

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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PRESIDENT: Quyen Vo-Ramirez
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Tammy Flores and
Rick Donnelly
TREASURER: Randall Kelly
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Nick Krall



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Minutes of the
SYLMAR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL (SNC)
GENERAL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, March 25, 2010

MB2 Raceway, 13943 Balboa Blvd., Sylmar CA 91342

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President of Communications Rick Donnelly called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ricardo Benitez.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken by the Secretary. Board Members present: Erlin Arellano (late), Ricardo Benitez, Hiral Bhakta, Rick Donnelly, Saul Gonzalez, Randall Kelly, Nick Krall (late), Martin Laufer (late), George Ortega, Guillermo Reyes, Jeanne Rowe, Jan Sandstrom, Jim Schopper, Esteban Tabarez and Quyen Vo-Ramirez (late).

Board Members absent: Cheri Blose (unexcused), Hector Cabrera (excused), Tammy Flores (excused), Fabian Garcia (excused), Rudy Lopez (unexcused) and Liz Meher (excused).

At this time, Mr. Laufer arrived.

Eleven of the 20 Board Members were present at this time. A quorum is 11 or more, so the Board could make Motions and take votes. Also attending were 18 Stakeholders and Guests.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The following correction to the January 28, 2010 General Board Meeting Minutes was requested:

Page two, Item #6: "four other sites" should read "three other sites."

MOTION (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Laufer): to approve the Minutes of the February 24, 2010 General Board Meeting as corrected.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

4. Housekeeping, Stakeholder comments, Speaker Cards, and Timekeeper.

Mr. Kelly explained the above.

5. Public Officials, Community Representatives and Board Member announcements and presentations.

Dan Rosales, Jr., Planning Deputy for L.A. City District Seven Councilman Richard Alarcon (818-756-8409; Dan.Rosales@lacity.org; www.CityPlanning.lacity.org), distributed a flyer for and announced the “Batting for Census 2010” March 27, 11:00 – 1:00 event (818-756-8409) at Ballerz Batting Cages, 15140 Bledsoe St., Sylmar. There’ll be free food and entertainment. Also, the High-Speed Rail Project [213-438-1755] is considering Sylmar and Pacoima as proposed station sites. It’ll be a 230-miles-per-hour train from Anaheim to San Francisco. There’ll be a Community Meeting in April.

6. Public Comments

Stakeholder Susana Escqido opposes a wireless telecommunications facility being installed next door to her home because of concerns about her family’s health. She said that studies show that children are “more susceptible” to RF emissions and that it’s “inconclusive to say that it’s safe.”

Evan Nakamura, Coordinator, Sylmar Recreation Center (818.367.5656; Evan.Nakamura@LACity.org), thanked the NC “for all [its] continued support . . . [and] help.” Recreation Center Teen Club members thanked the NC for support of the Spring Egg Hunt and Halloween events, pizza and Extreme Teen Program.

At this time, Ms. Arellano arrived.

Marlene Radar of the Community Alliance for Open Space (www.SunlandTujungaAlliance.com) introduced herself and distributed a “Summary of Request for Action” handout for the City to “save our open space . . . from the Lopez Canyon Truck Academy,” and encouraged people to attend an April 15th, 4:30 p.m. Hearing at the Braude Governmental Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys. A zoning variance at the Lopez Canyon Landfill “will set a precedent throughout the State . . . [from] the negative impacts it’ll have . . . with trucks driving through our streets.” They’re requesting for the City “to restore [the land] to its original use”; she asked the SNC “for a letter of support.” Alliance Member Kit Paul said she’s tolerated the landfill for 20 years; “the truck-driving Academy . . . will affect Sylmar . . . [We need to] support keeping open space for recreation . . . It’s been 14 years since [the Landfill] stopped taking trash.” Mr. Donnelly said the SNC will see if a Board Member can attend the Hearing.

7. Committee Reports

Secretary

The Secretary reported that Flyers were created for the NC Election Candidates Forum and for the Election, and both were arranged to be copied and distributed.

Other Election outreach was facilitated. Reservations were coordinated for the March 13th Policy con Pan Dulce event that the NC co-sponsored. Information regarding the Election, construction trucks on Hubbard St., a documentarian's filming request, a vendor payment inquiry, land use applications, and Certificates of Appreciation was handled.

Treasurer/Budget

Mr. Kelly said that there was no report.

Land Use

Mr. Ortega described events at last Monday's crowded Committee Meeting. Neighborhoods around applicants' projects were "canvassed."

Outreach

Mr. Bhakta distributed the Committee's unapproved March 9th Minutes; there was a "solid turnout." The Committee made recommendations that're on this Agenda. The next Committee Meeting will be April 13th, the second Tuesday, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sylmar Recreation Center Susan B. Anthony Building Children's Room.

Election Committee

Mr. Laufer reported that the Election will be Saturday from 1:00 – 7:00 at Polk and Borden next to the Fire Station.

Events

Ms. Arellano said that there was no report.

Public Services

Mr. Reyes reported that the next Committee Meeting will be another Joint Meeting with the Outreach Committee on April 13th [see above].

Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Garcia was not present and there was no report.

Additional Reports, requested by the President

There were no additional reports.

New Business

8. Presentations of Sylmar Neighborhood Council Appreciation Awards and acknowledgement of outgoing Board Members.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #11.] Mr. Donnelly thanked and Mr. Rosales presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Chris Brooks, MB2 Raceway General Manager (Chris@MB2Raceway.com; 818-364-8000) for "service to the community" for hosting the December 3, 2009 "Race for Youth" charity event that raised \$14,000. Mr. Rosales also thanked SNC Board Members and presented Certificates to each of them.

9. **Presentation and discussion** by the Community Redevelopment Agency regarding their annual budget and updates on the Truman St. and San Fernando Blvd. landscaped medians.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #8.] Duran Villegas, Project Manager, East Valley Region, CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency (818.753.1918; DVillegas@CRA.LACity.org), introduced himself and the CRA. [See <http://www.crala.net/internet-site/Projects/Pacoima/index.cfm>.] He described Sylmar projects and the development process, including a home ownership assistance program. The Sylmar Streetscape project “covers Hubbard north to Polk.” They’ll start the Phase One Truman St. and San Fernando Blvd. landscaped medians projects “within the next 60-75 days . . . four small medians . . . [with] shrubs . . . trees . . . [and] a “Welcome to Sylmar” sign . . . Phase Two is still under design . . . fixing curbs and sidewalks as needed . . . The HOP . . . (Home Ownership Program) . . . [is] to provide a `soft’ second home loan . . . [of] up to \$75,000 for qualified families.” He distributed a “CRA/LA . . . Homeownership Opportunity Program” flyer for the March 27 and April 17, 9:00-12:00 and 1:00-4:00 Workshops (877-570-5276; www.EastValleyHOP.org; Info@GoHomeLA.com) at the Mission Community Police Station and Mission Community Hospital. He also distributed a “Habitat for Humanity” (818-884-8808) flyer for its March 28th affordable first-time home buyers workshop.

10. **Discussion and possible action** [see below Motion].

MOTION (by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Ms. Arellano): to support the Mission Community Police Station’s purchase of a treadmill with financial support of up to \$500.00. Presentation by the Mission Community Police Station.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Rowe explained that “the Officers need the security” of being able to exercise in the Station. Ms. Sandstrom was concerned regarding the \$6,000 total cost of the treadmill. Mr. Bhakta relayed that LAPD Officer Charles Chacon explained that this is an “industrial” treadmill that Officers of “the entire Station” would share. Mr. Bhakta added that the “retail price [would be \$8,000-\$9,000] . . . Officers are also pooling money themselves . . . It’s a specialized treadmill that’ll last a number of years.” Mr. Kelly was concerned that the public will not have access to the treadmill.

At this time, Mr. Krall arrived.

AMENDMENT to the MOTION (by Mr. Donnelly and seconded): that the allocation is conditional upon approval by the Treasurer.

MOTION PASSED as amended by a unanimous hand vote.

11. Discussion and possible action [see below Motion].

MOTION (by Ms. Sandstrom, seconded by Mr. Kelly): to send a letter to the County Supervisor's and City Council District Seven Offices on behalf of the neighborhood, businesses and organizations along Olive View Drive currently affected by the possible noise pollution, traffic and other safety and health violations brought by the excessive dirt removal and hauling on Olive View Drive to the 210 Freeway.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Laufer was concerned that the problems "are occurring now, they're not `possible,'" and he described "300 trucks per day . . . waiting to unload . . . sitting on residential streets . . . blocking driveways . . . The Highway Patrol has been citing drivers for bad brakes" and more. "Trucks are being repaired on [residential] streets in front of people's houses . . . [The dumping] is expected to continue through the end of April . . . into the hills behind Olive View Hospital."

At this time, Mr. Tabarez left the Meeting.

Mr. Laufer continued that people have complained that there's "a lot of dirt in their house every single day." Mr. Krall offered that the NC "could ask for . . . some improvements . . . [and] insist that no trucks doing that dumping get off at Polk" [St.] and force the trucks "to wait on Foothill [Blvd.]." Ms. Arellano observed that it's "not the first time Sylmar has been used as a dumping ground . . . It's affecting our health [and] our environment." Mr. Kelly noted that "they're dumping it on the face of the hill." Mr. Rosales clarified that "the County has always had a removal spot there . . . It's supposed to only go from 7:00 to 4:00." He described the path that the trucks are supposed to take and made Public Works contact information available. Mr. Kelly described a possible truck route "that would not affect any residential homes." Ms. Sandstrom asked, "Where are the funds going to come from to repave these streets?" Mr. Donnelly suggested that Board Members work together to write a letter. Ms. Rowe suggested also having a Town Hall Meeting.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote.

Mr. Donnelly suggested and Ms. Sandstrom agreed to head a committee to write the letter and send it to L.A. County Supervisors Zev Yaroslavsky and Michael Antonovich, City Council District Seven, and as needed.

Recess. At this time, Ms. Vo-Ramirez arrived at and Mr. Gonzalez left the Meeting. She requested and Mr. Donnelly agreed to continue as Meeting Chair.

12. Discussion and possible action [see below Motion].

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #8.]

MOTION (by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): to organize a Town Hall Forum in April with the residents of northeastern Sylmar and elected officials in order to

resolve the issue with the Sylmar Debris Basin, as it has led to a negative impact on their quality of life.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kelly recommended setting a Forum date at the April [22nd] General Board Meeting. Mr. Krall recommended having “some protests . . . a joint Outreach-Public Services-Land Use Committees Meeting.”

Ms. Rowe agreed to **WITHDRAW the MOTION.**

MOTION to REFER (by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Arellano): to REFER the Sylmar Debris Basin issue to a Committee.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Krall recommended that the Committee’s Meetings be officially Noticed to be in accordance with the Brown Act.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

13. Discussion and possible action to support the following recommendations from the Land Use Committee regarding requests to permit:

f) [See below Motion.]

Mr. Krall reported that the Committee discussed that there’s an “existing cell tower that was in place before any of the camouflage . . . requirements . . . [The project] meets the requirements . . . The parking lot . . . is not up to code . . . We’d like to ask that the property owner” bring it up to code.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Laufer): for the SNC to support the co-location of additional panels and m-wave dishes on an existing tower with an additional cabinet at the base at 13040 Glenoaks Blvd., as long as the parking lot is restriped to meet specifications and camouflage requirements are met.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Krall reported that there were 18 members of the public at the Committee Meeting; two were opposed to the project, two in favor and 14 abstained. Ms. Sandstrom thought it would be better to split the Motion into cell towers and parking lot issues. Mr. Bhakta believed that this was “an opportunity for” the NC to deal with both issues at the same time.

CALL for the QUESTION by Ms. Vo-Ramirez.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with 10 (ten) in favor and two opposed.

j) [See below Motion.]

Mr. Krall described the project and its site improvement possibilities. The second floor would have medical offices. The Committee unanimously supported the project with the attached condition that the bus stop in front be upgraded to code

for handicapped access. The public attendees voted seven in favor, four opposed and seven abstained.

MOTION (by Mr. Krall, seconded by Mr. Bhakta): for the SNC to support a proposed new drug store with pharmacy at 13769 Sayre St., with the condition that the bus stop in front be upgraded to code for handicapped access.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Sandstrom was concerned that parking needs to be according to the Community Plan. Mr. Ortega described that the project appears to have “a one-way driveway” on the east side of the property next to the [210] Freeway; he described possible site improvements.

AMENDMENT to the MOTION (by Mr. Ortega, seconded by Ms. Sandstrom): that the one-way driveway at the 13769 Sayre St. project site be narrowed with landscaping at the northeast corner of the building; that “Do Not Enter” signs be installed facing the parking lot; and that a pavement arrow be installed pointing to the parking lot.

Mr. Krall and Mr. Bhakta accepted the amendment.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Schopper was concerned that the project appears to not have any loading dock; 18-wheel trucks would be difficult to park and unload. Mr. Laufer believed that the City Planning, and Building and Safety Departments will consider the “details . . . [The NC] needs to approve the Rite-Aid proposal.”

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote.

[Note: there was no #14 on the Agenda.]

15. Board Member Comments

Ms. Sandstrom thanked Graffiti Busters for their work and recognized Ms. Rowe for her work in helping to open the Office Depot store in 1992. Mr. Krall reminded about the April 24-25 Relay for Life at Olive Vista Middle School “to fight . . . a horrible disease . . . [see] www.RelayForLife.org/SylmarCa.” Ms. Arellano acknowledged the NC’s positive effect on her life and plans. She’ll “help others to make a difference in the community.” Mr. Benitez thanked the SNC for the opportunity to serve. Mr. Bhakta thanked Stakeholders for attending this Meeting. He reminded and encouraged everyone to “spread the word” regarding Saturday’s NC Election, and that there’re different Committees on which people can serve.

Mr. Schopper described that he’s “seen this [NC] evolve into the best [NC] in the City . . . We’ve all benefitted . . . It’s been a real blessing.” He’ll “still be here as [he] can . . . Thanks for the opportunity.” Mr. Laufer reminded that the City Council will be looking at the numbers of people who vote in the NC elections. Mr. Reyes thanked departing Board Members. Ms. Vo-Ramirez said “It’s been an amazing

three years.” She noted NC accomplishments and individually thanked departing and Candidate Board Members. Mr. Donnelly said that he “will be around.”

16. Next Meeting date, Future Agenda Items

Mr. Donnelly announced that the next General Board Meeting will be Thursday, April 22nd at a place to be determined. He said Dave Beauvais, the March 20th NC Election Candidates Forum Moderator, “did a great job.”

17. Closing Remarks, Announcements, Acknowledgements and Adjournment

Mr. Donnelly declared and it was agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Minutes written by DL.