added four levels, added laboratories for biological sciences, replacing 50-year-old equipment. Our fuel cell project (a 1-megawatt hydrogen fuel cell satellite) on campus is part of our green project, sending cooling water to campus. From Zelzah, you can see those Martian-looking pods which create a rainforest environment. Our own staff works on this in conjunction with school faculty. You will see more and different species of trees around there over the next year.

We had a pre-construction meeting today for our performing arts center, a 25-month process, 165000 square feet, 1700 seats in the house; exciting for us and the community. Some ground-breaking ceremonies will be scheduled.

Also a 1500-stall parking structure is under way for March 2009, which will provide some much-needed student parking. All this rain hasn't helped but we are making progress now. That structure will be the closest one to the performing arts center.

From Nordhoff, you can see our revitalized orange grove, which you can walk through to the venue. We are working on lighting for the walkway. Please come visit the campus.

Student housing – started construction on December 17th, same as the G3 structure, around the university park area, at Lindley & Lassen. Construction is going well, and the contractor is sensitive to noise issues. The project is to be finished for May-June 2009, to be ready for fall semester. Our goal is to become more residential, geared towards first-year students. We want to be better preparing students, and meeting our transportation initiative (having students be able to do without a car.) We will talk to you more over the coming months.

Faculty/staff housing: we have been working on the schematic for that, intending to start construction in fall 2008. We are looking at the market very closely right now. This project is right for this campus. We will not change it to meet market conditions. We need to maintain this over the next several years. We will keep you updated.

Our student recreation center – makes campus easier to live on. It is being built in the student union area. It will have an indoor running track, a gymnasium, and improved field space. That project is now in schematic design for construction in August of 2009, to be finished in August in 2011.

Our overall budget -- \$300 million dollars. Parking is something we are continually working on, and we are receptive to your concerns.

Bob Buckles [an audience member]: Does the hydrogen create humidity?

Colin: There is a heat by-product but we're using it to heat water. We're at 85% efficiency.

Extended discussion about the intersection at Etiwanda and Plummer – it's now safer.

Colin: We are committed to building a development where people can park their cars. The tram system and walking areas are our intention.

The \$300 million comes from a variety of fund sources, from the state and from donors.

[In response to an audience member's question,] Are the oranges being donated to food banks? Not sure. They don't taste good and are more ornamental.

A student from the college asked if the meal plan and tram system will be updated. Colin replied that some money will be coming in next year (\$400,000 for the transit center).

We are going to put more money in the tram system.

Kelly thanked Colin for the report and moved onto the next agenda item.

3. Sandra Mendoza, Project Coordinator for Neighborhood Councils Election Unit City Clerks Office

Sandra Mendoza is the City Clerk for the Neighborhood Council division, who will be helping with elections. The city clerk administers all municipal elections. She introduced her colleague Isaias Cantu. Our regional meeting is coming up at the end of March.

On Friday February 29th at Piper Tech Building, we will be holding a drawing.

For Region 3, of which this council is one, there are several upcoming meetings:

>> March 15th: Melvin Canas from DONE

>> March 29th is a regional meeting, on Saturday at the Braude building – you will elect one representative from neighborhood council to attend that meeting. The majority will decide on a region-wide election day. The timeframe will differ, but polls close no later than 8pm. It's important for everyone to participate.

>>On the 29th you will meet the staff that will help administer the voting process.

You must provide three steps:

1. Definition of stakeholder in at-large seat. *Kelly points out that this is the next item on the agenda.*

2. Will whole or part of board be up for election in June? *Also on today's agenda.*

2. Polling site? Will that be here at Andasol? *Kelly: Yes. That is also still yet to be discussed though.*

Sandra: We need those commitments before March 15th.

Barry Greenberg interjects: we hadn't been given that information and will not be having a meeting before that time. Melvin Canas has not been working with us on that.

Ray Calnan believes that we can determine these issues quickly, today.

Kelly noted that we are not prepared to answer some of these questions because we have to operate under the Brown Act.

Varied discussion on the timelines of notification follows for a couple minutes. The bottom line was that some of the election procedures are going to change.

Kelly then reshuffled the agenda order and called up Jasmine early:

5. Northridge Recreation Center Jasmine Dowlatshahi presents Activities for 2008

Jasmine Dowlatshahi, director of Northridge Park, talked about this year's activities. The 26th Annual Salute to Recreation Family Festival will be Friday May 30th, Saturday May

31st, and Sunday June 1st. The Northridge East Neighborhood Council supplies us with fireworks, so thank you all. We have a neighborhood council area with banners and booth. We are grateful for your support. This year, we are putting up pole banners on Devonshire and Reseda, announcing and advertising our benefactors. That costs \$400-450, if you are interested.

Regarding the park: Our aquatic center is completed, and is opening Memorial Day weekend. Our Spring Nut Hunt has arts & crafts, food, a petting zoo, a balloon bounce, all by the pool, with Devonshire police standing by. And all of our classes are performing on that day. I wanted to see if the neighborhood council wants to be involved. We ask for \$1500 to support food and supplies. NENC always helps with the theater program, so we are coming early to ask early for \$2500 in support for lights and sound.

We are having an open house and need support for that too, Northridge Park's funds are very low. [To answer Kelly's question,] yes we will be giving tours.

Peter McCarty noted that the center also has fun events that are for seniors – not just kids. And can we have a swim-a-thon? Jasmine noted that and said it will be discussed.

Dorit asked if there would be any programs at the pool.

Jasmine said that yes, but there is no information yet – maybe in May, but I can let you know.

4. NENC By Laws Amendments/Modifications per Election Requirements (Board Action Required)

Kelly Lord: We have to change the bylaws in order to be in compliance with the city clerk. Barry has worked it out so now we will listen:

Barry Greenberg: Each of you has two article packages in front of you – Article 3 amendments and Article 7 amendments. [He then lays out the article as it currently is, and as it will be, with a third page offering a red line with the changes to be made.] He reads aloud Article 3, Section 6 and the change: This brings us into compliance. All we did is add “or any other” = a very simple change. As it stands now, a homeless person living in a cart, or a bus passenger, could stake a claim as a stakeholder. The city clerk's office would then determine if that were sufficient. We are redefining “stakeholder.” Will anyone make a motion to make this simple change?

Steve Patel made the motion, Kelly Lord seconded. The motion passed.

Barry: Article 7 is more complicated. Currently we say [he reads 1st page, Article 1b.] DONE is no longer governing, so we changed it to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners. That was a substantial change;

The next change is about our Youth Member. Asking a Youth Member to make a commitment for two years is a lot. We propose that the Youth Member apply to the Board with a written application, be selected by the Board, and serve a one year term; that it would be an appointed term. [Barry reads Article 2D aloud.] We changed the makeup at the board; we now have two members at large with no qualification, previously we had 8. All board seats are 2-year seats and are up at every election. Barry

goes through the rest in detail. [**Link to Amendment file to come from Barry.**]
Ray noted that the bylaws can be further discussed and cleaned up during the retreat. Barry stressed that it was decided that the two-year cycle was best suited for the board. Four-year commitments are just too much to ask. Every two years, the council will potentially change = there will be elections for council seats. Duties remain the same. Many questions and clarifications were batted back and forth, but the members all agreed and ultimately understood the changes.

Kelly thanked and commended the work.

Barry thanked Ray and Tom for helping with the changes; also Peter and Judith for the crucial task of proofreading.

Peter thanked Barry for driving this effort, and moved to vote. Judith seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. NENC Retreat held in January, Summary, report of expenses (possible action)

Kelly Lord noted that Steve Patel had consolidated the notes – this motion has been passed, but we wanted to bring it to attention.

Steve thanked Yeprem, Judy, and CSUN for their help.

\$1,137.34 was the total cost. Did I miss any receipts?

Barry Greenberg has outstanding Starbucks and Western Bagel receipts.

Steve said \$500 went to the moderator, the rest went to food, \$60 for printing (bylaws).

The retreat was a great success.

Peter moved that we approve retreat expenses, Ray seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Barry: Point of information, how do we inform Melvin Canas of the changes to the bylaws?

Kelly: We will email a copy of the minutes to him.

7. Adopt Neighborhood Council Review Commission Final Report (Action Required submit to CIS)

Ray moved to postpone that item for next month. Judith Nutter seconded. That motion passed.

Board Member Reports

Peter McCarty:

Patrick Henry Middle School will get an award for physical fitness in our area

They need volunteers to do reading.

On May 17th, there is a NC activity, celebrating earth renewal. Stakeholders can learn whats going on. We have been invited to participate and describe our environmental programs. We can help foster environmental ambassadors, and enlighten local businesses. I recommend a zero-waste plan – for 10 bucks, every house can get a compost unit and learn how to use it. We can help promote that, working with schools. It will also promote neighbor-to-neighbor relations.

Future Agenda Items and other Calendar Events

Kelly: Any other items of interest? Youth rep?

Sarah Adelman: I'm excited to work the booth.

Kelly: Anyone else?

Ray: April 14th is Citrus Sunday.

Ray Calnan motioned to adjourn the meeting. Caroline Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned: 9:19p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jon Abrams, AppleOne, February 20, 2008