

**Neighborhood Council Valley Village  
Board Meeting  
3-28-07**

**Approved 4-25-07, 10-0-0**

**Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Distribution and Welcoming Remarks.** The meeting was called to order by Paul Wiener at 6:51 pm.

Mr. Wiener welcomed the audience to the meeting. Mr. Wiener reminded those in attendance who wished to speak to any issue on the agenda must first complete a speaker card. It was noted that the meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and within the guidelines of The Brown Act.

The roll was called. Board members present were: Ms. Dorothy Apple (residential homeowner), Mr. Tony Braswell (residential renter), Mr. Yacov Freedman (residential homeowner), Mr. Fritz Friedman (business), Ms. Ginny Hatfield (senior based), Mr. Paul Hatfield (at large), Mr. Yoni Kahn-Rose (residential renter), Mr. Ben Lautman (business), Dr. Joshua Levy (faith based), Dr. Eliezer Jones (community based organization), Mr. Greg O'Connor (residential homeowner), Mr. Stuart Simen (business), Mr. Beni Warshawsky (residential homeowner), Mr. Paul Wiener (residential renter). Absent was Ms. Mona Riss (education). The Posting Roll was called – posting requirements were met (5).

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of February Minutes.** *Ms. Hatfield submitted changes to the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Simen and seconded by Dr. Jones to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved 10-0-1 with Ms. Hatfield's corrections.*

**Agenda Item 3 – President's Comments.** Mr. Hatfield thanked the larger than usual crowd for their attendance and asked that a committee sign-up sheet be circulated, encouraging those in the audience to sign up for an NCVV committee.

**Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment on Agenda Items.** Mr. Steven Cavallero asked for the NCVV Board help in removing the "fortune seller" sign from 5017 Laurel Canyon. He mentioned that banners have been added to enhance the sign, and that there is another similar business on Riverside. He was advised to call 311. The Board was also encouraged to contact Ms. Greuel's office and 311 to inform them of these violations of zoning.

Mr. Ron Stein who lives on Voletta Place expressed concern about the bad state of streets. He has called the department of streets, Mr. Weiss' office, and other city departments. He feels he isn't being heard. Mr. Wiener and other Board members mentioned that the Department of Streets made a presentation to NCVV in 2006 and Mr. Braswell gave Mr. Stein the name and number of the representative of that office.

Mr. Friedman advised the Board that there is a new head of DONE. He also reminded the Board that a second hearing on the Neighborhood Character Study would be held at the Braude Center 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Room 1A on March 21.

**Agenda Item 5 – Presentation from LA City Attorney’s Office and other parties related to Crime in Valley Village.** Ms. Hatfield and Dr. Jones introduced the evening’s speakers. Dr. Jones thanked Ms. Hatfield for her help securing the presenters. Mr. Jonathan Galatzan, Deputy City Attorney and Neighborhood Prosecutor, North Hollywood and Foothills Area, and Brian Sottile, Deputy City Attorney and Neighborhood Prosecutor, North Hollywood Area, from the Los Angeles City Attorney’s office spoke to the Board about crime and gang activities in Valley Village. Graffiti abatement is a big focus of their efforts. They have a goal of identifying, photographing and removing graffiti within 24 hours. They keep track of known gang members and prosecute violators of the law, including those on probation for prior crimes. Part of their work is to identify issues that might be of particular importance to specific neighborhoods. They expressed their appreciation for the Valley Village Specific Plan stating that it helps them prosecute specific rule violations that are unique to Valley Village based on the Specific Plan.

The gentleman gave an example of their work to investigate a massage parlor by sending in vice officers to investigate health claims. They were able to shut the business down. They reviewed the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) which governs conduct of citizens. They enforce the LAMC, which contains guidelines that are not part of the penal code. Jonathan is a citywide nuisance abatement attorney. Gang monitoring in North Hollywood uses the nuisance “angle” to prosecute, monitoring residential and commercial establishments that allow gang activity. Specifically in Valley Village they watch out for abandoned homes and buildings. They encouraged members of the audience to get word back to their office if they suspect inappropriate use of a home or business. They also endorsed using the Councilperson’s offices for support and expressed a strong collaboration with both city council offices. Their office’s last 114 prosecutions were done in partnerships with Neighborhoods.

Mr. Friedman asked for clarification of tenant’s “rights” from protections that keep the landlord from evicting the tenant. The presenters explained that LA City Code 47.50 allows landlords to evict tenants who commit crimes within a certain distance of the property. He encouraged anyone with a similar concern to contact his office directly. Mr. Lautman asked if the police are doing an adequate job and what NCVV can do to help? It was mentioned that LA employs ¼ the number of police officers as New York City and covers roughly 10 times the area. Mr. Hatfield asked if the program works along with the LA County Sheriff’s office? No. Mr. Lautman asked how the neighborhood could be more supportive? Neighborhood Watch Programs are the most effective way to help the community. Mr. Braswell asked about the “moving” Thai Massage sign. Community members were encouraged to call and report the sign wherever it is displayed within Valley Village.

Mr. Bill North expressed concern that there is drug and gang activity in his residential building. He has contacted the city and the Senior Lead Officer and gotten no help. He lives at Chandler and Irvine.

Mr. Richard Ortiz expressed concern about the massage parlor. Are they allowed to operate because they have a business license? Yes, but the function of the business must comply with the Specific Plan.

Mr. Johnnie Young stated that he has tried to make his Neighborhood Watch program successful but does not get much support from the immediate community. Ms. Hatfield, Dr. Jones and Mr.

Wiener stated that improving Neighborhood Watch is one of the goals for this year's Board. Mr. Young was encouraged to attend the next Projects Committee Meeting April 18.

Mr. Israel Bick stated that money is being "pissed away" on departments that would be better spent on additional cops.

Mr. Freedman mentioned that he knows personally there has been a challenge recruiting officers for LAPD and encouraged the Board and audience to help get good candidates to apply for the Police Academy.

Ms. Kaylee Knecker of Bellingham stated there is constant loitering in her area, and by the time the police respond (if they do at all) the loiterers have moved on. Is there any other way to reach the police that calling the Senior Lead Officer? If it is not an emergency, call the Dispatch number at 1-877-275-5273. If it is an emergency call 911.

The presenters stated there are seven very hot gang areas they are monitoring, and none are in Valley Village.

Mr. Paul Janguchtan asked if it is possible to monitor calls and identify which come from Valley Village as a way of building a statistical model that could help establish the true "need"? All calls are logged by LAPD.

Mr. David LaFraviese commented that there are too many upscale kids with too much money and that they come back to LA with fireworks. He has called the police and they don't come. Can he go to the schools and talk to the kids? Mr. Wiener advised that if he hears fireworks that he contact the police.

Ms. Tangela Brown spoke with her daughter about their experience obtaining an apartment for the daughter. The apartment has some dangerous code violations and they can't find out the name of the owner of the building. They were advised to contact the LA Housing Department and state they believe there are potential code violations and ask for an inspection.

Unidentified member of the audience shared his "read" of the gang graffiti displayed, stating that he sees three gangs who are threatening each other.

Mr. Louis Dubois, Gang Officer Deputy Probation Officer who is focused solely on gang activity. He stated that there are 100,000 people on probation in LA County. His office goes into areas and monitors the activities of persons on parole. He felt that LA is doing a great job with gangs, and stated that his office is on duty every hour of every day. His number is 818-373-8100. Mr. Lautman asked how dangerous is the gang activity to ordinary citizens? Usually the fighting is between gangs, and bystanders sometimes get caught in the way.

An unidentified member of the audience asked how many gang members are "illegals" and could we just "gather up all the little jerks and put them in jail".

Mr. Braswell asked if Mr. Dubois office works with schools? Yes. Mr. Hatfield asked if there is a program to intervene with parents? Yes, but many times there is not a parent in the home.

The next presenter was Mr. Tom Leveque, supervisor of Valley Village Park. He oversees the maintenance of all parks in North Hollywood district, which includes Valley Village. He stated he has not ever seen a community so committed to and involved with their park. One of the most recent concerns was the graffiti in the bathroom. The restrooms are normally checked/cleaned daily and locked in the evening. This one time they were not and they were vandalized. He mentioned that there has been some allocation of Proposition K funds to use in the park. He wants to use that money for more lighting. He advised that the Board contact Ron Berkowitz (818-756-8190) or Able Perez (supervisor) who could help secure additional lighting. Mr. Leveque's number is 818-766-8445. He should be called on any issues related to the park. He also gave the Park Police number – 323-913-7390. Several people asked about homeless persons sleeping in the Valley Village and North Hollywood parks. He said that the law is clear but sometimes enforcement is difficult. They are helped greatly by the new "shopping cart" law which allows for the arrest of persons with a shopping cart who are not on store property. Mr. Hatfield asked about persons loitering in their cars at parks – he was advised to contact the Park Police upon any suspicious activity. Mr. Ortiz asked how the Oakwood School was able to get private parking? There is an agreement between the city and the school for use of the lot by both. Mr. Laveque stated that there are more trees that are to be planted in both parks.

Ms. Joan Pellico, Special Deputy to Jack Weiss, reported that there are 70 known gangs in Los Angeles. She estimated there are over 20,000 gang members. Residents should always contact 311 for assistance if they have non-emergency needs. There were over 1,000,000 calls to 311 in 2006. She mentioned that Wendy Greuel's office also has an operation graffiti program similar to the pothole program. It is very successful.

Ms. Pellico stated that Sherman Oaks NC is putting 3 cameras on their park with live feed to the Van Nuys Police Office. Valley Village is not in a situation that such action is needed "yet", but we should be proactive. She offered to give 2 cameras from the Councilman's office to monitor activity at Valley Village Park. Mr. Wiener thanked Ms. Pellico for her support.

Mr. Hatfield asked if there is a link between the availability of spray paint and graffiti. It was pointed out there is some restriction on the sale of spray paint.

Mr. Cavallero expressed frustration that the city does too much to protect "rights" of the lawless and doesn't do more profiling. Ms. Pellico reminded the audience that we are a community of rights first.

Ms. Taneda Larios from DONE reminded the Board and audience that they have direct access to city managers and could be a great resources on crime. She announced that there is a new Manager (Carole Baker Tharp) and new Supervisor BongHwan Kim (BH ). She also reminded the audience of the Mayor's Day of Service April 29.

Mr. Wiener reiterated that The Bridge and myvalleyvillage.com are two places where stakeholders can get more information on crime and efforts to stop crime in Los Angeles. He also directed those in attendance to the DONE website for links to specific city departments.

**Agenda Item 6 – Finance Committee.** Mr. Hatfield presented the financial report. All of the Valley Village birthday expenses have been turned in, and the responsibility is \$913 for NCVV and \$776 for the Valley Village Homeowners Association. *Mr. Hatfield motioned that the Board pay the expenses as presented as they were generally even. The motion was approved 13-1-0.* Year to date the NCVV Board has spent \$20,000. It is time for the 2008 budget; by April 9 committees should email any expenses anticipated to Mr. Hatfield so that he can present a budget for approval to the Board in the April meeting. The budget would then be presented to DONE. Mr. Washawsky advised that some of The Bridge allocation should be directed to enhance the website. Dr. Jones asked how to make specific budget requests – Mr. Hatfield advised that they be sent to him with specific summary and dollar request included.

**Agenda Item 7 – Communications Committee.** Mr. Braswell reported that the committee met and is working on presenting a web update plan to the full Board in the May meeting. The committee will present for approval a new posting list at the April Board meeting.

**Agenda Item 7 – Planning and Land Use Committee.** There was no PLU meeting.

**Agenda Item 7 – Elections.** The committee is working on the calendar, and is not scheduled to meet.

**Agenda Item 7 – Projects.** Dr. Jones thanked all of those involved with putting together the March meeting on crime in Valley Village. He specifically thanked the presenters, and Ginny Hatfield for her work coordinating the speakers.

Neighborhood Watch is in progress. There will be more to report as the committee expands their work on this issue.

The committee will propose Community Grants to support efforts within Valley Village, and will ask that \$10,000 be budgeted to support this annual effort.

There will be a presentation on Soundwalls at the next Board meeting (April).

Dare to Prepare, part of the Mayor’s Day of Service, will be in Valley Village Park on April 29. The first 250 families to arrive and register will receive emergency preparedness kits. *There will be a presence from LAPD, LAFD, CERT and others. Ms. Hatfield motioned that the backpacks have myvalleyvillage.com imprinted on them. The motion was approved 14-0-0.*

**Agenda Item 8 – Valley Village Birthday Party.** The party was held at the Senior Center, and over 100 people attended. Total expenses were \$1669.56. There were 50% less people this year, but the expenses were much lower. Feedback was very positive, and most seemed to like the format of drop in verses a formal dinner. Suzanne Lewis covered the event in the Daily News.

**Agenda Item 9 – Neighborhood Characterization Study Meeting.** Mr. Friedman, Mr. Hatfield and others commented on the March 21 Neighborhood Characterization Study meeting held at the Braude Center. Mr. Friedman expressed concern that the modification put forth in the proposal limits modification “1 to 1” front to rear, and was not inclusive of garage space and vaulted ceilings, among other issues. This causes concern in Mr. Friedman’s opinion for those in Valley Village.

The purpose of the city hearings is to collect information from residents to help craft the final version of the motion. There was one additional meeting scheduled for March 29 in Westwood.

*Mr. Friedman introduced a motion that stated: I move that the portion of Neighborhood Council Valley Village lying to the west of Laurel Canyon Boulevard – i.e. the portion currently situated in Jack Weiss' 5<sup>th</sup> City Council District – be exempt from all anti-Mansionization, Neighborhood Character and/or Floor Area Ratio zoning rule modifications and that this designated area shall retain and be governed by, the current City zoning regulations – i.e. 3:1 FAR.*

*Neighborhood Council Valley Village shall seek support and endorsement of this position from the LA Planning and Zoning Departments and their Boards of Commissioners; from the City Council and its Planning and Zoning Committees; as well as from the Mayor of Los Angeles.*

*Any and all members of the Neighborhood Council Valley Village shall be empowered to state this as the Neighborhood Council Valley Village's official position to any and all bodies and/or persons.*

*The motion was seconded by Yoni Kahn-Rose. There was more than 30 minutes of discussion on the motion, most of it focused on the validity of the motion related to the fact that it was not posted on the agenda that the motion would be presented. Ms. Taneda Larios of DONE advised the Board that the motion might not be in order under the Brown Act. There were several motions to amend the motion as presented, which were not accepted by Mr. Friedman. He stated that he felt it was important to get the position on record before the city ends its open meetings on the Neighborhood Characterization Study. On advice from DONE's representative that the motion might violate the Brown Act, Mr. Friedman withdrew the motion and advised he would present at either a subsequent Board meeting or at Planning and Land Use.*

**Agenda Item 10 – Board Liaison Reports, Material Distribution and Other Items for Discussion.** Mr. Wiener is still working on the Board liaison assignments. There were no other materials for distribution.

**Agenda Item 12 – Public Comment.** Mr. Dan Caplan stated that the next meeting of the Neighborhood Characterization hearing would be at the Henry Medina Center, 11214 West Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles. The open house begins at 6:30 and the meeting at 7:30.

**Agenda Item 11 – Future Agenda Items.** Dr. Jones would like to discuss grants for community projects. Mr. Hatfield will bring a draft of the 2008 budget.

**Agenda Item 12 – President's Closing Comments.** There were no further comments.

**Agenda Item 13** – the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm.